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A WEEK  
  
CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS,

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MR. THOREAU’S WORKS.  
  
‘Walden, or Life in the Woods. . Iva. ito  
Cape Code ee ee ee Tat tam  
  
A Week on the Concord and Mer  
rimack Rivera... 0. ++ Iva Ina  
  
Mixoursions © 55/5 ss ++ Toh ttm,  
he Maine Woods... + + Ire Men,  
Letters 2 6 6 be ee Teoh Ime,  
  
A Yankee in Canada. . 9. 5 + Int Iteo  
  
JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO., Publishers.

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\_ CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS.  
  
By HENRY D. THOREAU,  
  
MEW AND REVISED EDITION.  
  
   
  
BOSTON:  
  
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY,  
{Late Tiexnon & Vos, ano Fads, Osco, & Co,  
  
1873.  
ae

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‘ate scorng wo Act of Genin n he yea 887, by  
TIOKNOR AND FIELDS,  
thn Curt Omen ofthe Dit Goat the Distro of Mancha,  
  
   
  
Univensrry Passe: Were, Biortow, & Ca,  
‘Comaatooe,

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‘Where'er thou sast who sailed with me,  
‘Though now thou climbest lfter mounts,  
‘And fare rivers dost ascend,  
  
‘Be thou my Muse, my Brother —.

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ASTOR. LENOX M0  
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L  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
am bound, Tam bound, for distant shore,  
‘By a lonely isle, by a far Azore,  
  
‘There itis, there itis, the treasure T seek,  
(On the barren sands of a desolate creek.

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sailed up a river with a pleasant wind,  
  
New lands, new people, and new thoughts to finds  
Many fair reaches and headlands appeared,  
‘And many dangers were there to be feared ;  
But when I remember where I have been,  
‘And the far landscapes that I have seen,  
‘Trou seemest the only permanent shore,  
‘The cape never rounded, nor wandered o'er.

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‘Fluminaque obliquis cinsit dectviaripis  
‘Que, divers locs, partim sorbentur ab ipsa  
In mare perveniunt partim, campoque recepta  
Liberioris aque, pro ripisltora pulsant.  
  
Om, Met. 139  
  
   
  
‘He confined the rivers within ther sloping banks,  
‘Which in different places are part absorbed by the earth,  
‘Part reach the sea, and being received within the plain  
(Of its freer waters, beat the shore for banks

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CONCORD RIVER.  
  
““Beueath 1 bit fa he boa terval  
‘rough which a wl or Tedlan erat  
‘Winds mil ti of taoup aed o gua,  
Whose pipe and aro oft he plough eburen  
“era pn bose, al of new es,  
Sapplate f th ie, he farmers del  
Tarmor,  
  
Tax Musxeraguin, or Grass-ground River, thoagh  
probably as old as the Nile or Euphrates, did not be-  
gin to have a place in civilized history, until the fame of  
its grassy meadows and its fish attracted settlers out  
of England in 1685, when it received the other but  
Kindred name of Coxconp from the first plantation  
‘on its banks, which appears to have been commenced  
in a spirit of peace and harmony. It will be Grass-  
ground River as long as grass grows and water runs  
here; it will be Concord River only while men lead  
peaceable lives on its banks. ‘To an extinct race it  
was grass-ground, where they hunted and fished, and  
it is stil perennial grass-ground to Concord farmers,  
who own the Great Meadows, and get the hay from  
year to year. “One branch of it,” according to the  
historian of Concord, for I love to quote 20 good au-  
thority, “rises in the south part of Hopkinton, and  
another from a pond and a large cedarswamp in  
Westborough,” and flowing between Hopkinton and  
Southborough, through Framingham, and between Sud  
  
1

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10 conconD RIVER.  
  
Dury and Wayland, where it is sometimes called Sud-  
bury River, it enters Concord at the south part of  
‘the town, and after receiving the North or Assabeth  
River, which bas its source a little farther to the north  
and west, goes out at the northeast angle, and flow-  
ing between Bedford and Carlisle, and through Billerica,  
empties into the Merrimack at Lowell. In Concord  
it is, in summer, from four to fifteen feet deep, and  
from one hundred to three hundred feet wide, but in  
‘the spring fresbets, when it overflows ite banks, it is  
in some places nearly a mile wide. Between Sudbury  
and Wayland the meadows acquire their greatest  
breadth, and when covered with water, they form a  
hhandsome chain of shallow vernal lakes, resorted to  
bby numerous gulls and ducks. Just above Sherman’  
Bridge, between these towns, is the largest expanse,  
fand when the wind blows freshly in @ raw March  
ay, heaving up the surface into dark and sober bil-  
lows or regular swells, skirted as it is in the distance  
with alderswamps and emoke-like maples, it looks  
like a smaller Lake Huron, and is very pleasant and  
exciting for a lundsman to row or sail over. The  
farm-houses along the Sudbury shore, which rises  
gently to a considerable height, command fine water  
prospects at this season. ‘The shore is more flat on  
‘the Wayland side, and this town is the greatest loser  
by the flood. Its farmers tell me that thousands of  
‘acres are flooded now, since the dams have been  
erected, where they remember to have seen the  
white honeysuckle or clover growing once, and they  
could go dry with shoos only in summer. Now there  
is nothing but bluc-joint and sedge and cut-grase there,  
standing in water all the year round. For a: long

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concorD riven. un  
  
time; they made the most of the driest season to get  
their bay, working sometimes till nine o'clock at night,  
sedulously paring with their seythes in the twilight  
round the hummocks left by the ice; but now it is  
not worth the getting when they can come at it, and  
they look sadly round to their wood-lots and upland  
‘a9 a last resource.  
  
It is worth the while to make a voyage up this stream,  
if you go no farther than Sudbury, only to see how  
much country there is in the rear of us; great hills,  
and a hundred brooks, and farm-houses, and barus, and  
haystacks, you never saw before, and men everywhere,  
Sudbury, that is Southborough men,.and Wayland, and  
Nine-Acre-Corner men, and Bound Rock, where four  
towns bound on a rock in the river, Lincoln, Wayland,  
Sudbury, Concord. Many waves are there agitated by  
the wind, keeping nature fresh, the spray blowing in  
your face, reeds and rushes waving; ducks by the  
ihundred, all uneasy in the surf, in the raw wind, just  
ready to rise, and now going off with a clatter and a  
whistling like riggers straight for Labrador, flying  
against the stiff gale with reofed wings, or else circling  
round frst, with all their paddles briskly moving, just  
over the surf to reconnoitre you before they leave these  
parts; gulls wheeling overhead, muskrats swimming for  
dear life, wet and cold, with no fire to warm them by  
that you know of; their labored homes rising here and  
  
   
  
and winged titmice slong the sunny windy shore; cran-  
Derries tossed on the waves and heaving up on the  
beach, their litle red skiff beating about among the  
alders ;— such healthy natural tumult as proves the  
last day is not yet at band. And there stand all

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12 conconD nivEs.  
  
around the alders, and birches, and oaks, and maples  
full of glee and sap, holding in their buds until the  
waters subside. You shall perhaps run aground on  
Cranberry Island, only some spires of Inst year’s pipe-  
grass above water, to show where the danger is, and  
get as good a freezing there as anywhere on the  
Northwest Coast. I never voyaged so far in all my  
life. You shall see men you never heard of before,  
‘whose names you don't know, going away down through  
the meadows with long ducking-guns, with water-tight  
‘boots wading through the fowl-meadow grass, on bleak,  
wintry, distant shores, with guns at balf-cock, and they  
shall see teal, blue-winged, green-winged, shelldrakes,  
whiatlers, black ducks, ospreys, and many other wild and  
noble sights before night, such as they who sit in parlors  
never dream of. You shall see rude and sturdy, expe-  
rienced and wise men, keeping their eastles, or teaming.  
up their summer's wood, or chopping alone in the woods,  
men fuller of talk and rare adventure in the sun and  
‘wind and rain, than a chestnut is of meat; who were out  
not only in °75 and 1812, bat have been out every day of  
their lives; greater men than Homer, or Chaucer, or  
Shakespeare, only they never got time to say #0; they  
never took to the way of writing. Look at their fields,  
‘and imagine what they might write, if ever they should put  
pen to paper. Or what have they not written on the face  
of the earth already, clearing, and burning, and seratch-  
ing, and harrowing, and ploughing, and subsoiling, in and  
in, and out and out, and over and over, again and again,  
‘erasing what they had already written for want of  
parchment.  
  
As yesterday and the historical ages are past, as the  
work of to-day is present, so some fitting perspectives,

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conconD Riven. 18  
  
‘and demi-experiences of the Tife thet is ia nature are in  
time veritably future, or rather outside to time, peren-  
nial, young, divine, in the wind and rain which never  
die.  
  
‘The respeotable folks, —  
  
Where dwell they?  
  
‘They whisper inthe oaks,  
  
‘And they agh fo the bay  
  
‘Summer and winter, night and day,  
Out onthe meadow, there dwell they.  
‘They never die,  
  
[Nor anil, nor ory,  
  
[Nor ask ont pty  
  
‘With a wet eye,  
  
‘A ound state they over mend,  
  
‘To evry aaker readily ld  
  
‘To the ocean wealth,  
  
To the mendow healt,  
  
‘To Time his length,  
  
‘To the rocks strength,  
  
‘To the star ght,  
  
‘To the weary night,  
  
To the busy day,  
  
‘To the ide play;  
  
‘And to thelr od cheer never end,  
‘oral are their debtors, and all their fonds  
  
   
  
Concord River is remarkable for the gentleness of its  
‘current, which is scarcely perceptible, and some have re-  
ferred to its influence the proverbial moderation of the  
inbabitants of Concord, as exhibited in the Revolution,  
and on later occasions. It has been proposed, that the  
town should adopt for its coat of arms a field verdant, with  
the Concord circling nine times round. Ihave read that  
‘a descent of an eighth of an inch in a mile is sufficient to  
Produce a flow. Our river has, probably, very near the  
smallest allowance. The story is current, at any rate,  
though I believe that strict history will not bear it out,

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uu conconD niver.  
  
that the only bridge ever carried away on the main  
branch, within the limits of the town, was driven up  
stream by the wind. But. wherever it makes a sudden  
bend itis shallower and ewifter, and dsserts its ttle to be  
called a river. Compared with the other tributaries of  
the Merrimack, it appears to have been properly named  
‘Musketaquid, or Meadow River, by the Indians. For  
the most part, it creeps through broad meadows, adorned,  
with scattered oaks, where the cranberry is found in  
abundance, covering the ground like a moss-bed. A  
row of sunken dwarf willows borders the stream on one  
or both sides, while at a greater distance the meadow  
skirted with maples, aldere, and other fluviatile trees,  
overran with the grape-vine, which bears fruit in its  
season, purple, red, white, and other grapes. Still far-  
ther from the stream, on the edge of the firm land, are  
seen the gray and white dwellings of the inhabitants.  
According to the valuation of 1881, there were in Con-  
cord two thousand one hundred and eleven acres, oF  
about one seventh of the whole territory in meadow  
  
this standing next in the list ater pasturage and uni  
proved lands, and, judging from the returns of previous  
years, the mendow is not reclaimed 60 fast as the woods  
fare cleared.  
  
Let us here read what old Johnson says of these  
‘meadows in his Wonder-working Providence,” which  
gives the account of New England from 1626 to 1652,  
land see how matters looked to him. He says of the  
‘Twelfth Church of Christ gathered at Concord: This  
town is seated upon a fair fresh river, whose rivulets are  
filled with fresh marsh, and her streams with fish, it be-  
ing a branch of that large river of Merrimack, All  
wifes and shad in their season come up to this town, but

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coNconD RIVER. 15  
  
sslmon and dace cannot come up, by reason of the rocky  
falls, which causeth their meadows to lie much covered  
with water, the which these people, together with their  
neighbor town, have several times essayed to cut through  
but cannot, yet it may be turned another way with an  
hhundred pound charge as it appeared.” As to their  
farming he says: “Having laid out their estate upon  
cattle at 5 10 20 pound a com, when they came to winter  
them with inland hay, and feed upon such wild fother  
as was never cut before, they could not hold out the  
winter, but, ordinarily the first or second year after  
their coming up toa new plantation, many of their cat-  
tle died” And this from the same author “Of tho  
‘Planting of the 19th Church in the Mattachusets? Gov-  
emment, called Sudbury ”: “This year [does he mean  
1654] the town and church of Christ at Sudbury began  
to have the first foundation stones ‘up her  
station in the inland country, as her elder sister Concord  
hhad formerly done, lying further up the same river,  
being furnished with great plenty of fresh marsh, but,  
it lying very low is much indamaged with land floods  
insomuch that when the summer proves wet they lose  
part of their hay; yet are they so sufficiently provided  
that they take in cattle of other towns to winter.”  
  
‘The sluggish artery of the Concord meadows steals  
thus unobserved through the town, without a murmur  
for a pulse-beat, its general course from southwest. to  
northeast, and its length aboot fifty miles ; a huge vol-  
ume of matter, ceaselessly rolling through the plains  
‘and valleys of the substantial earth with the moceasoned  
tread of an Indian warrior, making haste from the high  
places of the earth to its ancient reservoir. ‘The mur  
‘murs of many a famous river on the other side of the

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16 coxcorD RIVER.  
  
globe reach even to us here, as to more distant dwell  
ers on its banks; many a poet’s stream floating the  
Iielins and shields of heroes on its bosom. ‘The Xanthus  
or Seamander is not a mere dry channel and bed of a  
‘mountain torrent, but fed by the everflowing springs of  
fame ;—  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
And thoa Simo, that aan arrows clere  
‘Throogh Troy reanes, sie downward to the sa”  
and I trust that I may be allowed to associate our maddy  
but much abused Concord River with the most farmous  
in history.  
  
   
  
“Sure there are poeta which did never dream  
‘Upon Parnanas, nor di ate the ream  
Of Helicon; we therefore may suppose  
‘Thowe made not poets, but the poet hore!”  
  
‘The Mississippi, the Ganges, and the Nile, those jour  
neying atoms from the Rocky Mountains, the Himmaleh,  
and Mountains of the Moon, have a kind of personal  
importance in the annals of the world. ‘The heavens  
are not yet drained over their sourers, but the Moun-  
tnins of the Moon still send their annual tribute to the  
Pasha without fail, as they did to the Pharaohs, though  
he mast collest the rest of his revenue at the point of  
the sword. Rivers must have been the guides which  
conducted the footsteps of the first travellers. ‘They aro  
the constant lure, when they flow by our doors, to dis=  
‘ant enterprise and adventure, and, by a natural impulse,  
the dvellers on their banks will at length accompany  
their currents to the lowlands of the globe, or explore  
at their invitation the interior of continents. ‘They are  
the natural highways of all nations, not only levelling  
the ground and removing obstacles from the path of the  
traveller, quenching his thirst and bearing him on their

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coxcorD Riven. 7  
  
‘bosoms, but conducting him through the most interesting  
scenery, the most populous portions of the globe, and  
where the animal and vegetable kingdoms attain their  
greatest perfection.  
  
Thad often stood on the banks of the Concord, watch-  
{ng the lapse of the current, an emblem of all progress,  
following the same law with the system, with time, ant  
all that is made; the weeds at the bottom gently bend-  
ing down the stream, shaken by the watery wind, sill  
planted where their seeds had sunk, but erelong to die  
and go down likewise; the shining pebbles, not yet anx-  
ious to better their condition, the chips and weeds, and  
‘occasional logs and stems of trees that floated pas, fufil-  
ling their fate, were objects of singular interest to me,  
‘and at last I resolved to launch myself on its bosom and  
float whither it would bear me.

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Google

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SATURDAY.  
  
ome ome my lvey fl, dt wey  
‘Phe rraaeacin”  
‘Christ's Inetation tothe Sout. Qeumian,

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Google

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SATURDAY.  
  
At length, on Saturday, the last day of August, 1889,  
‘we two, brothers, and natives of Concord, weighed an-  
chor in this river port for Concord, too, lies under the  
sun, a port of entry and departure for the bodies as well  
1s the souls of men; one shore at least exempted from  
all duties but such as an honest man will gladly dis-  
charge. A warm drizzling rain had obscured the  
morning, and threatened to delay our voyage, but a!  
Jength the leaves and grass were dried, and it came out  
‘a mild afternoon, as serene and fresh as if Nature were  
maturing some greater scheme of her own. After this  
long dripping and oozing from every pore, she began to  
respire again more healthily than ever. So with a vig-  
‘orous shove we launched our boat from the bank, while  
the flags and bulrushes courtesiod a God-speed, and  
ropped silently down the stream.  
  
Our boat, which had cost us a week's labor in the  
spring, wes in form like a fisherman's dory, fifteen feet  
long by three and s half in breadth at the widest part,  
painted green below, with a border of blue, with refer  
fence to the two elements in which it was to spend its  
existence. It had been londed the evening before at  
our door, half a mile from the river, with potatoes and  
melons from a patch which we had cultivated, and a few  
atensila, and was provided with whecls in order to be

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22 A WEEE.  
  
rolled around falls, as well as with two sets of oars, and.  
teveral slender poles for shoving in shallow places, and  
also two masts, one of which served for a tent-pole at  
night; for a buffaloskin was to be our bed, and a tent  
  
   
  
‘of cotton cloth our roof. It was strongly built, but  
heavy, and hardly of better model then usual. If right  
ly made, 2 boat would be a sort of amphibious animal,  
‘a creature of two elements, related by one half ite struc-  
ture to some swift and shapely fish, and by the other to  
some strong-winged and graceful bird. The fish shows  
where there should be the greatest breadth of beam and  
depth in the hold; its fins direct where to sett  
and the tail gives some hint for the form and position of  
the rudder. ‘The bird shows how to rig and trim the  
sails, and what form to give to the prow that it may  
Dalance the boat, and divide the air and water best.  
‘These hints we had but partially obeyed. But the  
‘eyes, though they are no sailors, will never be satisfied  
with any model, however fashionable, which does not  
answer all the requisitions of ar. However, as art is  
all of a ship but the wood, and yet the wood alone will  
rudely serve the purpose of a ship, 80 our boat, being  
of wood, gladly availed itself of thé old law that the  
heavier shall float the lighter, and though a dull water-  
fowl, proved a sufficient buoy for our purpose.  
“Wert the will of Heaven, an one Boog  
‘Were rete auf enough the ses to plough."  
  
Some village friends stood upon a promontory lower  
down the stream to wave us a Inst farewell; but we,  
hhaving already performed these shore rites, with exeus-  
able reserve, a8 befits those who are emburked on un  
‘usual enterprises, who behold but speak not, silently  
glided paat the frm lands of Concord, both peopled cape

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sarurDar. 23.  
  
and lonely summer meadow, with steady sweeps. And  
yet we did unbend so far as to let our guns speak for us,  
‘when at length we had swept out of eight, and thus left  
the woods to ring again with their echoes; and it may  
‘be many russet-clad children, lurking .in those brosd  
meadows, with the bittern and the woodcock and the  
rail, though wholly concealed ‘by brakes and hardback  
and meadow-sweet, heard our salate that afternoon.  
  
‘We were soon floating past the first regular battle-  
ground of the Revolution, resting on our oare between  
the still visible abutments of that “ North Bridge,” over  
which in April, 1775, rolled th first faint tide of that  
‘war, which ceased not, till, as we read on the stone on  
our right, it \* gave peace to these United States.” As  
Concord poet has sung :—  
  
\* By tho rade bridge that arched th food,  
"Their fag to April's breeze unfurled,  
  
ere once the embattled farmers stood,  
‘Aad fred the shot heard round the world.  
  
"The foe long since i silence slept;  
  
   
  
   
  
‘Down the dark stream which seaward creep.”  
  
Our reflections had already acquired a historical re-  
‘moteness from the scenes we had left, and we ourselves  
essayed to sing.  
  
‘Ab, taf ain the peneafl din  
‘That wakes the igooble town,  
  
Not thus did braver apiria win  
‘A patriots reaowa.  
  
‘There fn on eld beside this stream,  
‘Wherein no fot does fall  
  
Bat yet it benreth in my dream  
‘Arie erop thas all

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2 A WEEK.  
  
Lat me believe n dream so dea,  
  
‘Some heartbeat high that day,  
Above the pety Province here,  
“And Britain far aay 5,  
  
Some hero ofthe aneient mould,  
Some arm of koightly worth,  
  
‘Ofstreogth unbought, and fat unsold,  
‘Honore ths epot of exrth;  
  
‘Who sought the prize bls heart deserfbod,  
‘id nt ke rolenas,  
Whoee freo-bora valor was not bribed  
By prospect of pence.  
  
   
  
‘The man who stood on yonder height  
‘Thatday ae log sce gone;  
  
[Not the same hand directa the ght  
“And monumental stone  
  
‘Yo wore the Grocian sitio thea,  
“The Romes of modern birth,  
  
Whore the New England hnsbendmen  
‘Have shown & Roman worth-  
  
   
  
Tn ran I eorch «foreign end.  
"To od our Bunker Hil,  
  
‘And Lexington and Concord stand  
By n0 Lacooian ri  
  
‘With such thoughts we swept gently by this now  
peaceful pasture-ground, on waves of Concord, in which  
‘was long since drowned the din of war.  
  
Bat wince we saled  
Some things have filed,  
‘And many a dream  
‘Gone down the stream.  
  
ore then an aged shepherd dwelt  
‘Who to his lock bis substance deat,

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SATURDAY. Py  
  
‘And raled them with a vigorous erook,  
By precept ofthe sacred Book  
Bathe the plorles bridge passe o'er,  
‘Aud solitary lft the shore.  
  
Anon & youthfal pastor came,  
‘Whoee erooe mas not unknown to fame,  
“ls lamba bo viewed with gente glance,  
Spread o'er the countrys wide expanse,  
‘And fed with Moses from the Manse.”  
‘ere was our Hawthorne in the dale,  
  
‘And here the sbephord told is tale.  
  
‘That slight shaft, had now sunk bebind the hills, and  
‘wo had floated round the neighboring bend, and under  
the new North Bridge between Ponkawtasset and the  
  
Poplar Hill, into the Great Meadows, which, li  
  
broad  
  
   
  
‘moceason print, have levelled a fertile and juicy place in  
  
nature.  
  
(On Pookawtaae, since, we tok oar way,  
Down this atl stream to far Bilerioay,  
  
A poot wise ha settled, whove fine ray  
Doth often shine on Concord’ twilight day.  
  
[Like thove frat stars, whe aller beams on high,  
Shining more brightly as the day goes by,  
  
‘Moat trevellare cannot a fist dsery,  
  
‘Bt eye that woot to range th evesing ky,  
  
‘And now eslestial light, do plainly se,  
  
‘And gladly hall them, numbering two or three;  
For lore thats deep must deeply studied be,  
‘As from deep wells men reed star-pootry.  
  
‘Theao star are nover pale, thong out of tight,  
Bat like tho sun they shine forever bright;  
“Ay, they are rans though earth must ints fight  
Pot oat its oye that it may so their light.  
  
‘Who would neglect the lout celestial sound,  
(Or fantot light that falls on earthly ground,  
2

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26 A WEEK.  
  
Ihe could know it one day wonld be found  
‘That atar in Cyqans whither we are bound,  
‘And pale our sun with heavenly radianco round?  
  
Gradually the village murmur subsided, and we seemed  
to be embarked on the placid current of our dreams,  
floating from past to future as silently as one awakes to  
fresh morning or evening thoughts. We glided n:  
lesaly down the stream, occasionally driving a pickerel  
or a bream from the covert of the pads, and the smaller  
Dittern now and then sailed away on sluggish wings from  
some recess in the shore, or the larger lifted itself out of  
the long grass at our approach, and carried its precious  
legs away to deposit them in a place of safety. ‘The  
tortoises also rapidly dropped into the water, as our  
Doat rufiled the surface amid the willows, breaking the  
reflections of the trees. ‘The banks bad passed the  
height of their beauty, and some of the brighter flowers  
showed by their faded tints that the season was verging  
towards the afternoon of the year; but this sombre tinge  
‘enhanced their sincerity, and in the still unabated heats  
they seemed like the mosey brink of some cool well. ‘The  
narrow-leaved willow (Saliz Purshiana) lay along the  
surface of the water in masses of light green foliage, in-  
terspersed with the large balls of the button-bush. ‘The  
small rose-colored polygonum raised ita head proudly  
fabove the water on either hand, and flowering at this  
reason and in these localities, in front of dense fields of  
the white species which skirted the sides of the stream,  
its little streak of red looked very rare and precious.  
‘The pure white blossoms of the arrow-head stood in the  
thallower parts, and a few cardinals on the margin still  
proudly rurveyed themselves reflected in the water,  
though the latter, as well asthe pickerel-weed, was now

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SATURDAT. 27  
  
nearly out of blossom. ‘The snake-head, Ohelone glabra,  
grew close to the shore, while a kind of coreopsis, turn-  
ing its brazen face to the sun, full and rank, and a tall  
dull red flower, Eupatorium purpureum, or trumpet=  
weed, formed the rear rank of the fluvial array. The  
bright blue flowers of the soap-wort gentian were  
sprinkled here and there in the adjacent meadows, like  
flowers which Proserpine had dropped, and still farther  
in the fields or higher on the bank were seen the parple  
Gerardia, the Virginian rhexia, and drooping neottia or  
ldies'-tresses; while from the more distant waysides  
‘which we occasionally passed, and banks where the sun  
hhad lodged, was reflected still a dull yellow beam from  
the ranks of tansy, now pastits prime. In short, Nature  
seemed to have adored herself for our departure with  
1 profusion of fringes and curls, mingled with the bright  
tints of flowers, reflected in the water. But we missed  
the white waterdily, which is the queen of river flowers,  
its reign being over for this season. He makes his  
voyage t00 late, perhaps, by a true water clock who  
delays 20 long. Many of this species inhabit our Con-  
cord water. I have passed down the river before  
sunrise on a tummer morning between fields of lilies  
shut in sleep; and when, nt length, the flakes of  
sunlight from over the bank fell on the surface of the  
‘water, whole fields of white blossoms seemed to flash  
‘open before me, as I floated along, like the unfolding of  
1a banner, so sensible is this lower to the influence of the  
  
"As se wipe ial aug el ano sa  
miliar meadows, we observed the large and conspicuous  
flowers of the hibiscus, covering the dwarf willows,  
and mingled with the leaves of the grape, and wished

Page-7508

28 a ween.  
  
that we could inform one of our friends bebind of the  
locality of this somewhat rare and inaccessible flower  
before it was too Inte to pluck its but we were just  
  
iding out of sight of the village spire before it oc-  
‘curred to us that the farmer in the adjacent meadow  
‘would go to church on the morrow, and would carry  
‘this news for us; and so by the Monday, while we  
should be floating on the Merrimack, our friend would  
be reaching to pluck this blossom on the bank of the  
Concord.  
  
‘After a pause at Ball's Hill, the St Ann’s of Con-  
‘cord voyageurs, not to say any prayer for the success  
‘of our voyage, but 0 gather the few berries which  
‘were ill left on the bills, hanging by very slender  
‘threads, we weighed anchor again, and were soon out  
of sight of our native village. ‘The land seemed to  
grow fairer as we withdrew from it, Far away to  
the southwest lay the quiet village, left alone under  
its elms and buttonwoods in mid afternoon ; and the  
hill, notwithstanding their blue, ethereal faces, seemed  
to cast a saddened eye on their old playfellows; bat,  
turning short to the north, we bade adieu to their  
familiar outlines, and addressed ourselves to new scenes  
‘and adventures. Naught was familiar but the heavens,  
from under whose roof the voyageur never passes;  
Dut with their countenance, and the acquaintance we  
hhad with river and wood, we trusted to fare well under  
‘any circumstances.  
  
From this point, the ‘river runs perfectly straight  
for a mile or more to Carlisle Bridge, which consists  
of twenty wooden piers, and when we looked back  
over it, its surface was reduced to a line's breadth,  
and appeared like @ cobweb gleaming in the sun.

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‘saruRDAr. 29  
  
Hero and there might be seen « pole sticking up, to  
mark the place where some fisherman bad enjoyed  
unusual Tuck, and in return had consecrated his rod  
to the deitios who preside over these shallows. Tt was  
fall twice as broad as before, deep and tranquil, with  
‘a muddy bottom, and bordered with willows, beyond  
which spread broad lagoons covered with pads, bul-  
rushes, and flags.  
  
Late in the afternoon we passed @ man on the  
shore fishing with a long birch pole, its silvery bark  
eft on, and @ dog.at his side, rowing s0 near os to  
agitate his cork with our oars, and drive away luck  
for a season; and when we hed rowed a mile as  
straight as an arrow, with our faces tuned towards him,  
and the bubbles in our wake still visible on the tranquil  
surface, there stood the fisher still with his dog, like  
statues under the other side of the heavens, the only  
objecta to relieve the eye in the extended meadow ;  
‘and thero would he stand abiding bis tuck, till he took  
his way home through the ficlds at evening with his  
fab. "Thus, by ono bait or another, Nature allures  
‘inhabitants into all her recesses. ‘This man was the  
last of our townamen whom we saw, and wo silently  
through him bede adieu to our ftiends.  
  
‘Tho characteristics and pursuits of various ages and  
races of men are always existing in epitome in every  
neighborhood. The pleasures of my earliest youth  
hhave become the inheritance of other men. ‘This man  
is still fisher, and belongs to an era in which I my-  
self have lived. Perchance he is not confounded by  
many knowledges, and has not sought out many in-  
ventions, but how to take many fishes before the sun

Page-7510

30 A Ween.  
  
   
  
ets, with his slender birchen pole and flaxen line,  
that is invention enough for him. It is good even to  
bbe a fisherman in summer and in winter. Some men  
fare judges these August days, sitting on benches, even.  
{ill the court rises; they sit judging there honorably,  
between the seasons and between meals, leadiog @  
politic life, arbitrating in the case of Spaulding  
versus Cummings, it may be, from highest noon till  
the red vesper sinks into the west. ‘The fisherman,  
meanwhile, stands in three fect of water, under the  
same summer's gun, arbitrating in other cases between  
muckworm and shiner, amid the fragrance of water,  
lilies, mint, and pontederia, leading his life many rode  
from the dry land, within a pole's length of where  
the larger fishes swim. Human life is to him very  
much like a river,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
“rennig ale downward to the sea”  
  
‘This was his observation. His honor made a great  
discovery in bailments.  
  
I can just remember an old brown-coated man who  
‘was tho Walton of this stream, who had come over  
from Newcastle, England, with bis son,— the latter  
f stout and hearty man who hed lifted an anchor in  
his day. A straight old man he was who took his  
way in silence through the meadows, having passed  
the period of communication with his fellows: his old  
experienced coat, hanging long and straight and brown  
as the yellow-pine bark, glittering with so much smoth=  
ered sunlight, if you stood near enough, no work of  
art but naturalized at length. I often discovered him  
unexpectedly amid the pads and the gray willows  
when he moved, fishing in some old country method,

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sarunpar. 81  
  
—for youth and age then went a fishing together, —  
full of incommanicable thoughts, perchance about his  
‘own Tyne and Northumberland. He was always to  
be seen in serene afternoons haunting the river, and  
‘almost rustling with the sedge; so many sunny hours  
in an old man's life, entrapping silly fish; almost  
grown to be the san’s familiar; what need had he of  
hat or raiment any, having served out his time, and  
seen through such thin disguises? I have seen how.  
hhis coeval fates rewarded him with the yellow perch,  
and yet I thought his luck was not in proportion to  
hhis years; and I have seen when, with slow steps  
‘and weighed down with aged thoughts, he disappeared  
with his fish under his low-roofed house on the skirts  
‘of the village. I think nobody else saw him; nobody  
else remembers him now, for he soon after died, and  
migrated to new Tyne streams. His fishing was not  
‘8 sport, nor solely a means of subsistence, but a sort  
of solemn sacrament and withdrawal from the world,  
just as the aged read their Bibles.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Whether wo live by the seaside, or by the lakes  
‘and rivers, or on the prairie, it concerns us to attend  
to the nature of fishes, since they are not phenomena  
confined to certain localities only, but forms and phases  
of the life in nature universally dispersed. The count  
Jess shoals which annually coast the shores of Europe  
fand America are not so interesting to the student of  
nature, as the more fertile law itself, which deposits  
their spawn on the tops of mountains, and on the  
interior plains; the fish principle in nature, from which  
it results that they may be found in water in so many  
places, in greater or less numbers. ‘The natural his-

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82 A were,  
  
torian is not a fisherman, who prays for cloudy days  
and good luck merely, but as fishing has been styled  
“a contemplative man’s recreation,” introducing him  
profitably to woods and water, so the fruit of the  
naturaliat’s obsetvations is not in new genera or species,  
but in new contemplations still, and science is only a  
more contemplative man's recreation. ‘The seeds of  
the life of fishes are everywhere disseminated, whether  
the winds waft them, or the waters float them, or the  
deep earth holds thems wherever @ pond is dug,  
straightway it is stocked with this vivacious race.  
‘They have a lease of nature, and it is not yet out.  
‘The Chinese are bribed to carry their ova from prov-  
ince to province in jars or in hollow reeds, or the  
waterbirds to transport them to the mountain tarns  
and interior lakes. ‘There are fishes wherever there  
is a fiuid medium, and even in clouds and in melted  
metals we detect their semblance. ‘Think how in  
winter you can sink a line down straight in a pase  
ture through snow and through ice, and pull up a  
bright, slippery, dumb, subterranean silver or golden  
fish! It is curious, also, to reflect how they make  
one family, from the largest to the em The  
Jeast minnow that lies on the ice as bait for pickerel,  
Tooks like a huge sea-ish cast up on the shore. In  
the waters of this town there are about @ dozen dis  
tinet species, though the inexperienced would expect  
‘many more,  
  
   
  
   
  
It enhances our sense of the grand security and se-  
renity of nature, to observe the still undisturbed econ-  
‘omy and content of the fishes of this century, their hap-  
ppiness a regular fruit of the summer. The Fresh-Wa-

Page-7513

sarorpar. 93  
  
ter Sun-Fish, Bream, or Ruff, Pomotis vulgaris, as it  
‘were, without ancestry,  
the Fresh-Water Sun-Fish in nature. It is the most  
common of all, and seen on every urchin’s string; a  
simple and inoffensive fish, whose nests are visible all  
‘along the shore, hollowed in the eand, over which it is  
steadily poised through the summer hours on waving  
fin, Sometimes there are twenty or thirty nests in the  
‘space of a few rods, two feet wide by half a foot in  
depth, and made with no little labor, the weeds being  
removed, and the sand shoved up on the sides, like a  
bowl. Here it may be seen early in summer assiduous-  
ly brooding, and driving away minnows and larger  
fishes, even its own species, which would disturb its  
ova, pursuing them afew feet, and circling round swift-  
ly to its nest again: the minnows, like young sharks,  
instantly entering the empty nests, meanwhile, and  
swallowing the spawn, which is attached to the weeds  
fand to the bottom, on the sunny side. ‘The spawn is  
exposed to 0 many dangers, that a very small propor-  
tion can ever become fishes, for beside being the con-  
stant prey of birds and fishes, a great many nests are  
made so near the shore, in shallow water, that they are  
left dry in a few days, as the river goes down. ‘These  
and the Iamprey’s are the ooly fishes’ nests that I have  
observed, though the ova of some species may be seen  
floating on the surface. ‘The breams are 60 careful of  
their charge that you may stand close by in the water  
and examine them at your leisure. I have thus stood  
over them half an hour at a time, and stroked them fa-  
miliarly without frightening them, suffering them to nib-  
ble my fingers harmlessly, and seen them erect their  
  
dorsal fins in anger when my hand approached their  
2° °

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3 A ween.  
  
‘ova, and have even taken them gently out of the water  
with my hand; though this cannot be accomplished by  
‘8 sudden movement, however dexterous, for instant  
‘warning is conveyed to them through their denser elo-  
ment, but only by letting the fingers gradually close  
‘about them as they are poised over the palm, and with  
the utmost gentleness raising them slowly ta the rurface.  
‘Though stationary, they keep up a constant sculling or  
waving motion with their fins, which ix exceedingly  
graceful, and expressive of their humble happiness 5  
for unlike ours, the element in which they live is a  
stream which must be constantly resisted. From time  
to time they nibble the weeds at the bottom or over-  
hanging their nests, or dart after a fly or a worm. ‘The  
dorsal fin, besides anawering the purpose of a keel, with  
the anal, serves to keep the fsb upright, for in shallow  
‘water, where this is not covered, they fall on their sides.  
‘As you stand thus stooping over the bream in its nest,  
the edges of the dorsal and caudal fins have a singular  
dusty golden reflection, and its eyes, which stand out  
from the head, are transparent and colorless. Seen in  
its native element, it is a very beautiful and compact  
fish, perfect in all its parts, and looks like a brilliant  
in fresh from the mint. It is perfect jewel of the  
river, the green, red, coppery, and golden reflections of  
its mottled sides being the concentration of such rays as  
struggle through the floating pads and flowers to the  
sandy bottom, and in harmony with the sunlit brown,  
and yellow pebbles, Behind its watery shield it dwells  
far from many accidents inevitable to buman Ii  
  
‘Thore is also another species of bream found in our  
thout the red spot on the operculum, which, ae-  
‘cording to M. Agassiz, is undescribed.

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satuRpAr. 35  
  
   
  
‘The Common Perch, Perea flavescens, w  
Aescribes well the gleaming, golden refl  
scales as itis drawn out of the water, its red gills stand-  
{ng out in vain in the thin element, is one of the hand~  
somest and most regularly formed of our fishes, and at  
‘such a moment as this reminds us of the fish in the pic-  
ture which wished to be restored to its native element  
until it had grown larger ; and indeed most of this spe-  
cies that are caught are not half grown. In the ponds  
there is a light-colored and slender kind, which swim in  
shoals of many hundreds in the sunny water, in com=  
pany with the shiner, averaging not more than six or  
seven inches in length, while only a few larger speci  
‘mens are found in the deepest water, which prey upon  
their weaker brethren. I have often attracted these  
small perch to the shore at evening, by rippling the  
water with my fingers, and they may sometimes be  
‘caught while attempting to pass inside your hands. Tt  
is tough and heediess fish, biting from impulse, with-  
ut nibbling, and from impulse refraining to bite, and  
seulling indifferently past. It rather prefers the clear  
water and sandy bottoms, though here it has not much  
choice. It is @ true fsb, such as the angler loves to put  
into bis basket or hang at the top of his willow twig, in  
shady sfternoons along the banks of the stream. So  
many unquestionable fishes he counts, and so many  
shiners, which he counts and then throws away, Old  
<Josselyn in bis “New England's Rarities,” published in  
1672, mentions the Perch or River Partridge.  
  
The Chivin, Dace, Roach, Cousin Trout, or whatever  
lee it is called, Leuciseus pulchellus, white and red, al-  
‘ways an unexpected prize, which, however, any angler  
is glad to hook for itsrarity. A name that reminds us of

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36 A ween.  
  
many an unsuccessful ramble by swift streanis, when  
the wind rose to disappoint the fisher. It is commonly  
fa silvery softcaled fish, of graceful, scholarlike, and  
classical look, like many a picture in an English book.  
It loves a swift current and a sandy bottom, and bites  
inadvertently, yet not without appetite for the bait.  
‘The minnows are used as bait for pickerel in the winter.  
‘Tho red chivin, according to some, is still the same fish,  
only older, or with its tints deepened as they think by  
the darker water it inhabits, as the red clouds swim in  
the twilight atmosphere, He who has not hooked the  
red chivin is not yet a complete angler. Other fishes,  
methinks, are slightly amphibious, but this is a denizen  
of the water wholly. The cork goes dancing down the  
swiftrushing stream, amid the weeds and sands, when  
suddenly, by a coincidence never to be remembered,  
emerges this fabulous inhabitant of another element, &  
thing heard of but not seen, as if it were the in-  
stant creation of an eddy, a true product of the run-  
ring stream. And this bright eapreous dolphin was  
spawned and has passed its life beneath the level of your  
feet in your native fields. Fishes too, as well as birds  
and clouds, derive their armor from the mine. I have  
heard of mackerel visiting the copper banks at a par-  
ticular season 5 this fish, perchance, has its habitat in  
the Coppermine River. I have caught white chivin of  
great size in the Aboljacknagesic, where it empties into  
the Penobscot, at the base of Mount Ktaadn, but no  
red ones there. The latter variety seems not to have  
been sufficiently observed.  
  
The Dace, Leueiscus argenteus, is a slight silvery  
minnow, found generally in the middle of the stream,  
where the current is most rapid, and frequently con-  
founded with the last named,

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saturDar. 37  
  
‘The Shiner, Leuciscus erysolmicas, id a soft-acaled and  
tender fish, the victim of its stronger neighbors, found in  
all places, deep and shallow, clear and turbid ; generally.  
the first nibbler at the bait, bt, with its small mouth and.  
Ttis a gold or  
its limber tail  
srface in sport or flight. I have seen the  
fry, when frightened by something thrown into the water,  
leap out by dozens, together with the dace, and wreck  
themselves upon a floating plank, It is the little light-  
{infant of the river, with body armor of gold or silver  
spangles, slipping, gliding its life through with a quirk  
‘of tho tail, half in tho water, half in the sir, upward  
and ever upward with fitting fin to more crystalline  
tides, yet still abreast of us dwellers on the bank. It is  
almost dissolved by the summer heats, A slighter and  
lighter colored shiner is found in one of our ponds.  
‘The Pickerel, Broz reticulatus, the swiftest, wariest,  
and most ravenous of fishes, which Josselyn calls the  
‘Fresh-Water or River Wolf, is very common in the shal-  
ow and weedy lagoons along the sides of the stream.  
It is a solemn, stately, ruminant fish, lurking under the  
shadow of a pad at noon, with still, circumspect, vo-  
acious eye, motionless sa jewel set in water, oF  
moving slowly along to take up its position, darting  
from time to time at such unlacky fish or frog or insect  
3 comes within its range, and swallowing it at a gulp.  
T have caught ono which had swallowed a brother  
pickerel helf as large as itself, with the tail still visible  
in ita mouth, while the head was already digested in its  
stomach. Sometimes a striped enake, bound to greener  
meadows across the stream, ends its undulatory pro-  
‘gress in the same receptable, ‘They are so greedy and

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38 A ween.  
  
impetuous that they are frequently caught by being en-  
tangled in the line the moment it is cast. Fishermen  
also distinguish the brook pickerel, a shorter and thicker  
fish than the former.  
  
The Horned Pout, Pimelodus nebulosus, sometimes  
called Minister, from the peculiar squeaking noice  
it makes when drawn out of the water, isa dull and  
blundering fellow, and like the eel vespertinal in his  
habits, and fond of the mud. It bites deliberately as  
if about its business. ‘They are taken at night with  
‘a mass of worms strung on a thread, which catches  
in their teeth, sometimes three or four, with an eel, at  
one pull. They are extremely tenacious of life, open  
ing and shutting their mouths for half an hour after  
their heads have been cut off A bloodthirsty and  
bullying race of rangers, inhabiting the fertile river  
bottoms, with ever a lance in rest, and ready to do battle  
with their nearest neighbor. I have observed them in  
summer, when every otler one had a long and bloody  
scar upon his back, where the skin was gone, the mark,  
perhaps, of some fierce encounter. Sometimes the fry,  
not an inch long, are seen darkening the shore with  
their myriads.  
  
‘The Suckers, Catostomi Bostonienses and tubereulati,  
‘Common and Horned, perhaps on an average the largest  
of our fishes, may be seen in shoals of hundred or  
‘more, stemming the current in the sun, on their mysteri~  
‘ous migrations, and sometimes sucking in the bait which  
the fisherman suffers to float toward them. ‘The for-  
mer, which sometimes grow to a large size, are frequent-  
ly caught by the hand in the brooks, or like the red  
chivin, are jerked out by a hook fastened firmly to the  
end of a stick, and placed under their jaws. ‘They are

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SATURDAY. 39  
  
hardly known to the mere angler, however, not often  
Diting at his baits, though the spearer carries home  
many a mess in the spring. To our village eyes, these  
shoals have a foreign and imposing aspect, realizing the  
fertility of the seas.  
  
‘The Common Eel, too, Murena Bostoniensis, the only  
species of eel known in the State, a slimy, squirming  
creature, informed of mud, still equirming in the pan,  
is speared and hooked up with various success, Me~  
thinks it too occurs in picture, left after the deluge,  
in many a meadow high and ary.  
  
In the shallow parts of the river, where the current  
is rapid, and the bottom pebbly, you may sometimes  
see the curious circular nests of the Lamprey Eel,  
Petromyzon Americans, the American Stone-Sucker,  
fs large as a cart-wheel, a foot or two in height, and  
sometimes rising half a foot above the surface of the  
water. They collect these stones, of the size of a hen's  
‘egg, with their mouths, as their name implies, and are  
‘said to fashion them into circles with their tails. ‘They  
ascend falls by clinging to the stones, which may some-  
times be raised, by lifting the fish by the tail. As they  
‘are not seen on their way down the streams, it is  
thought by fishermen that they never returo, but waste  
away and die, clinging to rocks and stumps of trees for  
fan indefinite period ; a tragic feature in the scenery  
of the river ‘bottoms worthy to be remembered with  
Shakespeare's description of the seafloor. ‘They aro  
rarely seen in our waters at present, on account of the  
dams, though they are taken in great quantities at the  
‘mouth of the river in Lowell. ‘Their nests, which aro  
very conspicuous, look more like art than anything in  
the river.

Page-7520

40 A warn.  
  
If we had leisure this afternoon, we might tum ovr  
prow up the brooks in quest of the classical trout and  
the minnows. Of the last alone, according to M. Agas-  
fiz, several of the species found in this town are yet  
undescribed. ‘These would, perhaps, complete the list  
of our finny contemporaries in the Concord waters.  
Salmon, Shad, and Alewives were formerly abundant  
here, and taken in weirs by the Indians, who taught  
thia method to the whites, by whom they were used as  
food and as manure, until the dam, and afterward the  
canal at Billerica, and the factories at Lowell, put an.  
end to their migrations hitherward ; though it is thought  
that a few more enterprising shed may still occasionally.  
‘be seen in this part of the river. It is said, to account  
for the destruction of the fishery, that those who at that  
time represented the interests of the fishermen and the  
fishes, remembering between what dates they were ac-  
customed to take the grown shad, stipulated, that the  
‘dams should be left open for that season only, and the  
fry, which go down a month later, were consequently:  
stopped and destroyed by myriads. Others say that the  
fish-ways were not properly constructed. Perchance,  
after a few thousands of years, if the fishes will be  
patient, and pass their summers elsewhere, meanwhile,  
nature will have levelled the Billerica dam, and the  
Lowell factories, and the Grase-ground ran clear  
again, to be explored by new migratory shoals, even  
‘a8 far a9 the Hopkinton pond and Westborough swamp.  
‘One would like to know more of that race, now  
‘extinct, whose seines lie rotting in the garrets of their  
children, who openty professed the trade of fishermen,  
and even fed their townsmen oreditably, not skulking  
through the meadows to a rainy afternoon eport. Dim

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sarumpar. a  
  
   
  
ions we still get of miraculous draughts of fishes, and  
heaps uncountable by the river-side, from the tales of  
our seniors sent on horseback in their childhood from  
the neighboring towns, perched on saddle-bags, with  
instructions to get the one bag filled with shad, the other  
with alewives. At least one memento of those days  
‘may atill exist in the memory of this generation, in the  
familiar appellation of celebrated train-band of this  
town, whose untrained ancestors stood creditably at  
Concord North Bridge. ‘Their captain, a man of pisca-  
tory tastes, having duly warned his company to turn out  
on a certain day, they, ike obedient soldiers, appeared  
Promptly on parade at the appointed time, but, unforia-  
nately, they went undrilled, except in the manueevres  
of a soldier's wit and unlicensed jesting, that May day 5  
for their eaptain, forgetting his own appointment, and  
‘warned only by the favorable aspect of the heavens,  
vas he had often done before, went a-fshing that after-  
noon, and his company thenceforth was known to old  
‘and young, grave and gay, as “The Shad,” and by the  
youths of this vicinity this was long regarded as the  
proper name of all the irregular militia in Christendom.  
But, alas! no record of these fishers lives remains that  
we know, unless it be one brief page of hard but un-  
questionable history, which occurs in Day Book No. 4,  
of an old trader of this town, long since dead, which  
shows pretty plainly what constituted a fisherman's  
stock in trade in those days. It purports to be a  
erman’s Account Current, probably for the fishing sea-  
son of the year 1805, during which months he parchased  
daily rom and sugar, sugar and ram, N. E. and W. I,  
“one cod line,” “one brown mug,” and “a line for the  
seine”; rum and sugar, sugar and rum “good loaf

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42 A weer.  
  
sugar,” and “good brown,” W. I. and N. E., in short  
‘and uniform entries to the bottom of the page, all carried  
out in pounds, shillings, and pence, from Bfarch 25th to  
‘June 5th, and prompily settled by receiving “cash in  
full” at the last date, But perhaps not go settled alto-  
gether. ‘These were the necessaries of life in. those  
days ; with salmon, shed, and alewives, fresh and pick-  
led, be was thereafter independent on the groceries.  
Rather preponderance of the fluid elements; but  
‘such is the fisherman's nature. I can faintly remember  
‘to have seen this same fisher in my earliest youth, still  
as near the river as he could get, with uncertain undu-  
latory step, after 90 many things had gone down stream,  
swinging a scythe in the meadow, his bottle like a ser-  
ppent bid in the grass; himself as yet not eut down by  
the Great Mowe  
  
Surely the fates are forever kind, though Nature’  
Jaws are more immutable than any despots, yet toman’s  
daily life they rarely seem rigid, but permit him to  
relax with license in summer weather. He is not  
harshly reminded of the things he may not do. She  
is very kind and liberal to all men of vicious habits, and  
certainly does not deny thein quarter; they do not die  
without priest. Still they maintain life along the way,  
keeping this side the Styx, still hearty, still resolute,  
“never better in their lives”; and again, after a dozen  
‘years have elapeed, they start up from behind a hedge,  
asking for work and wages for able-bodied men Who  
hhas not met such  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
“a beggar on the way,  
Who atudity could gang?  
Who cared neither fr wind nor wet,

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saruRDAr. 43,  
  
“That bold adopts each house he views, his owns  
‘Makes every pase his cbeoquer, andy at pleas,  
Walks forth and taxes all the word, like Cesar"  
  
   
  
1s if consistency were the secret of health, while the  
poor inconsistent aspirant man, seeking to live a pure  
life, feeding on air, divided against himself, cannot  
stand, but pines and dies after a life of sickness, on  
beds of down.  
  
‘The unwise are accustomed to speak as if some were  
not sick; but methinks the difference between men in  
respect to health is not great enough to lay much stress  
upon. Some are reputed sick and some are not. Tt  
often happens that the sicker man is the nurse to the  
sounder.  
  
Shad aro still taken in the basin of Concord River at  
Lowell, where they are said to be a month earlier than  
the Merrimack shad, on account of the warmth of the  
water. Still patiently, almost pathetically, with instinct  
not to be discouraged, not to be reasoned with, revisiting  
their old haunts, as if their stern fates would relent, and.  
still met by the Corporation with its dam. {Poor shad!  
where is thy redress? When Nature gave thee instinct,  
gave she thee the heart to bear thy fate? Still wander-  
ing the ea in thy scaly armor to inguire hambly at the  
‘mouths of rivers if man has perchance left them free for  
thee to enter. By countless shoals loitering uncertain  
‘meanwhile, merely stemming the tide there, in danger  
from sea foes in spite of thy bright armor, awaiting new  
Instructions, until the sands, until the water itself, tell  
theo if it be #0 or not. ‘Thus by whole migrating na-  
‘tions, full of instinct, which is thy faith, in this backward  
spring, turned adrift, and perchance knowest not where  
men do not dwell, where there are not factories, in these

Page-7524

“4 A WEE.  
  
ays. Armed with no sword, no electric shock, but  
mere Shad, armed only with innocence and a just cause,  
‘with tender dumb mouth only forward, and scales easy  
to be detached. I for one am with thee, and who knows  
what may avail a crow-bar against that Billerica dam ?—  
‘Not despairing when whole myrieds have gone to feed  
thote sea monsters duting thy suspense, but still brave,  
indifferent, on easy fin there, like shad reserved for  
higher destinies. Willing to be decimated for man’s  
behoof after the spawning season. Away with the  
superficial and selfish philanthropy of men, — who  
knows what admirable virtue of fishes may be below  
low-water-mark, bearing up agsinst a hard destiny,  
not admired by that fellow-creature who alone can  
appreciate it! Who hears the fishes when they ory?  
Tt will not be forgotten by some memory that we were  
‘contemporaries. ‘Thou shalt erelong bave thy way up  
the rivers, up all the rivers of the globe, if Iam not  
mistaken. Yea, even thy dull watery dream shall be  
more than realized. If it were not so, but thou wert to  
be overlooked at first and at last, then would not I take  
their heaven. Yes, I eay 80, who think I know better  
than thou canst, Keep a stiff fin then, and stem all the  
tides thou mayst meet.  
  
‘At length it would seem that the interests, not of the  
fishes only, but of the men of Wayland, of Sudbury, of  
Concord, demand the levelling of that dam. Innumer-  
able scres of meadow are waiting to be made dry land,  
wild native grass to give place to English. ‘The farmers  
stand with ecythes whet, waiting the subsiding of the  
‘waters, by gravitation, by evaporation or otherwise, but  
sometimes their eyes do not rest, their wheels do not  
roll, on the quaking meadow ground during the haying

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saruRDar. 45  
  
season at all. So many sources of wealth inaccessible.  
‘They rate the loss hereby incurred in the single town of  
‘Wayland alone as equal to the expense of keeping a  
Jhundred yoke of oxen the year round. One year, as I  
learn, not long ago, the farmers standing ready to drive  
their teams afield as usual, the wator gavo no signs of  
falling ; without new attraction in the heavens, without  
freshet or visible cause, still standing stagnant at an  
‘wnprecedented height. All hydrometers were at fault;  
‘some trembled for their English even. But speedy  
emissaries revealed the unnatural secret, in the new  
float-board, wholly a foot in width, added to their al-  
rready too high privileges by the dam proprietors. ‘The  
hundred yoke of oxen, meanwhile, standing pationt, gaz-  
ing wishfully meadowward, at that inaccessible waving  
native grass, uncut but by the great mower Time, who  
cuts s0 broad swathe, without 6o much as a wisp to  
‘wind about their horns,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘That was a long poll from Ball's Hill to Carlisle  
Bridge, sitting with our faces to the south, a slight  
breeze rising from the north, but nevertheless water  
still runs and grass grows, for now, having passed the  
bridge between Carlisle and Bedford, we see men hay-  
ing far off in the meadow, their heads waving like the  
grass which they cut. In the distance the wind seemed  
to bend all alike. As the night stole over, euch a fresh  
ness was wafted across the meadow that every blade of  
‘eat grass seemed to teem with life. Faint purple clouds  
‘began to be reflected in the water, and the cow-bells  
tinkled louder along the banks, while, like sly water-rats,  
we tala long nearer the sore lang Grn place to  
pitch our camp.

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46 A WERK.  
  
At length, when we had made aboat seven miles, as  
far as Billerica, we moored our boat on the west side of  
alittle rising ground which in the spring forms an island  
in the river. Here we found huckleberries still hanging  
upon the bushes, where they seemed to have slowly  
  
ipened for our especial use. Bread and sugar, and  
cocoa boiled in river water, made our repast, and as we  
hhad drank in the fluvial prospect all day, 80 now we took  
‘a draft of the water with our evening meal to pro  
the river gods, and whet our vision for the sight  
to behold. ‘The sun was setting on the one hand, while  
our eminence was contributing its shadow to the night,  
on the other. It seemed insensibly to grow lighter as  
the night shut in, and a distant and solitary farm-house  
‘was revealed, which before lurked in the shadows of the  
noon, ‘There was no other house in sight, nor any cul-  
tivated field. To the right and lef, as far as the horizon,  
were straggling pine woods with their plumes against  
the sky, and across the river were rugged hills, covered  
with shrub oaks, tangled with grape-vines and ivy, with  
here and there a gray rock jutting out from the maze.  
‘The sides of these cliffa, though a quarter of a mile dis-  
tant, were almost heard to rustle while we looked at  
them, it was such a leafy wilderness; place for fauns  
and eatyrs, and where bats hung all day to the rocks, and  
at evening fltted over the water, and fire-lies husbanded  
their light under the grass and leaves against the night.  
‘When we had pitched our tent on the hillside, a few  
rods from the shore, we sat looking through its triangu-  
lar door in the twilight at our lonely mast on the shore,  
Jjust seen above the alders,'and hardly yet come to a  
stand-still from the swaying of the stream ; the first en-  
croachment of commerce on this land. ‘There was our  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
it wos

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SATURDAT. 47  
  
port, our Ostia. ‘That straight geometrical line against  
‘the water and the sky stood for the last refinements of  
civilized life, and what of sublimity there is in history  
was there symbolized,  
  
For the most part, there was no recognition of human  
Jife in the night, no human breathing was heard, only  
the breathing of the wind. As we sat up, kept awake  
by the novelty of our situation, we heard at intervals  
foxes stepping about over the dead leaves, and brushing.  
the dewy grass close to our tent, and once a musquash  
fumbling among the potatoes and melons in our boat, but  
‘when wo hastened to the shore we could detect only a  
ripple in the water rufling the disk of a star. At inter-  
vals we were serenaded by the song of dreaming sparrow  
or the throttled ery of an owl, but after each sound which  
near at band broke the stillness of the night, each crack~  
ling of the twigs, or rustling among the leaves, there was  
‘8 sudden pause, and deeper and more conscious silence,  
as if the intruder were aware that no life was rightfully  
‘abroad at that hour. ‘There was a fre in Lowell, as we  
Judged, this night, and we saw the horizon blazing, and  
heard the distant alarm-bells, as it were a faint tinkling  
music borne to these woods. But the most constant and  
memorable eound of a summer's night, which we did not  
fail to hear every night afterward, though at no time so  
incessantly and s0 favorably as now, was the barking of  
the house-dogs, from the loudest and hoarsest bark to  
the faintest aerial palpitation under the eaves of heaven,  
from the patient but anxious mastiff to the timid and  
‘wakeful terrier, at first loud and rapid, then faint and  
slow, to be imitated only in a whisper ; wow-wow-wow=  
wor—wo—wo—w—w,. Even in a retired and un-  
inhabited district like this it was a sufficiency of sound

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3 a ween.  
  
for the ear of night, and more impressive than any  
music. I have heard the voice of a hound, just before  
Gaylight, while the stars were shining, from over the  
‘woods and river, far in the horizon, when it sounded as  
sweet and melodious as an instrument. The hounding  
of a dog pursuing a fox or other animal in the horizon,  
may have first suggested the notes of the hunting-horn  
to alternate with and relieve the lunge of the dog. ‘This,  
natural bugle long resounded in the woods of the ancient  
‘world before the horn was invented. The very dogs  
‘hat sullenly bay the moon from farm-yards in these  
nights excite more heroism in our breasts than all the  
civil exhortations or war sermons of the age. “I would  
rather be @ dog, and bay the moon,” than many a Ro-  
man that I know, ‘The night is equally indebted to the  
clarion of the cock, with wakeful hope, from the very  
setting of the sun, prematurely ushering in the dawn.  
All these sounds, the crowing of cocks, the baying of  
dogs, and the hum of insects at noon, are the evidence  
‘of nature's health or sound state. Such is the never-  
failing beauty and accuracy of language, the most per-  
fect art in the world ; the chisel of a thousand years  
retouches it  
  
‘At length the antepeoultimate and drowsy hours  
drew on, and all sounds were denied entrance to our  
ears,  
  
‘Who slopa by day and wats by night,  
‘Will mect oo opet but some sprit.

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SUNDAY.  
  
‘the rrr cally toms, -  
‘Through sing bank though loely gen,  
“Where the ot aria, though er the ve of ea  
Har tere at ea,  
‘hun you hou walk thar, you wend other guin™  
‘ona,

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eons el of bean River Tying fart the wath, which they  
a Mersin”  
eon oe Mom, Relations ofthe enue, 1004

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SUNDAY.  
  
In the morning the river and adjacent country were  
covered with a dense fog, through which the smoke of  
our fire curled up like « still subtiler mist; but before  
‘we had rowed many rods, the sun arose and. the fog  
rapidly dispersed, leaving a slight steam only to curl  
‘along the surface of the water. It was a quiet Sunday  
‘morning, with more of the auroral rosy and white than  
of the yellow light in it, as if it dated from earlier than  
the fall of man, and still preserved a heathenish integ-  
a ‘An early unconverted Saint  
  
Free from noontide or eyeing tant,  
  
“Heathen without reproach,  
  
‘That dl apon the civil day encroach,  
‘And ever loos ita birth  
  
‘ad trod the outairaof the earth.  
  
But the impressions which the morning makes vanish  
with its dews, and not even the most persevering mor-  
tal” ean preserve the memory of its freshness to mid-  
day. As we passed tho various islands, or what were  
islands in the spring, rowing with our backs down  
stream, wo gave names to them. The one on which we  
had camped we called Fox Island, and one fine densely  
‘wooded island surrounded by deep water and overran  
by grape-vines, which looked like a mass of verdure  
tod of flowers cast upon the waves, we named Grape

Page-7532

52 A warn.  
  
Island. From Ball's Hill to Billerica meeting-house,  
the river was still twice 08 broad as in Concord, a deep,  
dark, and dead stream, flowing between gentle hills and  
sometimes clifs, and well wooded all the way. It was  
‘8 long woodland lake bordered with willows. For long  
reaches we could see neither house nor cultivated field,  
nor any sign of the vicinity of man. Now we coasted  
‘long some shallow shore by the edge of a dense pal-  
isade of bulrushes, which straightly bounded the water  
‘an if clipt by art, reminding us of the reed forts of the  
Enst-Indians, of which we had read; and now the bank  
slightly raised was overhung with graceful grasses and  
various species of brake, whose downy stems stood  
closely’ grouped and naked as in a vase, while their  
hheads spread several feet on either side. ‘The dead  
limbs of the willow were rounded and adorned by the  
climbing mikania, Mfkania scandens, which filled every  
cerovice in the leafy bank, contrasting agreeably with the  
gray bark of its supporter and the balls of the buttor  
dash. The water willow, Salix Purshiana, when it is  
of large size and entire, is the most graceful and ethe-  
real of our trees, Its masses of light green foliage,  
piled one upon another to the height of twenty or thirty  
feet, seemed to float on the surface of the water, while  
the slight gray stems and the shore were hardly visible  
between them. No tree is #0 wedded to the water, and  
harmonizes so well with still streams. It is even more  
gracefal than the weeping willow, or any pendulous  
trees, which dip their branches in the stream instead  
of being buoyed up by it. Its limbs curved outward.  
over the surface asif attracted by it. It had not a New  
England bat an Oriental character, reminding us of trim  
Persian gardens, of Huroun Alraschid, and the artifi-  
ial lakes of the East.

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suxDAT. 58.  
  
As we thus dipped our way along between fresh  
masses of foliage overrun with the grape and smaller  
flowering vines, the surface was so calm, and both air  
and water so transparent, that the flight of a kingfisher  
‘or robin over the river was as distinctly seen reflected  
in the water below as in the air above. The birds  
seemed to fiit through submerged groves, alighting on  
the yielding sprays, and their clear notes to come up  
from below. We were uncertain whether the water  
floated the land, or the land held the water in its bosom.  
Tt was such a season, in short, as that in which one of  
‘our Concord poets sailed on its stream, and sung its  
uiet glories.  
  
   
  
“Thor is an inward voice, that in the stream  
‘Sends forth ita spirit to the listening oar,  
‘And ia calm content it doweth on,  
Like wisdom, weleome with ts own respect.  
Clear in its breast ie a. these beanteons thoughts,  
Ke doth receive the green and gracetl tres,  
‘And the gray rocks smile ints pescefal ama.”  
  
   
  
   
  
And more he sung, but too serious for our page. For  
every oak and birch too growing on the hill-top, as well  
13 for these elms and willows, we knew that there was a  
graceful ethereal and ideal tree making down from the  
roots, and sometimes Nature in high tides brings her mir-  
ror to its foot and makes it visible. ‘The stillness was  
intense and almost conscious, as if it were a natural  
‘Sabbath, and we fancied that the morning was the even-  
ing of a celestial day. ‘The air was so elastic and  
crystalline that it bad the same effect on the landseape  
that a glass has on a picture, to give it an ideal remote-  
ness and perfection. ‘The landscape was clothed in  
mild and quiet light, in which the woods and fenoes

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5A ‘A weer.  
  
   
  
checkered and partitioned it with new regularity, and  
ough and uneven fields stretched away with Inwn-like  
smoothness to the horizon, and the clouds, finely distinet  
and picturesque, seemed a fit drapery to hang over fuiry-  
land. ‘The world seemed decked for some holiday or  
prouder pageantry, with silken streamers fying, and the  
course of our lives to wind on before us like a green  
lane into a country maze, at the season when fruit-trees  
‘are in blossom.  
  
‘Why should not our whole life and its scenery be act-  
ually thus fair and distinct? All our lives want a suit-  
able background. ‘They should at least, like the life of  
the anchorite, be as impressive to behola as objects in  
the desert, a broken shaft or crumbling mound against a  
limitless horizon. Character always secures for itself  
this advantage, and is thus distinct and unrelated to near  
or trivial objects, whether things or persons. On this  
same stream a maiden once sailed in my boat, thas‘un-  
attended but by invisible guardians, and as she sat in the  
  
ing bat herself between the steers-  
‘man and the sky. T could then say with the poet, —  
  
“Swoot fila the summer ale  
Over ber frame who sala with me  
lr way lke that i beautifully fea,  
  
Her nator far more rare,  
‘And is her constant heart of virgin parity.”  
  
At evening stil the very stars seem but this maiden’s  
‘emissaries and reporters of her progress.  
  
Low in the eastern ky  
In ot thy glancing eye  
‘And though ts gracious  
Neto riseth to my sight,  
‘Yet evry star that climbs  
Above th guarled limbs  
Ff yooder bill,  
‘Convoy thy gente wil.

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sunpar.  
  
Baliove I know thy thought,  
‘And thatthe zaphyre brought  
  
‘Thy kindest wishes through,  
  
‘As mine they bear to you,  
  
‘That ome attentive cloud  
  
Did panse amid the crowd  
Over my head,  
  
While gente things were sald.  
  
Believe the thrashes sang,  
  
‘And that the fower-bela rang,  
  
‘That herbs exhaled thei sees,  
  
‘And beasts knew what was mean,  
  
‘The tows weleome waved,  
  
‘And Iekes thelr margine layed,  
‘Whea thy foe mind  
  
‘To my retreat did wind.  
  
   
  
Ie wana summer ove,  
‘The air did gently heave  
While yot a Tow-hang cloud  
‘Thy eastern skis did shroud ;  
‘The lighting’ silent gleam,  
Starting my dromy dream,  
Seemed Ike the fash  
  
‘Vader thy dark eyelash.  
  
Stil will strive to be  
‘As if thon wert with me;  
‘Whatever path T take,  
Teoball befor thy aake,  
OF geate slope and wide,  
‘As thon wert by my side,  
Without a root  
‘To tp thy gentle foot  
  
TL walk with gentle pace,  
‘And choot the emoothest place  
‘And careful dip the oar,  
‘And shun the winding sre,  
‘And geatly ster my boat  
‘Where water-ilies float,  
  
‘And eardioal Bowers  
Stand in thelr sylvan bowers.

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56 a weer.  
  
Tt required some rudeness to distarb with our boat  
the mirror-like surface of the water, in which every  
twig and blade of grass was so faithfully reflected ; too  
faithfully indeed for art to imitate, for only Nature may  
exaggerate herself. The shallowest still water is un-  
fathomable. Wherever the trees and skies are reflected,  
there is more than Atlantic depth, and no danger of  
fancy ranning aground, We notice that it required 8  
separate intention of the eye, a more free and abstracted  
vision, to see the reflected trees and the sky, than to see  
the river bottom merely; and 90 are there manifold  
visions in the direction of every object, and even the  
‘most opaque reflect the heavens from their surface.  
‘Some men have their eyes naturally intended to the one  
and some to the other object.  
  
“A man that looks on glass,  
  
nit may say bs eye,  
(0, if be pleaseth, trough it pas,  
  
‘Aad the heavens py."  
  
‘Two men in a skit, whom we passed hereabouts,  
floating buoyantly amid the reflections of the trees, like  
‘feather in mid-air, or a leaf which is wafted gently  
from its twig to the water without turning over, seemed  
still in their element, and to have very delicately a1  
themselves of the natural laws. Their floating there  
‘was a beautifal and successful experiment in natural  
philosophy, and it served to ennoble in our eyes the art  
of navigation; for as birds fly and fishes swim, so these  
men sailed. Tt reminded us how much fairer and nobler  
all the actions of man might be, and that our life in its  
whole economy might be as beautiful as the fairest  
‘works of art or nature.  
  
‘The sun lodged on the old gray cliff, and glanced

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sonpar. “87  
  
from every pad; the bulrushes and flags seemed to  
rejoice in the delicious light and air; the meadows were  
‘tcdrinking at their leisure; the frogs sat meditating, all  
sabbath thoughts, summing up thejr week, with one eye  
out on the golden sun, and ong toe upon a reed, eying  
the wondrous universe in which they act their part; the  
fishes swam more staid and soberly, as maidens go to  
‘ehoreh; shoals of golden and silver minnows rose to the  
surface to behold the heavens, and then sheered off into  
‘more sombre aisles; they ewept by as if moved by one  
mind, continually gliding past each other, and yet pre-  
serving the form of their battalion unchanged, as if they  
were still embraced by the transparent membrane which  
Iheld the spawn ; a young band of brethren and sisters  
trying their new fins; now they wheeled, now shot  
ahead, and when we drove them to the shore and cut  
them off, they dexterously tacked and passed under  
neath the boat. Over the old wooden bridges no trav-  
eller crossed, and neither the river nor the fishes avoided.  
to glide between the abutments.  
  
Here was a village not far off behind the woods, Bil-  
Jerica, settled not long ago, and the children tll bear  
the names of the first settlers in this late “howling  
wilderness”; yet to all intents and purposes it is as old  
as Fernay or as Mantua, an old gray town where men  
grow old and sleep already under moss-grown monu-  
‘ments, — outgrow their usefulness. ‘This is ancient  
Billerica, (Villarica?) now in its dotage, named from  
the English Billericay, and whose Indian name was  
Shawshine. I never heard that it was young. See, is  
not nature here gone to decay, farms all run out, meet-  
ing-house grown gray and racked with age? If you  
‘would know of its early youth, ask those old gray rocks  
  
3°

Page-7538

58 a were.  
  
in the pasture. Tt has a bell that sounds sometimes as  
far a8 Concord woods; I have heard that,—ay, hear  
it now. No wonder that such a sound startled the  
dreaming Indian, and frightened bis game, when the  
first bells were swung on trees, and sounded through the  
forest beyond the plantations of the white man. But  
to-day I like best the echo amid these cliffs and woods.  
eis no feeble imitation, bat rather its original, or as if  
tome rural Orpheus played over the  
show how it should sound.  
  
Dong, sounds th bras inthe eas  
  
‘As ifto a feral fas,  
  
Bat Fike that sound the beat  
(Ont of the flattering wet.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘The steeple ringeth a knell,  
Bat the fai livery bell  
  
Ta the voice of that gentle folk,  
(Or else the horizon that spoks,  
  
   
  
‘Re metal fs not of bras,  
But air, and water, and glass,  
‘And under cload its ewung,  
‘And by the wind it is rang.  
  
‘When the steeple tleth the n008,  
Tt soundeth not 10 s000,  
  
‘Yet irings far erler hour,  
  
‘And the wan han not reached its tower,  
  
On the other hand, the road runs up to Carlisle, city  
‘of the woods, which, if it is less civil is the more nata-  
ral. It does well hold the earth together. It gets  
laughed at because itis a small town, I know, but never-  
theless it is a place where great men may be born any  
ay, for fair winds and foul blow right on over it with+  
ut distinction, It has a meeting-house and horse-sheds,

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suxpar. 39  
  
fa tavern and » blacksmith’s shop, for centre, and a good  
deal of wood to cut and cord yet. And  
Bedford, mot noble Bedford,  
Tahal ot thee forget.”  
  
History has remembered thee; especially that meck  
‘and humble petition of thy old planters, like the wail-  
ing of the Lord’s own people, “To the gentlemen, the  
selectmen” of Concord, praying to be erected into a  
separate parish. We can hardly credit that so plaintive  
‘8 palm resounded bat little more than a centory ago  
flong these Babylonish waters. “In the extreme diff-  
cealt seasons of heat and cold,” said they, “we were  
ready to say of the Sabbath, Behold what a weariness is  
it.” —« Gentlemen, if oir seeking to draw off proceed  
from any disaffection to our present Reverend Pastor,  
or the Christian Society with whom we have taken such  
sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of  
God in company, then hear us not this day, but we  
greatly desire, if God please, to be eased of our burden  
‘on the Sabbath, the travel and fatigue thereof, that the  
‘word of God may be nigh to us, near to our houses and  
in our hearts, that we and our little ones may serve the  
Lord. We hope that God, who stirred up the spirit of  
Cyrus to set forward temple work, has stirred us up to  
‘ask, and will stir you up to grant, the prayer of our  
petition; so shall your humble petitioners ever pray, as  
in duty bound—” And #0 the temple work went  
forward here to a happy conclusion. Yonder in Car-  
lisle the building of the temple was many wearisome  
years delayed, not that there was wanting of Shittim  
‘wood, or the gold of Ophir, but » site therefor con-  
venient to all the worshippers ; whether on Battrick’s  
Plain,” or rather on Poplar Hill.” —TIt was a tedious  
question.

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60. A WEEK.  
  
Jn this Billerica solid men must bave lived, select  
from year to year; a series of town clerks, at least; and  
there are old records that you may search. Some  
spring the white man came, built him @ house, and  
made a clearing here, letting in the sun, dried up a farm,  
piled up the old gray stones in fences, cut down the  
pines around his dwelling, planted orchard seeds brought  
from the old country, and persuaded the civil apple-  
‘ree to blossom next to the wild pine and the juniper,  
shedding its perfume in the wilderness. Their old  
stocks still remain. He called the graceful elm from  
out the woods and from the river-side, and so refined  
and smoothed his village plot. He rudely bridged the  
stream, and drove his team afield into the river mead-  
ows, cut the wild grass, and Inid bare the homes of  
beaver, otter, muskrat, and with the whetting of his  
scythe seared off the deer and bear. He eet up a mill,  
and fields of English grain sprang in the virgin soil.  
‘And with his grain he scattered the eeeds of the dande-  
lion and the wild trefoil over the mesdows, mingling his  
English flowers with the wild native ones. ‘The bris-  
tling bardock, tho sweet-scented catnip, and the humble  
‘yarrow planted themselves along his woodland road,  
they too seeking “freedom to worship God” in their  
way. And thus he plants a town. The white man's  
mullein soon reigned in Indian cornfields, and sweet-  
scented English grasses clothed the new soil. Where,  
then, could the Red Man set his foot? ‘The’honey-bee  
hhummed through the Massachusetts woods, and sipped  
the wild-fowers round the Indian's wigwam, perchance  
‘unnoticed, when, with prophetic warning, it stung the  
Red child's hand, forerunner of that industrious tribe  
that was to come and pluck the wild-fower of his race  
up by the root.

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suNDAT. 61  
  
The white man comes, pale as the dawn, with a load  
of thought, with a slumbering intelligence as a fire  
raked up, knowing well what he knows, not guessing  
Dut calcalating ; strong in commanity, yielding obedience  
to authority; of experienced race; of wonderful, won-  
erful common sense; dull but capable, slow but per-  
severing, severe bat just of little humor but genuine;  
f laboring man, despising game and sport; building a  
house that endures, a framed house. He buys the  
Indian's moccasins and baskets, then buys his hu  
grounds, and at length forgets wero bo is bariod and  
ploughs up his bones. And here town records, old, tat-  
tered, time-worn, weather-stained chronicles, contain the  
Indian sachem’s mark perchance, an arrow or a beaver,  
‘and the few fatal words by which he deeded his hunting-  
grounds away. He comes with a list of ancient Saxon,  
Norman, and Celtic names, and strews them up and  
down this river,— Framingham, Sudbury, Bedford, Car-  
lisle, Billerica, Chelmsford, —and this is New Angle-  
nnd, and these are the New West Saxons whom the  
Red Men call, not Angle-ish or English, but Yengoeso,  
‘and 6o at last they are known for Yankees.  
  
‘When wo were opposite to the middle of Billerica,  
the fields on either hand had a soft and cultivated  
‘Engliah aspect, the village spire being seen over the  
copses which skirt the river, and sometimes an orchard  
straggled down to the water-side, though, generally, our  
course this forenoon was the wildest part of our voyage.  
Tt seemed that men led a quiet and very civil life  
there. The inhabitants were plainly eultivators of the  
‘earth, and lived under an organized political govern-  
ment. The schoolhouse stood with a meek aspect,  
‘entreating a long truce to war and savage life. Every

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6 A wenn.  
  
‘one finds by his own experience, as well as in history,  
that the era in which men cultivate the apple, and tho  
amenities of the garden, is esentially different from  
that of the hunter and forest life, and neither can dis-  
place the other without loss. We have all hed our day-  
dreams, as well as more prophetic nocturnal vision ; but  
1s for farming, I am convinced that my genius dates  
from an older era than the agricultural. I would at  
least atrike my spade into the earth with such careless  
freedom but accuracy as the woodpecker his bill into  
tree. There is in my nature, methinks, a singular  
‘yearning toward all wildness. I know of no redeeming.  
‘qualities in myself but a sincere love for some things,  
and when I am reproved I fall back on to this ground.  
‘What have I'to do with ploughs? ° I cut another furrow  
than you see. Where the off ox treads, there is it not,  
it is farther off; where the nigh ox walks, it will not be,  
it is nigher still. If com fails, my crop faile not, and  
what are drought and rain to me? The rude Saxon  
pioncer will sometimes pine for that refinement and  
artificial beauty which are English, and love to hear the  
sound of such sweet and classical names as the Pentland  
and Malvern Hille, the CliSs of Dover and the Trosachs,  
Richmond, Derwent, and Winandermere, which are to  
hhim now instead of the Acropolis and Parthenon, of  
Baise, and Athens with its sea-walls, and Arcadia and  
Tempe.  
  
Greece, who am I that should remember thee,  
‘Thy Marathon and thy Thermopyla?  
  
[sty life vulgar, my fate mean,  
  
‘Which on thes golden memories can lean?  
  
‘We are apt enough to be pleased with such books as  
Evelyn’s Sylva, Acetarium, and Kalendarium Hortense,

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sunpar. 68  
  
but they imply a relaxed nerve in the reader. Garden.  
{ng is civil and social, but it wants the vigor and freedom  
of the forest and the outlaw. ‘There may be an excess  
of cultivation as well as of anything else, until  
tion becomes pathetic. A highly cultivated man,  
‘whose bones can be bent! whose heaven-born virtues  
are but good manners! ‘The young pines springing up  
in the cornfields from year to year aro to me a refresh.  
ing fact. We talk of civilizing the Indian, but that is  
not the name for his improvement. By the wary inde-  
pendence and aloofaess of his dim forest life he preserves  
hhia intercourse with his native gods, and is admitted  
from time to time jo a rare and peculiar society with  
Nature. He has glances of starry recognition to which  
ar saloons aro strangers. ‘The stendy illumination of  
his genius, dim only because distant, i like the faint bat  
satiofying Hight of the stars compared with the dazzling  
but ineffectual and short-lived blaze of candles. The  
Society-Islanders had their day-born gods, but they were  
not supposed to be “of equal antiquity with the atua  
Faucs po, or night-born gods.” Ib is true, there are the  
‘innocent pleasures of country life, and it is sometimes  
pleasant to make the earth yield her increase, and  
gather the fruits in their season, but the heroic spirit will  
not fail to dream of remoter retirements and more  
rugged paths. It will have its garden-plots and its par-  
terres eluewhero than on the earth, and gather nuts and  
berries by the way for its subsistence, or orchard fruits  
with such heedlessness.as berries. We would not,  
‘always be soothing and taming natore, breaking the  
horse and the ox, but sometimes ride the horse wild and  
cchase the buffalo. ‘The Tndian’s intercourse with Nature  
is at least such as admita of the greatest independence

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6 A WEEE.  
  
of each. If he is somewhat of a stranger in her midst,  
the gardener is too much of fa ‘There is some-  
‘thing valgar and foul in the Intter’s closeness to his  
mistress, something noble and cleanly in the former’s  
distance. In civilization, as in a southern latitude, man  
degenerates at length, and yields to the incursion of  
‘more northern tribes,  
Some nation yet sbat fa  
"Wiehe"  
  
‘There are other, savager, and more primeval aspects of  
nature than our poets have sung. It is only white  
‘man's poetry. Homer and Ossian even can never revive  
in London or Boston. And yet bebold how these cities  
are refreshed by the mere tradition, or the imperfectly  
transmitted fragrance and flavor of these wild fruits, If  
‘we could listen but for an instant to the chant of the  
Indian muse, we should understand why he will not ex-  
change his savageness for civilization. Nations are not  
whimsical. Steel and blankets are strong temptations;  
‘but the Indian does well to continue Indi  
  
‘After sitting in my chamber many days, reading the  
poets, I have been out early on a foggy morning, and  
heard the ery of an ow! in a neighboring wood aa from a  
nature behind the common, unexplored by science or by:  
literature. None of the feathered race has yet realized  
my youthful conceptions of the woodland depths. I had  
seen the red Election-bird brought from their recesses  
fon my comrades’ string, and fancied that their plumage  
‘would assume stranger and more dazzling colors, like  
the tints of evening, in proportion as T advanced farther  
into the darkness and solitude of the forest. Still less  
have I seen such strong and wilderness tints on any  
  
string.

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SUNDAY. cy  
  
‘These modern ingenious sciences and arts do not  
affect me as those more venerable arts of hunting and  
ishing, and even of husbandry in its primitive and si  
ple form as ancient and honorable trades as the sun  
‘and moon and winds pursue, coeval with the faculties of  
‘man, and invented when these were invented. We do  
not know their John Gutenberg, or Richard Arkwright,  
though the poets would fain make them to have been  
‘gradually learned and taught. According to Gower,—  
  
“And Indahel, a salt tbe bok,  
Fimsia made note, and fishes tke.  
OF bantyog eke he fond the chace,  
Whiche nowe is know in many places  
  
A teat of cote, with corde and stake,  
‘Ho aott up first, and dd it make.”  
  
Also, Lydgate says: —  
“Jason fet sayted, in story i is tlde,  
‘Toward Colchos, to wynne the fees of golie,  
Cares the Godden fod fr the tthe of lode;  
  
Also, Arotons fondo frat the usage  
  
Of mylke, and eradd, and of honey swote;  
eryodes, for grote artaniage,  
  
‘From flyntes smote fayre, daryog inthe root.”  
  
‘We read that Aristeus “ obtained of Jupiter and Nep-  
tane, that the pestilentil heat of the dog-days, wherein  
‘was great mortality, should be mitigated with wind.”  
‘This is one of those dateless benefits conferred on man,  
which have no record in our valgar day, though we still  
find some similitade to them in our dreams, in which we  
have a more liberal and juster apprehension of things,  
unconstrained by habit, which is then in some measure  
put off, and divested of memory, which we call history.  
  
‘According to fable, when the island of ABgina was

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66 A werk,  
  
depopulated by sickness, at the instance of Aacus, Ju-  
piter turned the ants into men, that is,as some think, he  
made men of the inhabitants who lived meanly like  
ants, ‘This is perbaps the fullest history of those early  
days extant.  
  
‘The fable which is naturally and truly composed, 80  
‘as to satisfy the imagination, ere it addresses the under-  
standing, beautiful though strange as a wild-flower, is to  
the wise man an apothegm, and admits of his most gen~  
cerous interpretation. When we read that Bacchus made  
the Tyrrhenian mariners mad, so that they leapt into  
the sea, mistaking it for a meadow full of flowers, and  
0 became dolphins, we are not concerned-about the  
torical truth of this, but rather a higher poetical truth.  
‘We seem to hear the music of a thought, and care not  
Af the understanding be not gratified. For their beauty,  
consider the fables of Narcissus, of Endymion, of Mem-  
non son of Morning, the representative of all promising  
youths who have died a premature death, and whose  
‘memory is melodiously prolonged to the latest morning ;  
the beautiful stories of Phacton, and of the Sirens  
whose isle shone afar off white with the bones of un-  
buried men; and the pregnant ones of Pan, Prome-  
‘theus, and the Sphinx; and that long list of names  
Which have already become part of the universal lan-  
‘guage of civilized men, and from: proper are becoming  
common names or nouns,— the Sibyls, the Eumenides,  
the Parem, the Graces, the Muses, Nemesis, &.  
tis interesting to observe with what singular unani  
ity the farthest sundered nations and generations con-  
sent to give completeness and roundness to an ancient  
fable, of which they indistinctly appreciate the beauty

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soxpar. er  
  
or the truth. By a faint and dream-like effort, though  
it be only by the vote of a scientific body, the dullest  
posterity slowly add some trait to the mythus, As when  
astronomers call the lately discovered planet Neptunes  
or the asteroid Astree, that the Virgin who was driven  
from earth to heaven at the end of the golden age, may  
hhave her local habitation in the heavens more distinctly.  
for the slightest reengnition of poetic  
icant. By such slow aggregation has  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
mythology grown from the first. The very nursery  
tales of this generation, were thé nursery tales of pri-  
meval races. They migrate from east to west, and  
again from west to east; now expanded into the “tale  
divine” of bards, now shrunk into » popular rhyme.  
  
   
  
‘oldest expressions of truth by the latest posterity, con-  
tent with slightly and religiously retouching the old  
material, is the most. impressive proof of common hu-  
manity.  
  
All nations love the same jests and tales, Jews, Chris-  
tians, and Mahometans, and the same translated suffice  
for all. All men are children, and of one family. ‘The  
‘same tale sends them all to bed, and wakes them in the  
morning. Joseph Wolf the missionary, distributed cop-  
ies of Robinson Crusoe, translated into Arabic, among  
the Arabs, and they made a great sensation. “Robinson  
Crusoe’s adventures and wisdom,” eays he, “were read  
by Mahometans in the iarket-places of Sanaa, Hody-  
eda, and Loheys, and admired and believed!” On  
reading the book, the Arabians exclaimed, “0, that  
‘Robinson Crusoe must have been a great prophet!”  
  
‘To some extent, mythology is only the most ancient

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68 A ween.  
  
history and biography. So far from being false or fabu-  
lous in the common sense, it contains only enduring and  
essential truth, the I and you, the here and there, the  
now and then, being omitted. Either time or rare wis-  
dom writes it, Before printing was discovered, a century  
‘was equal to a thousand years. ‘The poet is he who can  
write some pure mythology to-day without the aid of  
posterity. In how few words, for instance, the Grecks  
‘would have told the story of Abelard and Heloise,  
making but a sentence for our classical dictionary,  
and then, perchance, have stuck up their names to shino  
in some comer of the firmament. We modems, on the  
other hand, collect only the raw materiale of biography  
and history, “memoirs to serve for a history,” which  
itzelf is but materials to servo for a mythology. How  
many volumes folio would the Life and Labors of Pro-  
‘metheus have filled if perchance it bad fallen, as per-  
chance it did first, in days of cheap printing! Who  
‘knows what shape the fable of Columbus will at length  
assume, to be confounded with that of Jason and the  
expedition of the Argonauts, And Franklin,— there  
may be a line for him in the future classical dictionary,  
recording whet that demigod did, and referring him  
to some new goneslogy. “Son of  
He aided the Americans to gain their independence, in-  
structed mankind in economy, and drew down lightning  
from the clouds.”  
  
‘The hidden significance of these fables which is some-  
‘times thought to have been detected, the ethics running  
parallel to the poetry and history, are not so remarkable  
fs the readiness with which they may be made to ex-  
press a variety of truths, As if they were the skeletons  
of still oder and more universal truths than any whose  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘and ——,

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suNDAr. 69  
  
flesh and blood they are for the time made to wear. It  
is like striving to make the sun, or the wind, or the sea  
symbols to signify exclusively the particalar thoughts  
of oar day. But what signifies it? In the mythus a  
‘superhuman intelligence uses the unconscious thoughts  
and dreams of men as its hieroglyphios to address men  
‘unborn. In the history of the human mind, these glow-  
ing and ruddy fables precede the noonday thoughts of  
‘mes, as Aurora the sun's rays. ‘The matutine intellect  
of the poet, keeping in advance of the glare of philoso  
phy, always dwells in this auroral atmosphere.  
  
As wo said before, the Concord is a dead stream, but  
ita econery is the more suggestive to the contemplative  
‘voyager, and this day its water was fuller of reflections  
than our pages even. Just before it reaches the falls in  
Billerica, itis contracted, and becomes swifter and shal-  
lower, with a yellow pebbly bottom, hardly passable for  
‘canal-boat, leaving the broader and more stagnant por-  
tion above like a lake among the hills, All through  
the Concord, Bedford, and Billerica meadows we had  
heard no murmur from its stream, except where some  
tribatary rannel tumbled in, —  
  
Some tamaltaoos ite ri,  
ling round is tori pebble,  
‘inkling to th sefame tan,  
  
From September until Jane,  
“Which no drought doth oer enfeble.  
  
   
  
   
  
But now at length we heard this staid and primitive

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70 A warx.  
  
river rushing to her fall, ike any rill. We here left its  
channel, just above the Billerica Falls, and entered the  
canal, whicHi runs, or rather is conducted, six miles  
‘through the woods to the Merrimack, at Middlesex, and!  
as we did not eare to loiter in this part of our voyage,  
while one ran along the towpath drawing the boat by  
8 cond, the other kept it off the shore with a pole, 20  
that we aceomplished the whole distance in little more  
than an hour. ‘This canal, which is the oldest in the  
country, and has even an antique look beside the more  
modern railroads, is fod by the Covcord, so that we were  
  
il floating on its familiar waters It is so much water  
which the river lets for the advantage of commerce.  
‘There appeared some want of harmony in its scenery,  
since it was not of equal date with the woods and  
‘meadows through which itis led, and we missed the con-  
ciliatory influence of time on land and water; but in  
the lapse of ages, Nature will recover and indemnify  
herself, and gradually plant fit shrubs and flowers slong  
its bordere, Already the kingfisher sat upon pine over  
the water, and the bream and pickerel swam below.  
‘Thus all works pass directly out of the hands of the  
architect into the hands of Natare, to be perfected.  
  
‘Te was a retired and pleasant route, without houses or  
travellers, except some young men who were lounging  
‘upon a bridge in Chelmsford, who leaned impudently  
over the Tails to pry into our concerns, but we caught  
the eye of the most forward, and looked at him till ho  
‘was visibly discomfited. Not that there was any pecu-  
Tiar efficacy in our look, but rather @ sense of shame  
Jeft in him which disarmed bi  
  
It is'a very true and expressive phrase, “He looked  
daggers at me,” for the frst pattern and prototype:of all.

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SUNDAY. 1  
  
daggers must have been a glance of the eye. First,  
there was the glance of Jove's eye, then his fiery bolt  
then, the material gradually hardening, tridents, spears,  
Javelins, and finally, for the convenience of private men,  
agers, krises, and so forth, were invented. It is won-  
derful how we get about the streets without being  
‘wounded by these delicate and glancing weapons, a man  
can so nimbly whip out his rapier, or without being  
noticed carry it unsheathed. Yet it is rare that one  
gets seriously looked at.  
  
‘As we passed under the last bridge over the canal,  
{just before reaching the Merrimack, the people coming  
‘out of church paused to look at us from above, and ap-  
parently, so strong is custom, indulged in some heathen-  
ish comparisona; but we were the truest observers of  
this eunny day. According to Hesiod,  
  
   
  
“The eoventh i a boly day,  
For theo Latona brought forth golden-rayed Apollo  
  
   
  
and by oar reckoning this was the seventh day of the  
‘week, and not the first. I find among the papers of an  
old Justice of the Peace and Deacon of the town of Con-  
cord, this singular memorandum, which is worth pre-  
serving as relic of an ancient custom. After reform-  
ing the spelling and grammar, it runs as follows: “ Men.  
that travelled: with teams on the Sabbath, Dec. 18th,  
1808, were Jeremiah Richardson and Jonas Parker, both  
‘of Shirley. ‘They had teams with rigging such as is  
used to carry barrels, and they were travelling west-  
ward. Richardson was questioned by the Hon. Ephraim  
Wood, Bag, and he said that Jonas Parker was his  
fellow-iraveller, and he further said that a Mr. Longley  
‘was his employer, who promised to bear him out.” We

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RB A wee  
  
   
  
were the men that were gliding northward, this Sept.  
st, 1839, with still team, and rigging not the most con-  
  
jenient to carry barrels, unquestioned by any Squire or  
Church Deacon and ready to bear ourselves out if need  
were. In-the later part of the seventeenth century,  
according to the hi of Dunstable, “Towns were  
directed to erect ‘a cage" near the meeting-house, and  
in this all offenders agninst the sanctity of the Sabbath  
were confined.” Society has relaxed a little from its  
strictness, one would say, but I presume that there is  
not less religion than formerly. If the ligature is found  
to be loosened in ono part, it is only drawn the tighter  
in another.  
  
‘You can hardly convince a man of an error in a life-  
time, but must content yourself with the reflection that  
the progress of science is slow. If he is not convinced,  
hhis grandchildren may be. ‘The geologists tell us that  
it took one hundred years to prove that fossils are or-  
ganic, and one hundred and fifty more, to prove that they  
fare not to be referred to the Noachian deluge. Iam  
not sure but I should betake myself in extremities to  
the liberal divinities of Greece, rather than to my eoun-  
try’s God. Jehovah, though with us he has acqui  
new attributes, is more absolute and unapproachable, bat  
hardly more divine, than Jove. Ho is not so much of a  
gentleman, not 80 gracious and catholic, he does not ex-  
‘ert 00 intimate and genial an influence on nature, as  
many a god of the Greeks. I shoold fear the infinite  
power and infexible justice of the almighty mortal,  
hardly as yet apotheosized, so wholly masculine, with no  
sister Juno, no Apollo, no Venus, nor Minerva, to inter-  
cede for me, Oye gudrioved re, eptopérm re. The Grecian  
are youthful and erring and fallen gods, with the vices

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suxDAT. 73  
  
‘of men, but in many important respects essentially of  
the divine race. In my Pantheon, Pan still reigns in  
his pristine glory, with his ruddy face, his flowing beard,  
and his shaggy body, his pipe and his erook, his nymph  
Echo, and his chosen daughter Tambe; for the great  
‘god Pan ia not dead, as was ruraored. No god ever dics.  
Perhaps of all the gods of New England and of ancient  
Greece, I am most constant at his shrine.  
  
Tt seems to me that the god that is commonly wor-  
shipped in civilized countries is not at all divine, though  
hhe bears a divine name, but is the overwhelming author-  
ity and respectability of mankind combined. Men rev-  
ference one another, not yet God. If I thought that I  
could speak with discrimination and impartiality of the  
nations of Christendom, I should praise them, but it  
tasks me too much, ‘They seem to be the most civil and  
humane, but I may be mistaken. Every people havo  
gods to suit their circumstances; the Society Islanders  
hhad a god called Toabitu, “in shape like a dog; he saved  
such as were in danger of falling from rocks and trees.”  
T think that we can o without him, as we have not  
anuch climbing to do, Among them a man could make  
bbimself a god out of a pieoo of wood in a few minutes,  
which would frighten him out of his wits.  
  
I fancy that some indefatigable spinster of the old  
‘school, who had the supreme felicity to be born in “days  
that tried men's souls,” hearing this, may say with Nes-  
tor, another of the old school, “But you are younger  
than I. For time was when I conversed with greater  
men thin you. For not at any time have T seen such  
men, nor shall see them, as Perithous, and Dryas, and  
sroxiera Xow,” that is probably Washington, sole “ Shep-  
herd of the People” And when Apollo has now six  
  
‘

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4 A WEEK.  
  
times rolled westward, or seemed to roll, and now for the  
seventh time shows his face in the east, eyes wellnigh  
glazed, long glassed, which have fluctuated only between  
Iamb’s wool and worsted, explore ceaselessly some good  
sermon book. For six days shalt thou labor and do all  
thy knitting, but on the seventh, forsooth, thy reading.  
Happy we who ean bask in this warm September sun,  
which illomines all creatures, as well when they rest as  
when they toil, not without a feeling of gratitude; whose  
life is as blameless, how blameworthy soever it may be,  
on the Lord's Mona-day as on his Suna-day.  
  
‘There are various, nay, incredible faiths ; why should  
wwe be alarmed at any of thom? What man believes,  
God believes. Long as I have lived, and many blas-  
phemers as I have heard and seen, I have never yet  
heard oF witnessed any direct and conscious blasphemy  
or irreverence; but of indirect and habitual, enough.  
‘Where is the man who is guilty of direct and personal  
insolence to Him that made him?  
  
One memorable addition to the old mythology is due  
to this era,—the Christian fable. With what  
and tears, and blood these centuries have woren this  
and added it to the mythology of mankind. ‘The new  
Prometheus. With what miraculous consent, and pa-  
tience, and persistency has this mythus been stamped  
fon the memory of the race! Tt would scem as if it  
were in the progress of our mythology to dethrone Jeho-  
vvab, and erown Christ in his stead.  
  
If it is not a tragical life we live, then I know not  
what to call it, Such a story as that of Jesus Christ, —  
the history of Jerusalem, say, being a part of the Unie  
versal History. ‘The naked, the embalmed, unburied  
death of Jerusalem amid its desolate hills, — think of it.

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sUNDAT. 2%  
  
In Tasso’s poem I trust some things are sweetly buried.  
Consider the snnppish tenacity with which they preach  
Christianity still. What are time and space to Chris-  
tianity, eighteen hundred years, and x new world? —  
that the humble life of @ Jewish peasant should have  
force to make a New York bishop so bigoted. Forty-  
four lamps, the gift of kings, now burning in a place  
-called the Holy Sepulchre;—a church-bell ringing ;—  
some unaffected tears shed by a pilgrim on Mount Cel-  
vary within the week. —  
  
“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, when I forget thee, may my  
ight hand forget her cunning,”  
  
“By the waters of Babylon there we sat down, and  
‘we wept when we remembered Zion.”  
  
I trust that some may be as near and dear to Buddha,  
or Christ, or Swedenborg, who are without the pale of  
their churches. Tt is necessary not to be Christian to  
appreciate the beauty and significance of the  
Christ. I know that some will have hard thoughts  
‘of mo, when they hear their Christ named beside iny  
Buddha, yet I am sure that I am willing they should  
love their Christ more than my Buddha, for the love is  
the main thing, and I Tike him too. «God is the letter  
Ku, as well as Kho.” Why need Christians be still  
intolerant and superstitious? The simple-minded sailors  
‘were unwilling to east overboard Jonah at his own re-  
quest. —  
  
‘Wheres this love bocome in later ago?  
‘Ans! \*tle gone In endless pilgrimage  
From hence, and never to return I doubt,  
evolution wheel those times about.”  
One man says, —  
  
“The world’s «popular disease, that reigos  
Within the froward heart and fant brain  
  
OF poor distempered murals”

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76 a warn.  
  
Another, that  
  
al the world's a stage,  
‘And all tho men and women merely player.  
  
‘The world is a strange place for a playhouse to stand  
within it, Old Drayton thought that a man that lived  
here, and would be a poet, for instance, should have in  
hhim certain “brave, translonary things,” and s “fne  
madness” should possess his brain. Certainly it were  
‘as well, that he might be up to the occasion, That is  
superfluous wonder, which Dr. Johnson expresses at the  
‘assertion of Sir Thomas Browne that “his life has been  
‘a miracle of thirty years, which to relate, were not his-  
tory but a piece of poetry, and would sound like  
fable.” ‘The wonder is, rather, that all men do not  
‘assert a8 much. That would be a rare praise, if it were  
true, which was addressed to Francis Beaumont, —  
Spectators sate part in your tragedies.”  
  
‘Think what a mean and wretched place thie world  
ins that half the time wo have to light a lamp that we  
may see to live in it ‘This is half our lif. Who  
‘would undertake the enterprise if it were all? And,  
pray, what more has day to offer? A lamp that burns  
‘more clear, a purer oil, say winter-strained, that 50  
we may pursue our idléness with less obstruction,  
Bribed with a little sunlight and a few prismatic tints,  
wo bless our Maker, and stave off his wrath with  
hymns.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
make ye an offer,  
Yo gots, bear the scofer,  
  
‘The scheme will not hart you,  
  
If yo will goodnes, 1 will nd virtua.  
‘Though Iam your crestor,  
  
‘And child  
  
Tha  
  
‘And bleed undeseended,

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‘suNDAr. 7  
  
ome free indopendonee,  
‘And my own descendants.  
Teamnot toll bialy,  
‘Though ye behave kindly,  
And Tawear by the rood,  
T'llbe slave to 0 God.  
  
eye will deal paialy,  
will strive mainly,  
  
tye wil dacover,  
  
Great plans to your over,  
‘And give im a sphere  
Somewhat larger than here.  
  
Verily, my angels! I was abashed on account of my  
servant, who had no Providence but me; therefore did  
I pardon him” — The Gulistan of Sadi. :  
  
‘Most people with whom I talk, men and women even  
of some originality and genius, have their scheme of the  
universe all cut and dried,— very dry, I assure you, to  
hear, dry enough to burn, dry-rotted and powder-post,  
methinks, — which they set up between you and them in  
the shortest intercourse; an ancient and tottering frame  
with all its boards blown off. They do not walk with-  
‘out their bed. Some, to me, seemingly very unimpor-  
tant and unsubstantial things and relations are for them  
everlastingly settled, —as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
and tho like. These aro like the everlasting hills to  
them. Bat in all my wanderings T never came across  
the least vestige of authority for these things. ‘They  
hhave not left so distinet a trace as the delicate flower of  
18 remote geological period on the coal in my grate.  
‘The wisest man preaches no doctrines; he has no  
scheme; he sees no rafter, not even a cobweb, against  
the heavens. It is clear sky. If I ever sce more  
clearly at one time than at another, the medium through

Page-7558

78 A Weer.  
  
T seo is clearer. ‘To see from earth to heaven,  
and see there standing, still a fixture, that old Jewish  
‘scheme! What right have you to hold up this obstacle  
to my understanding you, to your understanding me!  
‘You did not invent it; it was imposed on you. Exam-  
ine your authority. Even Christ, we fear, bad his  
schome, his conformity to tradition, which slightly vit  
ates hie teaching. He had not swallowed all formulas.  
He preached some mere doctrines. As for me, Abra-  
ham, Isaac, and Jacob are now only the rubtilest imagi-  
rable easences, which would not stain the morning sky.  
‘Your scheme must be the framework of the universe;  
all other schemes will soon be ruins. ‘The perfect God  
in his revelations of himself has never got to the length  
of one such proposition as you, his prophets, state.  
Have you learned the alphabet of heaven and ean count  
three? Do you know the number of God's family?  
Can you put mysteries into words? Do you presume to  
fable of the ineffable? Pray, what geographer are you,  
that speak of heaven's topography? — Whose friend  
fare you that speak of God's personality? Do you,  
‘Miles Howard, think that he bas made you bis conf-  
dant? Tell me of the height of the mountains of the  
‘moon, oF of the diameter of space, and I may believe you,  
but of the secret history of the Almighty, and I shall pro-  
nounes thee mad. “Yet we have a sort of family history  
of our God,—so have the Thitians of theirs, —and  
some old poet's grand imagination is imposed on us as  
adamanting everlasting truth, and God’s own word!  
‘Pythagoras says, truly enough, “A true assertion re-  
specting God, is an assertion of God”; but we may  
well doubt if there is any example of this in litora-  
ture,

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suxpar. 9  
  
‘The New Testament is an invaluable book, though I  
confess to having been slightly prejudiced against it in  
my very early days by the church and the Sabbath  
school, 60 that it seemed, before I read it, to be the yel-  
lowest book in the catalogue. Yet I early escaped from  
their meshes. It was hard to get the commentaries out  
of one’s head and taste its true flavor.—I think that  
Pilgrim's Progress is the ‘best sermon which has been  
reached from this text; almost all other sermons that  
T have heard, or heard of, have been but poor imitations  
of this.—It would be @ poor story to be prejudiced  
against the Life of Christ becanse the book has been  
  
ed by Christians. In fact, I love this book rarely,  
‘though it is a sort of castle in the air to me, which Tam  
permitted to dream. Having come to it so recently and  
freshly, it bas the greater charm, so that I cannot find  
any fo talk with about it. I never read a novel, they  
hhave so little real life and thought in them. ‘The read-  
ing which I love best is the scriptures of the several  
nations, though it happens that I am better acquainted  
‘with those of the Hindoos, the Chinese, and the Persians,  
than of the Hebrews, which I have come telast. Give  
me one of these Bibles and you have silenced me for a  
while. When I recover the use of «ny tongue, I am  
‘wont to worry my neighbors with the new sentences  
but commonly they cannot cee thet there is any wit in  
them. Such bas been my experience with the New  
‘Testament. I have not yet got to the crucifixion, I  
Ihave read it over 6o many times. I should love dearly  
to rend it aloud to my friends, some of whom are seri-  
ously inclined ; it is 80 good, and Iam sure that they  
have never heard it, it fits their case exactly, and we  
should enjoy it so much together, — but I instinctively

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80 A ween,  
  
despair of getting their ears. ‘They soon show, by signs  
not to be mistaken, that itis inexpressibly wearisome ta  
them. I do not mean to imply that I am any better  
than my neighbors; for, alas! I know that I am only as  
‘good, though I love better books then they.  
  
It ig remarkable that, notwithstanding the universal  
favor with which the New ‘Testament is outwardly re-  
ceived, and even the bigotry with which it is defended,  
there is no hospitality shown to, there is no appreciation  
of, the order of truth with which it deals. I know of no  
book that has so few readers, There is none so truly  
strange, and heretical, and unpopular. To Christians,  
no less than Grecks and Jews, it is foolishness and a  
stumbling-block. ‘There are, indeed, severe things in it  
which no man should read aloud more than once. —  
Seek first the kingdom of heaven.” —“Lay not up for  
‘yourselves treasures on earth.” —“If thou wilt be per-  
fect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor,  
‘and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.” —“ For what  
is a man profited, if he shall gnin the whole world, and  
Jose his own eoul? or what shall a man give in exchange  
for his, soul?” —Think of this, Yankees !—« Verily,  
‘sy unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard  
seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to  
yonder place; and it shall remove ; and nothing shall be  
impossible unto you.” — Think of repeating these things  
to a New England audience! thindly, fourthly, ffteenth-  
ly, fill there are three barrels of sermons! Who,  
without cant, ean read them aloud? Who, without  
cant, can hear them, and not go out of the mect-  
ing-house? ‘They never were read, they never were  
heard. Let but one of these eentences be rightly read,  
from any pulpit in the land, and there would not be left  
‘one stove of that meeting-house upon another.

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sunDAr. 81  
  
‘Yet the New Testament treats of man and man’s #o-  
called spiritual affairs too exclusively, and is too con-  
stantly moral and personal, to alone content me, who am  
not interested solely in man’s religious or moral nature,  
or in man even. I have not the most definite designs on  
the future. Absolutely speaking, Do unto others as you  
‘would that they should do unto you, is by no means =  
golden role, but the best of current silver. An honest  
‘man would have but little occasion for it. It is golden  
not to hare any rule at all in such a ase. ‘The book has  
never been written which is to be accepted without any  
allowance. Christ was a sublime actor on the stage of  
the world. He knew what he was thinking of when he  
said, “ Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words  
shall not pase away.” I draw near to him at such a  
time. Yet he taught mankind but imperfectly bow to  
live hie thoughts were all directed toward another world.  
‘There is another kind of success than his. Even here  
we have a sort of living to get, and must buifet it some-  
what longer, ‘There are various tough problems yet to  
solve, and we must make shift to live, betwixt spirit and  
matter, such a human life as we can.  
  
‘A healthy man, with steady employment, 08 wood  
chopping at fifty cents ® cord, and a camp in the woods,  
will not be @ good subject for Christianity. ‘The New  
Testament may be a choice book to him on some, but not  
‘on all or most of his days. He will rather go a-ishing.  
in his leisure hours. The Apostles, though they were  
fishers too, were of the solemn race of sea-ishers, and  
never trolled for pickerel on inland streams.  
  
‘Men have a singular desire to be good without being  
good for anything, because, perchance, they think vaguely  
that so it will be good for them in theend. The sort of  
  
“ »

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82 awe,  
  
morality which the priests incolcate is a vory aubtle  
policy, far finer than the politicians, and the world i  
‘very successfully ruled by thera as the policemen. It is  
not worth the while to let our imperfections disturb us al-  
‘ways. The conscience really docs not, and ought not to  
‘monopolize the whole of our lives, any more than the heart  
orthe head. Itisas liable todisease as any other part. I  
have seen some whose consciences, owing undoubtedly to  
former indulgence, had grown to be as irritable as spoilt  
children, and at length gave them no peace. They did  
not know when to swallow their cud, and their lives of  
‘course yielded no milk.  
  
Conscionc i fotint br fn the house,  
Feeling and Thinking propagate the sia  
‘By an unnatural breeding Ia and fa.  
Lay, Tara it out door,  
Tinto the moors  
love a life whose plot is siraple,  
‘And does not thicken with every pimple,  
‘A-oul x0 sound no sickly conscience binds,  
‘Tot makes the universe no worse dhan’e fads ft  
love an earnest sol,  
‘Whose mighty joy and sorrow  
‘Are not drowned ina bowel,  
‘And brought to life to-merrows  
‘That lives one trugedy,  
‘And vot seventy 5  
“Keonscience worth keeping,  
Laughing not weeping  
‘Aconicience wise and steady,  
‘And forever ready  
‘Not chaugiog with event,  
Dealing in complimenta;  
‘A-conscience exorcised about  
Large things, where one may doubt  
love sol not all of wood,  
‘Pradeatinatd tobe good,  
Bat true tothe backbone  
‘ato Sas loos,

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SUNDAY. 83  
  
‘And false to none:  
‘Born to ite own affair,  
  
Its own joys and own caren;  
  
By whom the work which God begun  
  
Ie finished, and not undone;  
  
‘Taken up whore he lett of, :  
Whother to worship or to aco  
  
1 not good, why then ev  
1f not good god, good devi.  
Goodness! — you hypocrite, come out ofthat,  
Live your life, do your work, then take your hat,  
have no pationce towards  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Whose virtue fea song  
‘To cheer God slong.  
  
‘was once reproved by a minister who was driving a  
[poor beast to some meeting-house horse-sheds among the  
hills of New Hampshire, because I was bending my steps  
to @ mountain-top on the Sabbath, instead of a church,  
when I would have gone farther than he to hear a true  
‘word spoken on that oranyday. He declared that I was  
“breaking the Lord’s fourth commandment,” and pro-  
ceeded 10 enumerate, ina sepulechral tone, the disasters  
which had befallen him whenever he had done any ordi-  
nary work on the Sabbath. He really thought that a  
god was on the watch to trip up those men who followed  
any secular work on this day, and did not see that it was  
‘the evil conscience of the workers that did it. ‘The  
country is full of this superstition, so that when one en-  
ters a village, the church, not only really but from asso-  
ciation, is the ugliest looking building in it, because it is  
‘the one in which human nature stoops the lowest and is  
‘most disgraced. Certainly, such tomples as these shall  
erelong cease to deform the landscape. There are few

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84 A were,  
  
things more disheartening and disgusting than waen you  
are walking the streets of strange village on the Sab-  
bath, to hear a preacher shouting like a boatswai  
gole of wind, and thus harshly profaning the quiet at-  
mosphere of the day. You faney him to have taken  
off his coat, as when men are about to do hot and dirty  
work.  
  
If I should ask the minister of Middlesex to let mo  
speak in his pulpit on a Sunday, he would objec, because  
Ido not pray as he does, or because T am not ordained.  
‘What under the sun are these things ?  
  
Really, there is no infidelity, now-a-days, 6o great a8  
that which prays, and keeps the Sabbath, and rebuilds  
the churches. ‘The sealer of the South Pacific preaches  
f truer doctrine. ‘The church is a sort of hospital for  
men’s souls, and as full of quackery as the hospital for  
their bodies. ‘Those who are taken into it live like pen-  
sioners in their Retreat or Sailor's Sang Harbor, where  
you may see a row of religious cripples sitting outside  
in sunny weather. Let not the apprehension that he  
may one day have to occupy a ward therein, discourage  
the cheerful labors of the able-souled man. While he re-  
‘members the sick in their extremities, let him not look.  
‘hither as to One is sick at heart of this pago-  
da worship. Tt is like the beating of gongs in a Hindoo  
subterranean temple. In dark places and dungeons the  
preacher's words might perhaps strike root and grow,  
Dut not in broad daylight in any part of the world that I  
know. The sound of the Sabbath bell far away, now  
breaking on these shores, does not awaken pleasing asso-  
ciations, but melancholy and sombre ones rather. One  
involuntarily rests on his oar, to humor his unusually  
‘meditative mood. It is as the sound of many catechisms

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suNDAY. 8  
  
and religious books twanging a canting peal round the  
earth, seeming to issue from some Egyptian temple and  
echo along the shore of the Nile, right opposite to Pha-  
rraok’s palace and Moses in the bulrushes, startling a mul-  
titade of storks and alligators basking in the sun.  
  
Everywhere “good men” sound a retreat, and the  
‘word has gone forth to fall back on innocence. Fall  
forward rather on to whatever there is there. Chris-  
tianity only hopes. Tt has hung its harp on the willows,  
and cannot sing a.song in a strange land. It has dreamed.  
asad dream, and does not yet welcome the morning with  
Joy. ‘The mother tells her falsehoods to her child, but,  
thank Heaven, the child does not grow up in its parent's  
shadow. Our mother’s faith has not grown with her ex-  
perience. Her experience has been too much for hi  
‘The lesson of life was too hard for her to learn.  
  
It is remarkable, that almost all speakers and writers  
feel it to be incumbent on them, sooner oF later, to prove  
‘or to acknowledge the personality of God. Some Earl  
‘of Bridgewater, thinking it better late than never, has  
provided for it in his will. It is a sad mistake. In  
reading a work on agriculture, we have to skip the au-  
thor’s moral reflections, and the words “ Providence”  
and “ He” scattered along the page, to come at the prof  
itable level of what he has to say. What he calls bis  
religion is for the most part offensive to the nostrils. He  
should know better than expose himself, and keep  
foul sores covered till they are quite healed. ‘There is  
‘more religion in men’s science than there is acience in  
their religion. Let’ us make haste to the report of the  
‘committee on swit  
  
‘A man’s real faith is never contained in his creed, nor  
is his creed an article of his faith, ‘The last is never

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86 A were,  
  
‘adopted. This itis that permits him to smile ever, and  
to live even as bravely as he does. And yet he clings  
anxiously to his creed, as to a straw, thinking that that  
does him good service because his sheet anchor does not  
drag.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
most men’s religion, the ligature, which should be  
‘umbilical cord connecting them with divinity, is rather  
like that thread which the accomplices of Cylon held in  
their hands when they went abroad from the temple of  
  
inerva, the other end being attached to the statue of  
the goddess. But frequently, asin their ease, the thread  
breaks, being stretched, and’ they are left without an  
asylum.  
  
‘A good and pious man reclined his head on the bosom of  
contemplation, and was absorbed in the ocean of revery. At  
the instant when he awaked from his vision, one of his friends,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
us from that garden, where you have been recreating? He  
replied, I fancied to myself and said, when I ean reach the  
rose-bower, Iwill fill my lap with the flowers, and bring them  
‘as a present to my friends ; but when T got there, the fra-  
‘grance of the roses 20 intoxicated me, that the skirt dropped,  
  
   
  
from my hands. —\* O bird of dawn ! learn the warinth of  
affection from the moth ; for that scorched creature gave up  
‘the ghost, and uttered not a groan: ‘These vain pretenders  
are ignorant of him they seck after; for of him that knew  
hhim we never heard again: —O thou! who towerest above  
the flights of conjecture, opinion, and comprehension ; what=  
ever has been reported of thea we have heard and read ; the  
congregation is dismissed, and life drawn to a close; and we  
‘ill rest at our first encomium of thee 1"” — Sadi.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘By noon we were let down into the Merrimack through,  
the locks at Middlesex, just above Pawtucket Falls, by  
‘a serene and liberal-minded man, who came quietly from

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sonar. a7  
  
his book, though his duties, we supposed, did not require  
‘him to open the locks on Sundays. With him we had  
‘2 just and equal encounter of the eyes,.as between two  
benest men.  
  
‘The movements of the eyes express the perpetual and  
‘unconscious courtesy of the parties. It is said, that a  
rogue does not look you in the face, neither does an  
hhonest man look at you as if he had his reputation to  
establish. I have seen some who did not know when to  
turn aside their eyes in meeting yours, A truly con-  
fident and magnanimous spirit is wiser than to contend  
for the mastery in such encounters. Serpents alone  
conquer by the steadiness of their gaze. By friend  
looks me in the face and sees me, that is all.  
  
‘The best relations were at once established between  
tus and this man; and though few words were spoken,  
he could not conceal visible interest in us and our ex-  
ccursion. He was a lover of the higher mathema  
‘we found, and in the midst of some vast sunny problem,  
when we overtook him and whispered our conjectures.  
By this man we were presented with the freedom of the  
‘Merrimack. We now felt as if we were fairly launched  
fon the ocean-stream of our voyage, and were pleased 10  
find that our boat would float on Merrimack water. We  
began again busily to put in practice those old arts of  
rowing, steering, and paddling. It seemed a strange  
phenomenon to us that the two rivers should mingle  
their waters so readily, since we had never associated  
‘them in our thoughts.  
  
‘As we glided over the broad bosom of the Merrimack,  
between Chelmsford and Dracut, at noon, here a quarter  
of mile wide, the rattling of our onrs was echoed over  
the water to thoce villages, and their slight sounds to us.

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88 A were. |  
  
‘Their harbors lay as smooth and fairy-tike as the  
or Syracuse, or Rhodes, in our imagination, while, like  
some strange roving craft, we fitted past what seemed  
the dwellings of noble home-staying men, seemingly as  
conspicuous as if on an eminence, oF floating upon a  
which came up to those villagers’ breasts. At a third  
of a mile over the water we beard distinctly some chi  
dren repeating their catechism in a cottage near the  
shore, while in the broad shallows between, a herd of  
cows stood lashing their sides, and waging war with the  
flies.  
  
‘Two hundred years ago other catechizing than this  
‘was going on here ; for here eame the Sachem Wanna  
lancet, and his people, and sometimes Tabatawan, our |  
‘Concord Sachem, who afterwards had a church at home,  
to catch fh at the falls; and hero also eame John Eli  
with the Bible and Catechism, and Baxter's Call to tbe |  
Uneonverted, and other tracts, done into the Massachu-  
setts tongue, and taught them Christianity meanwhile.  
“This place,” says Gookin, referring to Wamesit,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
“being an anciont and capital seat of Indians, they come to  
fish; and thin good man tae this opportunity to epread the  
  
   
  
he continues, according to our usual custom, Mr. Eliot and  
myeelf took our journey to Wamest, or Pawtuckett; and  
arriving there that evening, Mr. Eliot preached to as many  
of them as could be got together, out of Matt. xxii. 1~14,  
the parable of the marriage of the king’s son. We met at  
the wigwam of one called Wannalancet, about two miles  
from the town, near Pawtuckett falls, and bordering upon  
Merrimak rivet. ‘This perion, Wannalancet, i the eldest  
son of old Pasaconaway, he chiofeet sachem of Pawtuckett.  
He is a sober and grave person, and of years, between fifty  
and sinty. He hath been always loving and friendly to the

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suxpar. 89  
  
English.” As yet, however, they had not prevailed on him  
to embrace the Christian religion. “But at this time,” says  
Gookin, “May 6, 1674,"—after some deliberation and.  
rerions pause, he stood up, and made a speech to this effect:  
—\*1 must acknowledge I have, all my days, uted to pasa in  
tan old canoe, (alluding to his frequent custom to pass in a  
ceanoe upon the river,) and now youexhort me to change and  
leave my old canoe, and embark in a new canoe, to which I  
hhave hitherto been unwilling ; but now I yield up myself to  
‘your advice, and enter into a new eanoe, and do engage to  
Pray to God hereafter” One “Mr. Richard Daniel,  
gentleman that lived in Billerica,” who with other “ persons  
‘of quality” was present, desired brother Eliot to tell the  
sachem from him, that it may be, while he went in his old  
‘canoe, he passed in a quiet stream; but the end thereof was  
death and destruction to soul and body. But now he went  
into a new canoe, perhaps he would meet with storms and  
‘trials, ut yet he should be encouraged to persevere, for the  
‘end of his voyage would be everlasting rest.” —“ Since that  
‘time, I hear this sachem doth persevere, and i a constant  
and diligent hearer of God's word, and sanctfieth the Sab-  
ath, though he doth travel to Wamesit meeting every Sab-  
‘bath, which is above two miles; and though sundry of his  
people have deserted him, since he subjected to the gospel,  
yet he continues and persista"— Gookin’s Hist. Coll. of the  
Indians in New England, 1674.  
  
‘Already, as appears from the records, “At a General  
Court held at Boston in New England, the 7th of the fet  
month, 1643-4." — Wassamequin, Nashoonon, Kutcbama-  
quin, Mastaconomet, and Squaw Sachem, did voluntarily  
submit themselves” to the English; and among other things  
did“ promise to be willing from time to time to be instructed  
in the knowledge of God.” Being asked “Not to do any  
‘unnecessary work on the Sabbath day, especially within the  
gates of Christian towns,” they answered, It is easy to thems  
‘they have not much to do on any day, and they ean well take  
their rest on that day.” —" So,” says Winthrop, in bis Jour-

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90 A were.  
  
anal, wo causing them to understand the articles, and all the  
‘ten commandments of God, and they freely amenting to all,  
they were solemaly received, and then presented the Court  
with twenty-six fathom more of wampom and the Court gave  
‘each of them a coat of two yards of cloth, and their dinner;  
‘and to them and their men, every of them, a cup of aack at  
‘their departure ; 90 they took leave and went away.”  
  
   
  
‘What journeyings on foot and on horseback through  
the wilderness, to preach the Gospel to these minks and  
muskrats! who first, no doubt, listened with their red  
‘ears out of a natural hospitality and courtesy, and after-  
ward from curiosity or even interest, till at length there  
were ‘praying Indiana,” and, as the General Court  
wrote to Cromwell, the \* work is brought to this perfec-  
tion, that some of the Indians themselves ean pray and  
prophesy in a comfortable manner.”  
  
Tt was in fact an old battle and bunting ground  
through which we had been floating, the ancient dwelling  
place of a race of bunters and warriors. ‘Their weirs of  
stone, their arrowheads and hatchets, their pestles, and  
the mortars in which they pounded Indian corn before  
the white man had tasted it, lay concealed in the mud  
‘of the river bottom. ‘Tradition still points out the spots  
where they took fish in the greatest numbers, by such  
arts as they possessed. It is a rapid story the historian  
‘will have to put together. -Miantonimo,— Winthrop, —  
‘Webster. Soon he comes from Montaup to Bunker  
Hill, from bear-skins, parched com, bows and arrows, {0  
tiled roofs, wheat‘ields, guns and swords. Pawtucket  
‘and Wamesit, where the Indians resorted in the fishing  
season, are now Lowell, the city of spindles and Man-  
chester of America, which sends its cotton cloth round  
the globe. Even we youthful voyagers had spent a

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suxpar. 1  
  
part of our lives in the village of Chelmsford, when the  
resent city, whose bells we heard, was its obscure north  
istrict only, and the giant weaver was not yet fairly  
‘born, So old are we; s0 young is it,  
  
We were thus entering the State of New Hampshire  
‘on the bosom of the flood formed by the tribute of  
innumerable valleys. ‘The river was the only key which  
could unlock its maze, presenting its hills and valleys,  
its lakes and streams, in their natural order and position.  
‘The Mengmaox, or Sturgeon River, is formed by the  
confluence of the Pemigewasset, which rises near the  
Notch of the White Mountains, and the Winnipiseogee,  
‘which drains the lake of the same name, signifying “The  
Smile of the Great Spirit.” From their junction it runs  
south seventy-cight miles to Massachusetts, and thence  
feast thirty-five miles to tho sea, I have traced its  
stream from where it bubbles out of the rocks of the  
White Mountains above the clouds, to where it is lost  
‘amid the salt billows of the ocean on Plum Island beach.  
At first it comes on murmuring to itself by the base of  
stately and retired mountains, through moist primitive  
‘woods whose juices it receives, where the bear still  
drinks it, and the cabins of settlers are far between, and  
there are few to cross its stream ; enjoying in solitude  
its cascades still unknown to fame; by long ranges of  
mountains of Sandwich and of Squam, slumbering like  
tumuli of Titans, with the peaks of Moosehillock, the  
‘Haystack, and Kearsarge reflected in its waters; where  
the maple and the raspberry, those lovers of the hills,  
flourish amid temperate dews ;— flowing long and full  
of meaning, but untranslatable as its name Pemigewasset,  
by many @ pastured Pelion and Ossa, where uonamed

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92 A ware,  
  
muses haunt, tended by Oreads, Dryads, Naiads, and  
receiving the tribute of many an untasted Hippocrene.  
‘There are earth, air, fre, and water, — very wel, this is  
water, and down it comes.  
  
Sach water do the gods dit,  
‘And pour down every hill  
  
‘For thelr Now England mens  
‘A draught ofthis wild nectar bring,  
‘And T'll not tanta the opring  
  
(0f Helicon agnin.  
  
Falling all the way, and yet not discouraged by the  
lowest fall. By the law of its birth never to become  
stagnant, for it has come out of the clouds, and down the  
  
ides of precipices worn in tho flood, through beaver-  
dams broke loose, not eplitting but splicing and mending  
itself, antl it found a breathing-place in this low land.  
‘There is no danger now that the sun will steal it back  
to heaven again before it reach the sea, for it has a war-  
rant even to recover its own dews into its bosom again  
with interest at every eve.  
  
Tt was already the water of Squam and Newfound  
Lake and Winnipiseogee, and White Mountain snow dis-  
solved, on which we were floating, and Smith's and  
Baker's and Mad Rivers, and Nashua and Souhegan  
and Piseataquoag, and Suncook and Soucook and Contoo-  
cook, mingled in incalculable proportions, still uid, yel-  
lowiab, restless all, with an ancient, ineradieable inelina-  
tion to the sea.  
  
Sot lows on down by Lowell and Haverhill, at which  
last place it first suffers a sea change, and a fow masts  
betray the vicinity of the ocean. Between the towns of  
Amesbury and Newbury itis a broad commercial river,  
from a third to half a mile in width, no longer skirted  
with yellow and crumbling banks, but backed by high

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suxpar. 93  
  
‘green hills and pastures, with frequent white beaches on  
‘which the fishermen draw up their nets. I have passed  
down this portion of the river in a steamboat, and it  
‘was a pleasant sight to watch from its deck the fsher-  
men dragging their seines on tho distant shore, ¢ in  
pictures of a foreign strand. At intervals you may meet  
‘with a schooner Inden with lumber, standing up to  
Haverhill, or else lying at anchor or aground, waiting,  
for wind or tide; until, at last, you glide under the  
famous Chain Bridgo, and are landed at Newburyport.  
‘Thus she who at first was “ poore of waters, naked of  
renowne,” having received so many fair tributaries, as  
‘was said of the Forth,  
“Doth grow the greater st, th further downes  
  
‘Till that abounding bots in power aod fae,  
ho long doth strive to give the ae her na  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
for if not her name, in this case, at least the impulse  
of her stream. From the steeples of Newburyport you  
may review this river stretching far up into the coun-  
try, with many a white sail glancing over it like an  
inland sea, and behold, as one wrote who was born on  
its head-waters, “Down out at its mouth, the dark inky  
‘main blending with the blue above. Plom Island, it cand  
ridges scolloping along the horizon like the sea-serpent,  
‘and the distant outline broken by many a tall ship, lean-  
ing, sil, against the aky.”  
  
Rising at an equal height with the Connecticut, the  
‘Merrimack reaches the sea by a course only half as long,  
‘and hence has no leisure to form broad and fertile mead-  
‘ows, like the former, but is hurried along rapids, and  
down numerous falls, without long delay. ‘The banks  
are generally steep and high, with a narrow interval  
reaching back to the hills, which ts only rarely or par-

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94 A were.  
  
tially overflown at present, and is much valued by the  
farmers. Between Chelmsford and Concord, in New  
‘Hampshire, it varies from twenty to seventy-five rods in  
width. It is probably wider than it was formerly, in  
‘many places, owing to the trees having been cut down,  
and the consequent wasting away of its banks. ‘The  
influence of the Pawtucket Dam is felt as far up as  
Cromwell's Falls, and many think that the banks are  
being abraded and the river filled up again by this  
cause. Like all our rivers, it  
  
the Pemigewasset has been known to rise twenty-five  
feet in a few hours. It ia navigable for vescels of burden  
about twenty miles; for canal-boats, by means of locks,  
1s far as Concord in New Hampshire, about seventy-five  
miles from its mouth; and for smaller boats to Plymouth,  
fone hundred and thirteen miles. A. small steamboat  
once plied between Lowell and Nashua, before the rail-  
road was built, and one now runs from Newburyport to  
Haverhill.  
  
Unfitted to some extent for the purposes of commerce  
by the sand-bar at its mouth, see how this river was  
devoted from the first to the service of manufactures.  
Issuing from the iron region of Franconia, and flowing  
through still uncut forests, by inexhaustible ledges of  
granite, with Squam, and Winnipiseogee, and Newfound,  
and Massabesic Lakes for its mill-ponds, it falls over a  
suceresion of natural dams, where it has been offering its  
(privileges in vain for ages, until at last the Yankee race  
‘came to improve them. Standing at its mouth, look up  
its sparkling stream to ite souree,—a silver cascade  
which falls all the way from the White Mountains to the  
sea,—and behold a city on each successive plateau, a  
‘busy colony of human beaver around every fall. Not  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
iable to freshets, and

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suNpaY. 95  
  
to mention Newburyport and Haverhill, see Lawrence,  
‘and Lowell, and Nashua, and Manchester, and Concord,  
gleaming one above the other. When at length it has  
escaped from under the last of the factories, it has a  
Jevel and unmolested passage to the sea, a mere waste  
water, as it were, bearing little with it but its fame; its  
pleasant course revealed by the moming fog which  
hhangs over it, and the sails of the few small vessels  
which transact the commerce of Haverhill and New-  
buryport. Bat its real vessels are railroad cars, and its  
‘rue and main stream, flowing by an iron channel farther  
south, may be traced by a long line of vapor amid the  
hills, which no morning wind ever disperses, to where  
it empties into the sea at Boston. This side is the  
Jouder murmur now. Thstead of the scream of fish-  
hhawk scaring the fishes, is heard the whistle of the  
steam-engine, arousing @ country to its progress,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘This river too was at length discovered by the white  
‘man, “trending up into the land,” he knew not how far,  
possibly an inlet to the South Sea. Its valley, as far  
as the Winnipiseogee, was first surveyed in 1652. ‘The  
first settlers of Massachusetts supposed that the Con-  
necticut, in one part of its course, ran northwest, “£0  
near the great lake as the Indians do pass their canoes  
into it over land.” From which lake and the “ hideous  
‘swamps” about it, as they supposed, came all the beaver  
that was traded between Virginia and Canada, —and  
the Potomac was thought to come out of or from very  
near it, Afterward the Connecticut came 20 near the  
course of the Merrimack that, with a litle pains, they  
‘expected to divert the current of the trade into the latter  
river, and its profits from their Dutch neighbors inte  
their own pockets,

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96 a werx.  
  
Unlike the Concord, the Merrimack is not a dead but  
4 living stream, though it has less life within its waters  
and on its banks. It has a swift current, and, in th  
course, a clayey bottom, almost no woeds, and  
comparatively few fishes. We looked down into its  
yellow water with the more curiosity, who were accus-  
‘tomed to the Nile-like blackness of tho former river.  
Shad and alewives are taken here in their season, but  
salmon, though at one time more numerous than shad,  
fare now more rare. Bass, also, are taken occasionally ;  
‘but locks and dams have proved more or less destruc-  
tive to the fisheries. ‘The shad make their appearance  
‘early in May, at the same time with the blossoms of the  
yrus, one of the most conspicuous early flowers, which  
is for this reason called the shad-blossom. An insect  
called the shad-fy also appears at the same time, eover-  
ing the houses and fences. We are told that “their  
greatest ron is when the apple-trees are in fall blossom.  
‘Tho old shad return in August; the young, threo or  
four inches long, in September. ‘These aro very fond  
of flies.” A rather picturesque and luxurious mode of  
fishing was formerly practised on the Connecticut, at Bel-  
lows Falls, where a large rock divides the stream. “On  
the steep sides of the island rock,” says Belknap, “hang.  
several arm-chairs, fastened to ladders, and secured by a  
counterpoite, in which fishermen sit to catch salmon and  
had with dipping nets.” The remains of Indian weirs,  
made of large stones, are still to be seen in the Winni-  
piseogee, one of the headwaters of this river.  
  
Te cannot but effect our philosophy favorably to be  
reminded of these shoals of migratory fishes, of salmon,  
shad, slewives, marsh-bankers, and others, which pene-  
trate up the innumerable rivers of our coast in the

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sUNDAr. 97  
  
spring, even to the intorior lakes, their scales gleaming  
in the sun; and again, of the fry which in still greater  
numbers wend their way downward to the sea. “And  
is it not pretty sport,” wrote Captain John Smith, who  
‘was on this coast as early as 1614, “to pull up twopence,  
ixpence, and twelvepence, as fast as you can haul and  
veer a line?” — And what sport doth yield a more  
pleasing content, and less hurt or change, than angling  
with a hook, and crossing the sweet air from isle to  
isle, over the silent streams of a calm sea.”  
  
   
  
   
  
On the sandy shore, opposite the Glass-house village  
in Chelmsford, at the Great Bend where we landed to  
rest us and gather a few wild plums, we discovered the  
Campanula rotundifolia, a new flower to us, the harebell  
of the poets, which is common to both hemispheres,  
growing close to the water. Here, in the shady branches  
of an applestree on the sand, we took our nooning, where  
there was not a zephyr to disturb the repose of this glo-  
ious Sabbath day, and we reflected serenely on the long  
past and suocessful labors of Latona.  
  
“So tent the cette a,  
‘That every ory and call,  
The hls and dales, end forest fir  
‘Aca repeats them all  
“The herds beneath somo leafy trea,  
‘Amidst the Sowers they ly  
‘The stable ships upon th seas  
‘Teod up ther ans to ry.”  
  
‘As we thus rested in the shade, or rowed leisurely  
along, we had recourse, from time to time, to the Gazet-  
teer, which was our Navigator, and from its bald natural  
facts extracted the pleasure of poetry. Reaver  
  
®

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98 A wenx.  
  
comes in a little lower down, draining the meadows of  
Pelbam, Windham, and Londonderry. ‘The Scotch-Irish  
settlers of the latter town, according to this authority,  
‘were the first to introduce the potato into New England,  
as well as the manufacture of linen cloth.  
  
Everything that is printed and bound in a book con-  
tains some echo at least of the best that is in literature.  
Indeed, the best books have a use, like sticks and stones,  
which is above or beside their design, not anticipated in  
the preface, nor concluded in the appendix. Even Vir  
gil's poetry serves a very different use to me to-day  
from what it did to his contemporaries. Tt has often an  
acquired and accidental value merely, proving that man  
is still man in the world. It is pleasant to meet with  
such still Lines as,  
  
“Jam nto forgot fn pabite gem";  
‘Now the buds awel on the joyful stem.  
  
   
  
   
  
“Strata jeoent passin aaa quiegue sub arbore pom;  
‘The apples lie sattered everywhere, each under ita tee,  
  
In an ancient and dead language, any recognition of  
living nature attracts us. ‘These are such sentences as  
were written while grass grew and water ran. It is no  
small recommendation when book will stand the test  
of mere unobstructed sunshine and daylight  
  
‘What would we not give for some great poem to read  
now, which would be in harmony with the scenery, —  
for if men read aright, methinks they would never read  
anything but poems. No history nor philosophy ean  
‘supply their place,  
  
‘The wisest definition of poetry the poet will instantly  
prove false by setting aside its requisitions. We can,  
therefore, publish only our advertisement of it.

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SoNDAT. 99  
  
‘There is no doubt that the loftiest written wisdom  
‘either rhymed, or in some way musically meseured,—  
in form as well as substance, poetry; and a volume  
which should contain the condensed wisdom of mankind  
need not have one rhythmless line.  
  
‘Yet poetry, though the last and finest result, is  
natural fruit. As naturally 6 the oak bears an acora,  
‘and the vine a gourd, man bears a poem, either spoken  
‘or done. It is the chief and most memorable success,  
for history is but a prose narrative of poetic deeds.  
‘What else have the Hindoos, the Persians, the Baby-  
Jonians, the Egyptians done, that can be told? It is the  
simplest relation of phenomeng, and describes the com-  
monest sencations with more truth than science does,  
and the latter at a distance slowly mimics its style and  
methods. ‘The poet sings how the blood flows in his  
veins. He performs his functions, and is so well that  
he needs such stimulus to sing only as plants to put  
forth leaves and blossoms. He would strive in vain to  
modulate the remote and transient music which he  
sometimes hears, since his song is a vital function like  
breathing, and an integral result like weight. It is not  
the overflowing of life but its subsidence rather, and is  
drawn from under the feet of the poet. It is enough if  
Homer but say the sun sets. He is as serene as nature,  
‘and we can hardly detect the enthusiasm of the bard.  
cis as if nature spoke. He presents to us the simplest  
pictures of human life, so the child itself can understand  
them, and the man must not think twice to appreciate  
his naturalness. Ench reader discovers for himself that,  
with respect to the simpler features of nature, succeed-  
ing poets have done little else than copy his similes.  
‘His more memorable passages are as naturally bright as

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100 A warn.  
  
gleams ot sunshine in misty weather. Nature furnishes  
him not only with words, but with stereotyped lines and  
sentences from her mint.  
  
“Aa from the clouds appear the fll moon,  
  
All shining, and then tga it goes behind the shadowy clouds,  
  
So Hector, at one time appeared among the foremost,  
  
‘And at another in the rear, commanding; and all with brass  
  
“He shong, like tothe lightaing of mgit-bearing Zeus.”  
  
‘Ho conveys the least information, even the hour of the  
‘ay, with such magnificence and vast expense of natural  
imagery, as if it were a message from the gods.  
  
“While it was dawn, and ancred day was advancing,  
For that space the weapons of oth fw fast, andthe people fll  
Bat when now the woodeatter was preparing his morning meal,  
In the receues ofthe moustaln, and had wearid his hands  
‘With cutting oy tree, and atiety onme to his mind,  
‘And the desire of sweet fod took posession of bis thoughts;  
‘Thea the Dansans, by thelr valor, broke the phalanxes,  
Shooting to their compenions from rank to rank"  
  
‘When the army of the Trojans passed the night under  
farms, keeping watch lest the enemy should re-embark  
under cover of the dark,  
  
“They, thinkiog great things, upon the neutral ground of war  
Sat all the night; and many fires burned for them.  
‘As whoa io the heavens the stars round the bright moon  
‘Appear bountiful, and the air is without wind;  
‘And all he heighs, and the extreme suraats,  
‘And the wooded sides of the mountains appear; and from the heey.  
‘enna Infalte other is difased,  
‘And all the star ar seen; and the shepherd rejotoes in is heart;  
So betwoen the shipe and the streans of Xanthus  
“Appented the fires ofthe Trajans before lium.  
‘A thousand fies burned on the plain; and by each  
‘Sat ity, fn tho light of the Blazing fre  
‘And bores eating white barley and coro,  
Standlog by the chariots, awaited fair-throned Aurora.”  
  
‘The “ white-armed goddess Juno,” sent by the Father  
of gods and men for Iris and Apollo,

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SUNDA. 101  
  
‘Went down the Hvean mountain to far Olympas,  
‘As when the iad of man, who has come over much earth,  
  
Sats forth, end he edocta with rapid thought  
‘There was I and thor, and remembers many thingy;  
So wify the anguat Js bastonog Dew troagh the  
‘And came to high Olympan”  
‘His scenery is always true, and not invented. He  
oes not leap in imagination from Asia to Greece,  
  
through mid air,  
dee) wide wo0RA peraks  
“Oupeé re onsoivre, Badéooa re ixieooa.  
for there are vory many  
‘Shady monntaas and resounding seu Detwoen.  
If bis messengers repair but to the tent of Achilles, we  
do not wonder how they got there, but accompany them  
step by step along the shore of the resounding ses,  
Nestor’s account of the march of the Pylians against  
‘the Epeians is extremely lifelike :—  
“Then rose up to thom swest-worded Nestor, the shel orator ofthe  
Pylian,  
‘And words swestr than honey flowed from his tongue.  
‘This time, however, he addresses Patroclus alone: “A  
certain river, Minyas by name, leaps seaward near  
to Arene, where we Pylians wait the dawn, both horse  
and foot. ‘Thence with all haste wo sped us on the  
‘morrow ere "twas noonday, accoutred for the Bight, even  
to Alpheus's sacred source,” &e. We fancy that we hear  
the subdued murmuring of the Minyas discharging its  
‘waters into the main the livelong night, and the hollow  
sound of the waves breaking on the shore,—until at"  
length we are cheered at the close of a toilsome march  
by the gurgling fountains of Alpheus.  
‘There are few books which are fit to be remembered  
in our wisest hours, but the Iliad is brightest in the

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102 A weer.  
  
‘erenest days, and embodies still all the sunlight that  
fell on Asia Minor. No modern joy or ecstasy of ours  
can lower its height or dim its lustre, but there it lies in  
the east of literature, as it were the earliest and latest  
production of the mind. The ruins of Egypt oppress and  
stifle us with their dust, foulness preserved in cassia and  
pitch, and swathed in linen ; the death of that which  
never lived. But the rays of Greek poetry struggle  
down to us, and mingle with the sunbeams of the recent,  
day. The statue of Memnon is cast down, but the shaft  
of the Hiad still meets the sun in his rising.  
  
“Homer in gone; and where is Jove? and where  
  
Tho rival ites seven? Hi tong ontive  
‘Time, tower, and god,—all that hen was sve Haves.”  
  
So too, no doubt, Hlomer had his Homer, and Orpheus  
his Orpheus, in the dim antiquity which preceded them.  
‘The mythological eystem of the ancients, and it is still  
‘the mythology of the moderns, the poem of mankind, in-  
terwoven so wonderfully with their astronomy, and  
matching in grandeur and harmony the architecture of  
the heavens themselves, seems to point to a time when a  
mightier genius inbabited the earth. But, after all, man  
is the great poet, and not Homer nor Shakespeare; and  
our language itself, and the common arts of life, are his  
‘work. Poetry is #0 universally true and independent of  
experience, that it does not need any particular biography  
to illustrate it, but we rofer it sooner or later to some  
Orpheus or Linus, and after ages to the genius of human-  
ity and the gods themselves.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
It would be worth the while to select our reading, for  
books are the society we keep ; to read only the serenely  
true; never statistics, nor fiction, nor news, nor reports,

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SUNDAY. 103  
  
nor periodicals, but only great poems, and when they  
failed, read them again, or perchance write more. In-  
stead of other sacrifice, we might offer up our perfect  
(redeia) thoughts to the gods daily, in hymns or psalms.  
For we should be at the helm at least once a day. The  
whole of the day should not be daytime ; there should  
bbe one hour, if no more, which the day did not bring  
forth. Scholars are wont to sell their birthright for a  
mess of learning. But is it necessary to know what the  
speculator prints, or the thoughtless study, or the idle  
read, the literature of the Russians and the Chinese, or  
even French philosophy and much of German eriticiam.  
Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance  
to read them at all. “There are the worshippers with  
offerings, and the worshippers with mortifieations ; and  
again the worshippers with enthusiastic devotion; so  
there are those the wisdom of whose reading is their  
worship, men of subdued passions and severe manners ;  
—This world is not for him who doth not worship 5 and  
where, O Arjoon, is there another?” Certainly, we do  
not need to be soothed and entertained alvways like chil-  
Gren, He who resorts to the easy novel, because hi  
languid, does no better than if he took a nap. ‘The front  
‘aspect of great thoughta can only be enjoyed by those  
who stand on the side whence they arrive. Books, not  
which afford us a cowering enjoyment, but in which each  
thought is of unusual daring ; such as an idle man cannot  
read, and a timid one would not be entertained by, which  
even make us dangerous to existing institutions, — such  
call I good books.  
  
‘All that are printed and bound are not books; they  
do not necessarily belong to letters, but are oftener to be  
ranked with the other luxuries and appendages of civil-

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104 A ware.  
  
ized life. Base wares are palmed off under a thousand  
disguises. “The way to trade,” as a pedler once told  
mo, ‘is to put it right through,” no matter what it is,  
anything that is agreed on.  
  
“You grovling wordings, you whove wisdom trades  
‘Where light ne'er abot hia golden ray.”  
  
   
  
By dint of able writing and pen-craft, books are cun-  
ningly compiled, and have their run and success even  
among the learned, as if they were the result of a new  
‘man’s thinking, and their birth were attended with some  
natural throes. Bat in a little while their covers fall  
‘off, for no binding will avail, and it appears that they  
are not Books or Bibles at all. ‘There are new and pat-  
ented inventions in this shape, purporting to be for the  
elevation of the race, which many ® pure scholar and  
genius who has learned to read is for a moment deceived  
by, and finds himself reading a horse-rake, or  
  
Jenny, or wooden nutmeg, or oak-leaf cigar, or steam-  
ower press, or kitchen range, perchance, when he was  
  
seeking setene and biblical truths.  
Merchants, arse,  
‘And mingle conscience with your merchandise.”  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Paper is cheap, and authors need not now erase one  
book before they write another. Instead of cultivating  
the earth for wheat and potatoes, they cultivate litera  
ture, and fill a place in the Republic of Letters. Or  
they would fain write for fame merely, as others actually  
raise crops of grain to be distilled into brandy. Books  
are for the most part wilfully and hastily written, as  
parts of @ system, to supply a want real or imagined.  
Books of natural history aim commonly to be hasty  
schedules, or inventories of God's property, by some  
alerk, ‘They do not in the least teach the divine view

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suxpar, 105  
  
of nature, but the popular view, or rather the popular  
‘method of studying nature, and make haste to conduct  
the persevering pupil only into that dilemma where tho  
professors always dwell.  
  
“To Athens gowned be gos, and from that school  
  
Refuros uneped, a more instrcted fol.”  
They teach the elements really of ignorance, not of  
knowledge, for, to speak deliberately and in view of the  
highest traths, it is not easy to distinguish clomentary  
Knowledge. ‘There is a chasm between knowledge and  
ignorance which the arches of science can never span.  
‘A book should contain pare discoveries, glimpses of terra  
firma, though by shipwrecked mariners, and not the-art  
of navigation by those who have never been out of sight  
of land. They must not yield wheat and potatoes, but  
rust themselves be the unconstrained and natural hare  
vest of their author's lives.  
“What Ihave learned i mine; Ive had my thong,  
  
‘And me the Muses noble traths have taught”  
  
We do not learn much from learned books, but from,  
true, sincere, human books, from frank and honest biog-  
raphies. The life of a good man will hardly improve  
‘us more than the life of freebooter, for the inevitable  
Jaws appear as plainly in the infringement as in the ob-  
servance, and our lives are sustained by a nearly equal  
expense of virtue of some kind. ‘The decaying tree,  
while yet it lives, demands sun, wind, and rain no less  
than the green one. It secretes eap and performs the  
functions of health. If we choose, we may study the  
‘alburnum only. ‘The goarled stump has as tender a bad  
as the sapling,  
  
At least let us have healthy books, a stout horse-rake  
oe

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106 A warn.  
  
or akitchen range which is not cracked. Let not the  
poet shed tears only for the public weal. He should be  
as vigorous a8 a sugar-maple, with sap enough to main-  
tain bis own verdure, beside what rans into the troughs,  
and not like @ vine, which being cat in the spring bears  
no fruit, but bleeds to death in the endeavor to heal its  
‘wounds. ‘The poet is he that bath fat enough, like bears  
and marmots, tosuck his clawsall winter. He hibernates  
in this world, and feeds on his own marrow. We love  
to think in winter, as we walk over the snowy pastures,  
of those happy dreamers that lie under the sod, of dor-  
mice and all that race of dormant creatures, which have  
such superfluity of life enveloped in thick folds of fur,  
impervious to cold. Alas, the poet too is, in one sense,  
‘8 sort of dormouse gone into winter quarters of deep and  
serene thoughts, insensible to surrounding circumstances 5  
his words are the relation of his oldest and finest memory,  
‘a wisdom drawn from the remotest experience. Other  
men lead a starved existence, meanwhile, like hawks,  
that would fain keep on the wing, and trust to pick up a  
sparrow now and then.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘There aro already essays and poems, the growth of  
this land, which are not in vain, all which, however, we  
could conveniently have stowed in the till of our chest,  
If the gods permitted their own inspiration tobe breathed  
in vain, these might be overlooked in the crowd, but the  
accents of truth are as sure fo be heard at Iast on earth  
as in heaven, They already ceem ancient, and in somo  
measure have lost the traces of their modern birth, Here  
are they who  
  
“ak for that which is our whol life's light,  
For the perpetual, true and clear insight”

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SUNDAY. 107  
  
I remember a few sentences which apring like the sward  
in its native pasture, where ite roots were never disturbed,  
and not as if spread over a sandy embankment ;answer-  
ing to the poet’s prayer,  
“Lat wna 9 Jost  
Aratoon knowledge, thatthe word may trast  
“Tho poet's sentence, and nt ell ver  
Each ari to tae fattore:  
But, above all, in our native port, did we not frequent  
the peaceful games of the Lyceum, from which anew era  
will be dated to New England, as from the games of  
Greece. For if Herodotus carried his history to Olympia  
toread, afier the cestus and the race, have we not heard  
such histories recited there, which since our countrymen,  
hhave read, as made Greece sometimes to be forgotten ?  
—Philosophy, too, has there her grove and portico, not  
wholly unfrequented in these days.  
Lately the vietor, whom all Pindars praised, has won,  
‘another palm, contending, with  
“Olympian bard who rang  
Divine ideas below,  
Which always fod'us young,  
‘And always eop aa 0.”  
‘What earth or sea, mountain or stream, or Muses’ spring  
for grove, is safe from his all-searching ardent eye, who  
drives off Phoebus’ beaten track, visits unwonted zones,  
makes the gelid Hyperboreans glow, and the old polar  
serpent writhe, and many a Nile flow back and hide bis  
head!  
  
   
  
   
  
‘That Phacton of our day,  
‘Who'd make another milky way,  
‘And bara the world up with his ray  
  
By ws an undisputed seer, —  
Who'd drive hin faming car so near  
‘Wato our shuddering mortal sphere,

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108 A were.  
  
Diogracog all oar slender worth,  
‘And seorching up the living earth,  
‘To prove his heavealy birth.  
  
   
  
‘The silver apokes, the golden tre,  
Are glowing with unwonted fre,  
‘Aas ever nigher roll and niger;  
  
‘The pion and axle melted are,  
‘The silver mail fy af,  
‘Ab, bo will spoil his Father's car!  
  
‘Who lot him have th steds he cannot steer?  
lenceforth the san will not shine fora years  
‘And we shall Ethiops all appear.  
  
‘From his  
  
   
  
‘ips of canning fll  
‘The thrling Delphi oracle.”  
And yet, sometimes,  
‘We shold not mind if on our ear thre fell  
Some less of cunning, more of oracle.  
  
It is Apollo shining in your face. O rare Contempo-  
rary, lot us have far-off heats. Give us the subtler, the  
heavenlier though fleeting beauty, which passes through  
and through, and dwells not in the verse; even pure  
water, which but reflects those tints which wine wears in  
its grain. Let epic trade-winds blow, and cease this  
waltz of inspirations. Let us oftener feel even the gen-  
tle southwest wind upon our cheeks blowing from the  
Indian’s heaven. What though we lose a thousand me-  
teors from the sky, if skyey depths, if stardust and un-  
  
iscolvable nebula remain? What though we lose a  
thousand wise responses of the oracle, if we may have  
instead some natural acres of Ionian earth ?  
  
‘Though we know well,  
  
“That ‘in notin tho power of ngs for president] to raise  
  
A spirit for verse that is not bora thereto,  
‘Nor are they born in evory prince's days”;

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SUNDAY. 109  
  
yet spite of all they sang in praise of their Elizn’s  
‘reign,” we have evidence that poets may be bora and  
sing in our day, in the presidency of James K. Polk,  
  
“And that tho utmont powers of English rhyme,”  
‘Were not “within her peaceful reign confined.”  
  
‘The propheey of the poet Daniel is already how much  
‘more than fulfilled!  
“kod who a tne knows whither wo may vent  
  
‘The treasure of our tongue? ‘To what strange shorws  
  
‘This gain of our bet glory shall be sent,  
  
TP earch unknowing nations with or sree?  
  
‘What worlds in th’ yot unformed oecident,  
  
May come refined with the acoent that are our.”  
  
Enough has been ssid in these days of the charm of  
fiuent writing. . We hear it complained of some works of  
genius, that they have fine thoughts, but are irregular  
‘and have no flow. But even the mountain peaks in the  
horizon are, to the eye of science, parts of one range.  
‘We should consider that the flow of thought is more like  
f tidal wave than a prone river, and is the result of a  
celestial influence, not of any declivity in its channel.  
‘The river flows because it runs down hill, and flows  
the faster the faster it descends. ‘The reader who expects,  
to float down stream for the whole voyage, may well  
complain of nauseating swells and choppings of the ses  
when his frail shore-craft gets amidst the billows of the  
ocean stream, which flows as mach to sun and moon a8  
lesser streams toit. But if we would appreciate the flow  
that is in these books, we must expect to feel it rise from  
the page like an exhalation, and wash away our eritical  
brains like burr millstones, lowing to higher levels above  
‘and behind ourselves. There is many a book which  
ripples on like a freshet, and flows as glibly as « mill-

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110 A were,  
  
stream sucking under @ causeway ; and when their au-  
‘thors are in the fall tide of their discourse, Pythagoras  
‘and Plato and Jamblichus balt beside them. Their  
long, stringy, slimy sentences are of that consistency that  
they naturally flow and run together. ‘They read as if  
written for military men, for men of business, there is  
such a despatch in them. Compared with these, the  
grave thinkers and philosophers seem not to have got  
their ewaddling-clothes off; they are slower than a Ro-  
‘man army in its mareb, the rear camping to-night where  
the van camped last night. ‘The wise Jamblichus eddies  
and gleams like a watery slough.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
(F Sidoey, or of Spentr, or their books?  
And yet brave fllows, and presume of fame,  
  
‘And seem fo bear down all the world with looks.”  
  
‘The ready writer seizes the pen, and shouts, Forward!  
Alamo and Fanning! and after rolls the tide of war.  
‘The very walls and fences seem to travel. But the  
‘most rapid trot is no flow after all; and thither, reader,  
you ana I, at least, will not follow.  
  
A perfectly healthy sentence, it is true, is extremely  
rare. For the most part we miss the hue and fragrance  
of the thought ; as if we could be satisfied with the dews  
of the morning or evening without their colors, or the  
heavens without their azure. The most attractive sen  
tences are, perhaps, not the wisest, but the surest and  
roundest. They are spoken firmly and conclusively, as  
if the speaker had a right to know what he says, and if  
not wise, they have at least been well learned. Sir Wale  
tor Raleigh might well be studied if only for the excel-  
lence of his style, for he is remarkable in the midst of s0  
many masters, ‘There is a natural emphasis in his style,

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suxpar. ML  
  
Tike @ man's tread, and breathing spaco between the  
sentences, which the best of modern writing does not  
farnish. His chapters are like English parks, or say  
rather like a Western forest, where the larger growth  
‘keeps down the underwood, and one may ride on horse-  
‘back through the openings. All the distinguished writ-  
ers of that period possess a greater vigor and natural-  
ness than the more modera, — for it is allowed to slander  
our own time, —and when we read a quotation from one  
of them in the midst of a modern author, we seem to  
have come suddenly upon ® greener ground, a greater  
depth and strength of soil. Tt is as if a green bough  
were laid across the page, and wo are refreshed as by  
the sight of fresh grass in midwinter or early spring,  
‘You have constantly the warrant of life and expe-  
rience in what you reed. ‘The little that is said is  
eked out by implication of the much that was done.  
‘The sentences are verdurous and blooming as evergreen  
and flowers, because they are rooted in fact and expe-  
rience, but our false and florid sentence have only the  
tints of flowers without their sap or roots. All men are  
really most attracted by the beauty of plain speech, and  
they even write in a florid style in imitation of this.  
‘They prefer to be misunderstood rather than to come  
short of its exuberance. Hussein Effendi praised the  
epistolary style of Ibrabim Pasha to the French travel-  
ler Botta, because of “the dificulty of understanding it;  
there was,” he said, “ but one person at Jidda, who was  
capable of understanding and explaining the Past  
correspondence.” A man's whole life is taxed for the  
least thing well done. It is its net result. Every sen~  
tence is the result of a long probation. Where shall we  
look for standard English, but to the words of a stand-

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12 A wenn.  
  
ard man? The word which is best said came nearest to  
not being spoken at all, for itis cousin to a deed which  
‘the speaker could have better done. Nay, almost it  
‘must have taken the place of a deed by some urgent  
necessity, even by somo misfortune, so that the truest  
writer will be some captive knight, after all. And per-  
hhaps the fates had such a design, when, having stored  
Raleigh s0 richly with the substance of life and experi-  
ence, they made him a fast prisoner, and compelled him  
to make his words his deeds, and transfer to his expres-  
sion the emphasis and sincerity of his action.  
  
‘Men have a respect for scholarship and learning  
greatly ont of proportion to the use they commonly  
serve. We are amused to read how Bea Jonson en-  
gaged, that the dull masks with which the roysl family  
and nobility wero to be entertained should be “ grounded  
‘upon antiquity and solid learning.” Can there be any  
‘greater reproach than an idle learning? Learn to split  
‘wood, at least. ‘The necessity of labor and conversation  
with many men and things, to the scholar is rarely well  
remembered; steady labor with the hands, which en-  
grosses the attention also, is unquestionably the best  
method of removing palaver and sentimentality out of  
one’s style, both of epeaking and writing. If he has  
worked hard from morning till night, though be may  
have grieved that he could not be watching the train of  
his thoughts during that time, yet the few hasty lines  
which at evening record his day's experienco will be  
more musical and true than hie freest but idle faney  
could have furnished. Surely the writer is to address  
world of laborers, and such therefore must be his own  
discipline, Ho will not idly dance at his work who has  
‘wood to ent and ord before nightfall in the short days

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scnpar. M3  
  
of winter ; but every stroke will be husbanded, and ring  
oberly through the wood; and so will the strokes of  
that scholar’s pen, which at evening record the story of  
the day, ring soberly, yet cheerily, on the ear of the  
reader, long after the echoes of his axe have died away.  
The scholar may be sure that he writes the tougher  
truth for the calluses on his palms. ‘They give firmness  
to the sentence. Indeed, the mind never makes a great  
and successful effort, without a corresponding energy of  
the body. We are often struck by the force and pre  
of style to which hard-working men, unpractised  
in writing, easily attain when required to make the effort.  
‘As if plainness, and vigor, and sincerity, the ornaments  
of style, were better learned on the farm and in the  
‘workshop, than in the schools. ‘The sentences written  
by such rude hands are nervous and tough, like hard-  
cened thongs, the sinews of the deer, or the roots of the  
pine. As for the graces of expression, a great thought  
is mever fond ina mean dress; but though it proceed  
from the lips of the Woloffs the nine Bfuses and the  
three Graces will have conspired to clothe it in fit  
phrase. Tis education has always been liberal, and its  
implied wit ean endow a college. ‘The world, which tho  
Greeks called Beauty, has been made such by being  
gradually divested of every ornament which was not  
fitted to endure. ‘The Sibyl, ‘speaking with inspired  
mouth, smileless, inornate, and unperfumed, pierces  
through centuries by the power of the god.” The  
‘scholar might frequently emulate the propriety and em-  
phasis of the farmer’s call to his team, and confess that  
if that were written it would surpass his labored sen-  
tences. Whose are the truly labored sentences? From  
the weak and flimsy periods of the politician and literary

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us A were,  
  
rman, we are glad to tun even to the description of work,  
the simple record of the month's labor in the farmer's  
falmanec, to restore our tone and spirits, A sentence  
should read as fits author, hed he held « plovgh instead  
of pen, could have drawn a furrow deep and straight  
to the end. ‘The scholar requires hard and serious labor  
to give an impetus to his thought, He will learn to  
grasp the pen firmly so, and wield it gracefully and  
effectively, as an axe or @ sword. When we consider  
the weak and nerveless periods of some literary men,  
‘who perchance in feet and inches come up to the stand~  
ard of their race, and are not deficient ia girth also, we  
fare amazed at the immense sacrifice of thews and sin-  
ews, What! these proportions, — these bones, —and  
this their work! Hands which could have felled an ox  
have hewed this fragile matter which would not have  
tasked a ledy’s fingers! Can this be a stalwart man’s  
work, who bas a marrow in his back and a tendon  
Ackilles in his heel? ‘They who set up the blocks of  
Stonehenge did somewhat, if they only Inid out their  
strength for once, and stretched themselves.  
  
Yet, afterall, the truly efficient laborer will not erowd  
hhis day with work, but will saunter to his task surround-  
ed by a wide halo of ease and leisure, and then do but  
what he loves best. He is anxious only about the  
fruitful kernels of time. ‘Though the hen should sit all  
day, she could lay only one egg, and, besides, would not  
hhave picked up materials for another. Let a man take  
time enough for the most trivial deed, though it be but  
the paring of his nails. ‘The buds ewell imperceptibly,  
without hurry or confusion, as if the short spring days  
were an eternity.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘Then epend an age in whetting thy desir,  
‘Thou needs't not hasten if thou dost sand fot

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SUNDAY. 15  
  
Some hours seem not to be oceasion for any deed, but  
for resolves to draw breath in. We do not directly go  
about the execution of the purpose that thrills us, bat  
shut our doors behind us and ramble with prepared  
‘ind, as if the half were already done. Our resolution  
is taking root or hold on the earth then, as seeds first  
send shoot downward which is fed by their own slbu-  
‘men, ere they send one upward to the light.  
  
‘There is a sort of homely truth and naturalness in  
ome books which is very rare to find, and yet looks  
cheap enough. ‘There may be nothing lofty in the tenti-  
‘ment, or fine in the expression, but itis careless country  
talk. Homeliness is almost as great a merit in a book  
fas in ® hovse, if the reader would abide there. It is  
next to beauty, and a very high art. Some have this  
merit only. The scholar is not apt to make his most  
familiar experience come gracefully to the aid of his ex-  
pression. Very fow men can speak of Nature, for  
instance, with any truth. ‘They overstep her modesty,  
somehow or other, and confer no favor. ‘They do not  
speak good word for her. Most ery better than they  
speak, and you can get more nature out of them by  
pinching than by addressing them. ‘The surlinoss wi  
‘which the woodchopper speaks of his woods, handling  
‘them as indifferently as his axe, is better than the mealy-  
mouthed enthusiasm of the lover of nature. Better that  
the primrose by the river’s brim be a yellow primrose,  
‘and nothing more, than that it be something Tess. Au-  
‘rey relates of Thomas Fuller that his was “a very  
working head, insomuch that, walking and meditating  
before dinner, he would eat up penny loaf, not know-  
ing that he did it, His natural memory was very great,

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16 A were,  
  
to which he added the art of memory. He woold repeat  
to you forwards and backwards all the signs from Lud-  
‘He says of Mr. John Hales,  
that, “He loved Canarie,” and was buried “under an  
altar monument of black marble — — with s too  
ong epitaph”; of Edmund Halley, that he “at sixteen  
could make a dil, and then, he said, he thought himself  
‘a brave fellow”; of William Holder, who wrote a book  
upon his caring one Popham who was deaf and dumb,  
“he was beholding to no author; did only consult with  
natore.” For the most part, an author consults only  
with all who have written before him upon a subject, and  
his book is but the advice of so many. But a good book  
‘will never have been forestalled, but the topic itself will  
in one sense be new, and its author, by consulting with  
nature, will consult not only with those who have gone  
before, but with those who may come after, ‘There is  
always room and occasion enough for a true book on any  
subject; as there is room for more light the brightest  
ay and more rays will not interfere with the first.  
  
   
  
‘We thus worked our way up this river, gradually ad-  
justing our thoughts to novelties, beholding from its placid  
‘bosom a new nature and new works of men, and, as it  
‘were with inereasing confidence, finding nature still habi-  
table, genial, and propitious to us; not following any  
beaten path, but the windings of the river, as ever the  
nearest way for us. Fortunately we bad no business in  
this country. ‘The Concord had rarely been a river, or  
rivus, but barely fluvius, or between flueius and lacus.  
‘This Merrimack was neither rivus nor flueius nor lacus,  
but rather amnis here, a gently swelling and stately  
rolling flood approaching the sea. We could even sym

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SUNDAY. uur  
  
pathize with its buoyant tide, going to ecek ite fortune  
in the ocean, and, anticipating the time when “being  
received within the plain of its freer water” it should  
“beat the shores for banks,”  
  
   
  
   
  
“eron ago, pro petra pat  
At length we doubled low shrubby islet, called  
Rabbit Island, subjected alternately to the sun and to  
the waves, as desolate as if it Iny some leagues within  
the icy sea, and found ourselves in a narrower part of  
the river, near the sheds and yards for picking the stone  
known as the Chelmsford granite, which is quarried in  
‘Westford and the neighboring towns. We passed Wica-  
suck Island, which contains seventy acres or more, on  
‘our right, between Chelmsford and Tyngsborough. This  
‘was a favorite residence of the Indians. According to  
the History of Dunstable, “ About. 1669, the eldest son  
of Passaconaway [Chief of the Penacooks] was thrown  
into jail for a debt of £45, due to John Tinker, by one  
of his tribe, and which he had promised verbally should  
bbe paid. To relieve him from his imprisonment, his  
brother Wannalancet and others, who owned Wicasuck  
Taland, sold it and paid the debt.” It was, however, re-  
stored to the Indians by the General Court in 1665.  
‘After the departure of the Indians in 1683, it wus  
‘granted to Jonathan ‘Tyng in payment for his services  
to tho colony, in maintaining a garrison at his house.  
‘Tyng's house stood not far from Wicasuck Falla. Goo-  
kin, who, in his Epistle Dedicatory to Robert Boyle,  
apologizes for presenting his “matter clothed in a wi  
derness dress,” says that on the breaking out of Phil  
war in 1675, there were taken up by the Ch  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
tian  
Todians and the English in Marlborough, and sent to

Page-7598

8 A WEEK.  
  
Cambridge, seven “Indians belonging to Narragansett,  
Long Island, and Pequod, who had all been at work  
about seven weeks with one Mr. Jonathan Tyng, of  
Dunstable, upon Merrimack River; and, hearing of the  
war, they reckoned with their master, and getting their  
‘wages, conveyed themselves away without his privity,  
‘and, being afraid, marched secretly through the woods,  
designing to go to their own country.” However, they  
were released soon after. Such were the hired men in  
those days. ‘Tyng was the first permanent settler of  
Dunstable, which then embraced what is’ now Tyngs-  
borough and many other towns. In the winter of  
1675, in Philip's war, every other settler left the town,  
but “he,” says the historian of Dunstable, “fortified his  
hhouse; and, although ‘obliged to send to Boston for  
food,’ sat himself down in the midst of bis savage  
‘enemies, alone, in the wilderness, to defend his home.  
Deeming his position an important one for the defence of  
the frontiers, in February, 1676, he petitioned the Colony  
for aid,” hambly showing, as his petition runs, that, as he  
lived ‘in the uppermost house on Merrimac river, lying  
as it  
he could  
country if only be had  
"he suid, “never a  
hhabitant left in the town but mysel” Wherefore he  
requests that their “Honors would be pleased to order  
hhim three or four men to help garrison his said house,”  
which they did. But methinks that euch a garrison  
‘would be weakened by the addition of a man.  
“blue bandog thy aout watch to bark at thief,  
ike courage for lif, tobe enpitain  
  
Make trap-door thy bulwark, make boll begin,  
‘Make gusstone and arrow show who is within.”  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘open to y\* enemy, yet being #0 seated tha  
‘were, a watch-house to the neighboring towns  
render important service to

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suxDAr. 9  
  
‘Thus he earned the title of first permanent settler. In  
1694 a law was passed “that every settler who deserted  
‘town for fear of the Indians should forfit all his rights  
therein.” But now, at any rate, as I have frequently  
observed, a man may desert the fertile frontier territories  
of trath and justice, which are the State's best lands, for  
fear of far more insignificant foes, without forfeiting any  
of his civil rights therein. Nay, townships are granted  
to deserters, and the General Court, as I am sometimes  
inclined to regard it, is bot a deserters’ camp itself.  
  
‘As we rowed along near the shore of Wicasuck Island,  
which was then covered with wood, in onder to avoid the  
current, two men, who looked as if they had just ron  
out of Lowell, where they had been waylaid by the  
Sabbath, meaning to go to Nasbus, and who now found  
themselves in the strange, natural, uncultivated, and  
‘unsettled part of the globe which intervenes, full of walls  
and barriers, a rough and uncivil place to them, seeing  
‘our boat moving so smoothly up the stream, called out  
from the high bank above our heads to know if we  
‘would take them as passengers, as if this were the street  
‘they had missed; that they might sit and chat and drive  
‘away the time, and so at last find themselves in Nashua.  
This smooth way they much preferred. But our boat  
was crowded with necessary furniture, and sunk low in  
the water, and moreover required to be worked, for even  
At did not progress against the stream without effort #0  
‘we were obliged to deny them passage. As we glided  
away with even sweeps, while the fates scattered oil in  
oar course, the sun now sinking bebind the alders on the  
distant shore, we could still see them far off over the  
water, running along the shore and climbing over the  
rocks and fallen trees like insects, —for they did not

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120 A Warn,  
  
iknow any better than we that they were on an island, —  
the unsympathizing river ever flowing in an opposite  
direction; until, having reached the entrance of the  
island brook, which they had probably crossed upon the  
locks below, they found a more effectual barrier to their  
progress. ‘They seemed to be learning much in « little  
‘time. ‘They ran about like ants on a burning brand,  
‘and once more they tried the river here, and once more  
there, to see if water still indeed was not to be walked  
on, as if a new thought inspired them, and by some pecu-  
liar disposition of the limbs they could accomplish it  
At length sober common sense seemed to have resumed  
its sway, and they concluded that what they had so long  
hheard most be true, and resolved to ford the shallower  
stream. When nearly a mile distant we could see them  
stripping off their clothes and preparing for this experi-  
ment; yet it seemed likely that a new dilemma would  
arise, they were so thonghtlessly throwing away their  
clothes on the wrong side of the stream, as in the case  
of the countryman with his corn, his fox, and his goose,  
which hed to be transported one at a time. Whether  
they got aafely through, or went round by the locks, we  
never learned. We could not help being struck by the  
seeming, though innocent indifference of Nature to these  
men’s necessities, while elsewhere she was equally serv-  
ing others. Like a true benefactress, the secret of her  
rervice is unchangeableness. ‘Thus is the busiest mer-  
‘chant, though within sight of his Lowell, put to pilgrim’  
shifts, and soon comes to staff and scrip and scallop  
shell  
  
‘We, too, who held the middle of the stream, came  
near experiencing a pilgrim’s fate, being tempted to  
pursue what seemed a sturgeon oF larger fish, for we re-

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suxpax. 121  
  
   
  
   
  
mombered that this was the Sturgeon River,  
snd monstrous back alternately rising and  
rmid-stream. We kept falling behind, but the fish kept  
his back well out, and did not dive, and seemed to prefer  
to swim against the stream, 60, at any rate, he would not  
escape us by going out to sea. At length, having got  
‘as near as was convenient, and looking out not to get a  
blow from his tail, now the bow-gunner delivered his  
charge, while the stera-man held his ground. Bat the  
halibut-skinned monster, in one of these swift-liding  
pregnant moments, without ever ceasing his bobbing up  
and down, saw fit, without a chuckle or other prelude, to  
proclaim himself a hago imprisoned spar, placed there aa  
‘a buoy, to warn sailors of sunken rocks. So, each cast-  
ing some blame upon th other, we withdrew quickly to  
safer waters.  
  
‘The Scene-hifter saw fit here to close the drama, of  
this day, without regard to any unities which we mortals  
prize, Whether it might have proved tragedy, or com-  
cedy, oF tragi-comedy, or pastoral, we cannot tell. This  
Sunday ended by the going down of the sun, leaving us  
still on the waves. But they who are on the water  
enjoy a longer and brighter twilight than they who are  
fon the Innd, for here the water, as well ns the atmosphere,  
absorbs and reflects the light, and some of the day seems  
to have sunk down into the waves. The light gradual-  
ly forsook the deep water, as well as the deeper air, and  
the gloaming came to the fishes as well as to us, and  
more dim and gloomy to them, whose day is a perpetual  
twilight, though sufficiently bright for their weak and  
watery eyes. Vespers had already rung in many a dim  
‘and watery chapel down below, where the shadows of  
‘the weeds were extended in length aver the sandy floor.  
  
‘

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192 A WEEK.  
  
‘The vespertinal pout had already begun to fit on leath-  
em fin, and the finny gossips withdrew from the fluvial  
street to erveks and coves, and other private haunts,  
excepting few of stronger fin, which anchored in the  
stream, stemming the tide even in their dreams. Mean-  
while, like a dark evening cloud, we were wafted over  
the cope of their sky, deepening the shadows on their  
deluged fields.  
  
Having reached retired part of the river where it  
spread out to sixty rods in width, we pitched our tent on  
the east side, in Tyngsborough, just above some patches of  
the beach plum, which was now nearly ripe, where the  
sloping bank was a sufficient pillow, and with the bustle  
of sailors making the land, we transferred such stores as  
‘were required from boat to tent, and hung a lantern to  
the tent-pole, and 0 our house was ready. With a buf-  
falo epread on the grass, and a blanket for our covering  
four bed was soon made. A fire crackled merrily before  
the entrance, so near that we could tend it without step-  
ping abroad, and when we had supped, we put out the  
Diaze, and closed the door, and with the semblance of  
domestic comfort, sat up to read the Gazeticer, to learn  
our latitude and longitude, and write the journal of the  
‘voyage, or listened to the wind and the rippling of the  
river till sleep overtook us. ‘There we lay under an oak  
fon the bank of the stream, near to some farmer's corn-  
field, getting sleep, and forgetting where we weres a  
great blessing, that we are obliged to forget our enter-  
rises every twelve hours, Minks, muskrats, meadow=  
‘mice woodchucks, sqairrels, skunks, rabbits, foxes, and  
‘weasels, all inhabit near, but keep very close while you  
are there. The river sucking and eddying away all  
night down toward the marts and the seaboard, a great

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suNDAT. 128  
  
wash and freshet, and no small enterprise to reflect on.  
Instead of the Scythian vastness of the Billeriea night,  
and its wild musical sounds, we were kept awake by the  
boisterous sport of some Irish Inborers on the railroad,  
‘wafted to us over the water, sill unwearied and unresting  
‘on this seventh day, who would not have done with  
whirling up and down the track with ever increasing  
‘velocity and still reviving shouts, til late in the night.  
  
One sailor was visited in his dreams this night by the  
Evil Destinies, and all those powers that are hostile to  
hbuman life, which constrain and oppress the minds of  
‘men, and make their path seem diffcalt and narrow, and  
beset with dangers, 40 that the most innocent and worthy  
enterprises appear insolent and a tempting of fate, and  
the gods go not with us. But the other happily passed  
‘serene and even ambrosial or immortal night, and his  
sleep was dreamleas, or only the atmosphere of pleasant  
dreams remained, a happy natural sleep until the morn-  
ing and his cheerful spirit soothed and reassured his  
brother, for whenever they meet, the Good Genius is  
sure to prevail.

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noes Google

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MONDAY.  
  
“er agate fr ttn alan  
"The word whabenowed vei dala,  
Boas Tous, masala”  
  
comm.  
  
‘ene hye she of Netra,  
ym bei your made.”  
“Robin Hood Ballad,

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‘Rs sons tus bt ny ae,  
‘et fee aot he arowe fa ain,  
York et ene of thn series wee,  
‘dod Willa «ret was alae”  
“Rotin ood Batads  
  
anton the Heavens oe what he mist Hath  
Britons’ Pastors

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MONDAY.  
  
‘Waren the first light dawned on the earth, and the  
birds awoke, and the brave river was heard rippling  
confidently seaward, and the nimble early rising wind  
rrustled the oak leaves about our tent, all men, having  
reinforced their bodies and their souls with sleep, and  
cast aside doubt and fear, were invited to unattempted  
‘adventures.  
  
   
  
   
  
“ AM courageous Kntchtis  
‘Aguins the day dichtis  
‘The breest plat that bricht in,  
  
"To fght withthe fous.  
‘The stoned sted stampis  
‘Throw corage and erampis,  
Syne oa the land lamp  
  
‘The night is neir gous.  
  
   
  
   
  
One of us took the boat over to the opposite shore,  
which was flat and accessible, a quarter of a mile dis-  
tant, to empty it of water and wash out the clay,  
while the other kindled a fire and got breakfast ready.  
At an early hour we were again on our way, rowing  
‘through the fog as before, the river already awake, and  
‘million crisped waves come forth to meet the sun when  
hhe should show himself; The countrymen, recruited by  
their day of rest, wore already stirring, and had begun,  
to cross the ferry on the business of the week. This  
ferry was as busy as s beaver dam, and all the world

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128 A WEEE.  
  
seemed anxious to get across the Merrimack River at  
this particular point, waiting to get set over, — children  
with their two cents dove up in paper, jail-birds broke  
loose and constable with warrant, travellers from distant  
lands to distant lands, men and women to whom the  
‘Merrimack River was « bar. ‘There stands a gig in the  
‘gray morning, in the mist, the impatient traveller pacing,  
the wet shore with whip in hand, and shouting through  
the fog after the regardless Charon and his retreating  
ark, as if he might throw that passenger overboard and  
return forthwith for himself; he will compensate him.  
He is to break his fast at some unseen place on the op-  
posite side, It may be Ledyard or the Wandering Jew.  
‘Whence, pray, did he come out of the foggy night ? and  
whither through the sunny day will ho go? We observe  
only his transit ; important to us, forgotten by him, tran-  
  
ing all day. ‘There are two of them. Bay be, they  
are Virgil and Dante, But when they crossed the Styx,  
none were seen bound up or down the stream, that I  
remember. It is only a transjectus, a transitory voyage,  
like life itself, none but the long-lived gods bound up or  
down the stream. Many of these Monday men are  
ministers, no doubt, reseeking their parishes with hired  
horses, with sermons in their valises all read and gutted,  
the day after never with them. ‘They crose each other’s  
routes all the country over like woof and warp, making  
1 garment of loose texture ; vacation now for six days.  
‘They stop to pick nuts and berries, and gather apples  
by the wayside at their leisure. Good religious men,  
with the love of men in their hearts, and the means o  
pay their toll in their pockets. We got over this ferry  
chain without scraping, rowing athwart the tide of travel,  
no toll for us that day.

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MONDAY. 129  
  
‘The fog dispersed and we rowed leisurely slong  
through Tyngsborough, with a clear sky and a mild at-  
mosphere, leaving the habitations of men behind and  
penetrating yet farther into the territory of ancient  
Danstable. It was from Dunstable, then a frontier town,  
that the famous Captain Lovewell, with his company,  
marched in quest of the Indians on the 18th of April,  
1725. He was the son of “an ensign in the army of  
Oliver Cromwell, who came to this country, and settled  
‘at Dunstable, where he died at the great age of one hun-  
dred and twenty years.” In the words of the old nursery  
tale, sung about a hundred years ago, —  
  
“Ho and his valiant soldiers did range the woods full wide,  
  
‘And hardship they eodared to quel th Indian's pide’  
  
In the shaggy pine forest of Pequawket they met the  
“rebel Indians,” and prevailed, after a bloody fight, and  
‘a remnant returned home to enjoy the fame of their vie-  
tory. A township called Lovewell’s Town, but now, for  
some reason, or perhaps without reason, Pembroke, was  
granted them by the State.  
“ Of all our valiant English, there were bat thirty-four,  
  
‘And of the rebel Indios, there were about fouraceres  
  
‘And sixteen of our English did safely home retur,  
‘The rst were killed and wonnded, fr which wo all must mourn.  
  
   
  
   
  
“Our worthy Capt. Lovewell among them there did de,  
‘They Killed Lient. Robbins, end wounded good young Frye,  
‘Who was our English Chapin; he many Indians slew,  
‘And some of them he seapod while ballet round him flow.  
Our brave forefathers have exterminated all the In-  
  
dians, and their degenerate children no longer dwell in  
  
garrisoned houses nor hear any war-whoop in their path.  
  
Te would be well, perchance, if many an “ English Chap-  
  
Jin” in these days could exhibit as unquestionable tro-

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180 A WEEE.  
  
phies of his valor as did “ good young Frye.” Wo have  
need to be as sturdy pioneers still as Miles Standish, or  
Church, o Lovewell. Wo are to follow on another  
trail, it is true, bat one as convenient for ambushes.  
‘What if the Indians are exterminated, are not savages  
as grim prowling about the clearings to-day? —  
“And braving many dangers and hardships i the ws  
‘Thay sao arrived at Dunstable the thirteenth (2) ay of May.”  
But they did not all “safe arrive in Dunstable the  
thirteenth,” or the fifteenth, or the thirtieth “day of  
May.” Eleazer Davis and Josiah Jones, both of Con-  
cord, for our native town had seven men in this fight,  
Lieutenant Farwell, of Dunstable, and Jonathan Frye,  
of Andover, who were all wounded, were left behind,  
ereeping toward the settlements, “After travelling  
several miles, Frye was left and lost,” though a more  
recent post has assigned him company io his last  
ours.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
4 man bo was of cxmely form,  
Polished and brave, welllaroed and kinds  
(Od Harvard's learned hala he left  
ar in the wilde a grave to lad.  
  
“AR! now hi blood-red arm he lifts  
‘His losing ids be tin to vaio  
‘And speak once more before he dee,  
‘In supplication and in praise,  
  
   
  
“Ho prays kind Heaven to grant encoess,  
Bravo Lovewall's mea to gulde and bles,  
‘And wheo they ve shed their heart-blod true,  
‘To ris them all to happiness.”  
  
“Lloatenant Farwell fok bis bend,  
‘is arm around hie neck he throw,  
‘And anid “Brave Chaplain, Toonld wish  
‘That Heaven had made me die for you.”

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MoxDAr. 131  
  
Farwell held out eleven days. “A tradition says,” as  
we learn from the History of Concord, “that arriving at  
fa pond with Lieut. Farwell, Davis pulled off one of his  
moccasins, cut it in strings, on which he fastened a hook,  
caught some fish, fried and ste them. ‘They refreshed  
him, but were injurious to Farwell, who died coon after.”  
Davis had a ball lodged in his body, and his right hand  
shot off; but on the whole, he seems to have been less  
damaged than his companion, He came into Berwick  
‘after being out fourteen days. Jones also had a ball  
lodged in his body, but he likewise got into Saco after  
fourteen days, though not in the best condition imagin-  
able. ‘He had subsisted,” says an old journal, “on the  
spontaneous vegetables of the forest; and cranberries  
‘which he had eaten came out of wounds he had received  
in bis body.” ‘This was also the case with Davis,  
‘The last two reached home at length, safe if not sound,  
and lived many years in a crippled state to enjoy their  
pension.  
  
But alas! of the crippled Indians, and their adven-  
tures in the woods, —  
  
“Foran wo are farmed 90 thick and fst they fell  
  
‘caro twenty of thelr number at night did get home we  
hhow many bells lodged with them, how fared their cran-  
berries, what Berwick or Saco they got into, and fnally  
‘what pension or township was granted them, there is no  
journal to tell.  
  
Ti is stated in the History of Dunstable, that just be-  
fore hia last march, Lovewell was warned to beware of  
the ambuscades of the enemy, but “he replied, ‘that he  
id not eare for them! and bending down a small elm  
beside which he was standing into a bow, declared ‘that  
the would treat the Indians in the same way.” T”

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182 A WEEE.  
  
is otil standing [in Nashua], a venerable and magnifi-  
  
cent tree.”  
  
   
  
   
  
having passed the Horseshoe Interval in  
‘Tyngsborough, where the river makes a sudden bend to  
the northwest, — for our reflections have anticipated our  
progress somewhat,—we were advancing farther into  
the country and into the day, which last proved almost  
‘as golden as the preceding, though the slight bustle and  
‘activity of the Monday seemed to penetrate even to this  
‘scenery. Now and then we had to muster all our energy  
to get round a point, where the river broke rippling over  
rocks, and the maples trailed their branches in the  
stream, but there was generally a backwater or eddy on  
the side, of which we took advantage. ‘The river was  
here about forty rods wide and fifteen feet deep. Occa-  
sionally one ran along the shore, examining the country,  
‘and visiting the nearest farm-houses, while the other fol-  
owed the windings of the stream alone, to meet his  
‘companion at some distant point, and hear the report of  
hhis adventares; how the farmer praised the coolness of  
well, and his wife offered the stranger a draught of  
lk, or the children quarrelled for the only transparency  
in the window that they might get sight of the man at  
the well. For though the country seemed so new, and  
1o hiouse was observed by us, shut in between the banks  
that sunny day, we did not have to travel far to find  
where men inhabited, like wild bees, and had sunk wells  
in the loose cand and loam of the Merrimack. ‘There  
welt the subject of the Hebrew scriptures, and the  
Esprit des Lois, where a thin vaporous smoke curled up  
through the noon. All that is told of mankind, of the  
inhabitants of the Upper Nile, and the Sunderbunds,

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Morar. 138  
  
and Timbactoo, and the Orinoko, was experience here,  
Every race and class of men was represented. Accord-  
ing to Belknap, the historian of New Hampshire, who  
wrote sixty years ago, here too, perchance, dwelt “new  
lights,” and free thinking men even then. “The people  
in general throughout the State,” itis written, “are pro-  
fessors of the Christian religion in some form or other.  
‘There is, however, a sort of wise men who pretend to  
reject its but they have not yet been able to substitute  
1 better in its place.”  
  
‘The other voyageur, perhaps, would in the mean while  
hhave seen a brown hawk, or a woodchuck, or a musquash  
‘ereeping under the alders.  
  
‘We occasionally rested in the shade of a maple or a  
willow, and drew forth a melon for our refreshment,  
while we contemplated at our leisure the lapse of the  
river and of human life; and as that current, with its  
floating twigs and leaves, so did all things pass in review  
before us, while far away in cities and marts on this very  
stream, the old routine was proceeding still, There is,  
indeed, a tide in the affairs of men, as the poet says, and  
yet as things flow they circulate, and the ebb always  
balances the flow. All streams are but tributary to th  
ceean, which itself does not stream, and the shores are  
unchanged, but in longer periods than man ean measure.  
Go where we will, we discover infinite change in partic  
tlars only, not in generals, When I go into a museum  
and see the mummies wrapped in their linen bandages,  
I see that tH lives of men began to need reform as long  
1ago as when they walked the earth. I come out into the  
streets, and meet men who declare that the time is near  
‘at hand for the redemption of the race. But as men  
lived in Thebes, so do they live in Dunstable to-day.

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134 A WEEK.  
  
“Time drinketh up the essence of every great and noble  
action which ought to be performed, and is delayed in  
the execution.” So says Veeshnoo Sarma; and we per-  
ceive that the schemers return again and again to com-  
‘mon sense and labor. Such is the evidence of history.  
“Yet T dou ot trough the age ve Increasing parpose runs,  
‘And the thoogta of men are widenol with the proces of the  
‘Suan.  
There are secret articles in our treaties with the gods,  
‘of more importance than all the rest, which the historian,  
can never know.  
  
‘There are many skilful apprentices, but few master  
workmen. On every hand we observe a truly wise prac-  
tice, in education, in morals, and in the arts of life, the  
embodied wisdom of many an ancient philosopher. Who  
does not see that heresies have some time prevailed, that  
reforms have already taken place? All this worldly  
vwindom might be regarded as the once unamiable heresy  
of some wise man. Some interests have got a footing  
on the earth which we have not made sufficient allow-  
ance for. Even they who first built these barns and  
cleared the land thus, had some valor. ‘The abrupt  
epochs and chasms are smoothed down in history as the  
inequalities of the plain are concealed by distance,  
But unless we do more than simply learn the trade of  
cour time, we are but apprentices, and not yet masters of  
the art of life.  
  
‘Now that we are casting away these melon seeds, how  
can we help feeling reproach? He who ots the fruit,  
should at least plant the seed; aye, if posible, a better  
toed than that whose fruit he has enjoyed. Seeds!  
there are seeds enough which need only to be stirred in  
with the soil where they lie, by an inspired voice or pen,

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MONDAY. 1385  
  
to bear fruit of a divine flavor. © thou spendthrift!  
Defray thy debt to the world; eat not the seed of iusti-  
tutions, os the luxurious do, but plant it rather, wl  
thou devourest the pulp and tuber for thy subsistence;  
that s0, perchance, one variety may at last be found  
worthy of preservation.  
  
‘There are moments when all anxiety and stated toil  
are becalmed in the infinite leisure and repose of nature.  
All Iaborers must have their nooning, and at this season  
of the day, we are all, more oF less, Asiatics, and give  
‘over alll work and reform. While lying thus on our oars  
ty the side of the stream, in the heat of the day, our  
‘boat held by an osier pat through the staple in its prow,  
‘and slicing the melons, which are a fruit of the East, our  
‘thoughts reverted to Arabia, Persia, and Hindostan, the  
Jands of contemplation and dwelling-places of the rumi-  
nant nations, Tn the experience of this noontide we  
could find some apology even for the instinct of the  
opium, betel, and tobacco chewers. Mount Sebér, ac-  
cording to the French traveller and naturalist, Botta, is  
celebrated for producing the Két-tree, of which “the soft  
‘tops of the twigs and tender leaves are eaten,” says his  
reviewer, “and produce an agreeable soothing excite-  
‘ment, restoring from fatigue, banishing sleep, and dis-  
posing to the enjoyment of conversation.” We thought  
that we might lead a dignified Oriental life along thi  
stream as well, and the maple and alders would be our  
Kattrees.  
  
Tt is a great pleasure to escape sometimes from the  
restless class of Reformers. What if these grievances  
exist? So do you and I. Think you that sitting hens  
are troubled with ennai these long summer days, sitting  
‘on and on in the crevice of a hay-loft, without active

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136 A were,  
  
employment? By the faint cackling in distant barns, I  
Judge that dame Nature is interested still to know how  
many eggs her hens lay. ‘The Universal Soul, as it is  
called, has an interest in the stacking of hay, the fodder-  
ing of cattle, and the draining of peat-meadows. Away  
in Scythia, away in India, it makes butter and cheese.  
Suppose that all farms are run out, and we youths must  
Day old land and bring it to, still everywhere the relent-  
less opponents of reform bear a strange resemblance to  
ourselves; of, perchance, they are a few old maids and  
‘bachelors, who sit round the kitchen hearth and listen  
to the singing of the kettle. “The oracles often give  
victory to our choice, and not to the order alone of the  
mundane periods. As, for instance, when they say that  
our voluntary sorrows germinate in us as the growth of  
the particalar life we lead.” ‘The reform which you tall:  
about can be undertaken any morning before unbarring.  
our doors. We need not call any convention. When  
two neighbors begin to eat corn bread, who before ate  
‘wheat, then the gods smile from ear to ear, for it is very  
pleasant to them. Why do you not try it? Don't let  
ime hinder you.  
  
‘There are theoretical reformers at all times, and all  
the world over, living on anticipation. Wolf, trav  
in the deserts of Bokhara, says, “ Another party of der-  
‘veeshes came to me and observed, ‘The time will come  
when there shall be no difference between rich and  
oor, between high and low, when property will be in  
common, even wives and children” But forever I ask  
of such, What then? The derveeshes in the deserts of  
‘Bokhara and the reformers in Marlboro’ Chapel sing the  
same song. “There's a good time coming, boys,” but,  
asked one of the audience, in good faith, “ Can you fix  
the date?” Said I, « Will you help it along?”

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‘The nonchalance and dolee.far-niente air of nature  
and society hint at infinite periods in the progress of  
mankind. The States have leisure to laugh from Ms  
to Texas at some newspaper joke, and New England  
shakes at the double-entendres of Australian circles,  
while the poor reformer eannot get a hearing.  
  
‘Men do not fail commonly for want of knowledge, but  
for want of prudence to give wisdom the preference.  
‘What we need to know in any ease is very simple, Tt  
is but too easy to establish another durable and harmo-  
rious routine. Immediately all parts of nature consent  
to it, Only make something to take the place of some-  
thing, and men will behave as if it was the very thing  
‘they wanted. ‘They must behave, at any rate, and will  
work up any material. ‘There is always a present and  
‘extant life, be it better or worse, which all combine to  
uphold. We should be slow to mend, my friends, a5  
flow to require mending, “Not hurling, according to  
the oracle, » transcendent foot towards piety.” ‘The  
language of excitement is at best picturesque merely.  
‘You must be calm before you can utter oracles. What  
‘was the excitenient of the Delphic priestess compared  
with the calm wisdom of Socrates? —or whoever it  
was that was wise.— Enthusiasm is a supernatural  
serenity.  
  
“en find that action ie another thing  
‘Than what they in discoursig papers read;  
  
‘The word's afira require in managing  
More arts than those wherein you clerks proceed.”  
  
   
  
As in geology, zo in social institutions, we may discover  
‘tho causes of all past change in the present invariable  
‘onder of society. The greatest appreciable physical  
revolations are the work of the light-footed air, the

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188 A were,  
  
stealthy-paced water, and the subterranean fire. Aris  
totle said, “As time never fails, and the universe is  
ternal, neither the Tanais nor the Nile ean have flowed.  
forever.” We are independent of the change we detect.  
‘The longer the lever the less perceptible its motion.  
It is tho slowest pulsation which is the most vital  
‘The hero then will know how to wait, as well as to  
make haste. All good abides with him who waiteth  
‘wisely; we shall sooner overtake the dawn by remain-  
ing here than by hurrying over the hills of the west.  
‘Be assured that every man’s success is in proportion to  
his average ability. ‘The meadow flowers spring and  
loom where the waters annually deposit their slime, not  
where they reach in some fresbet only. A man is not  
his hope, nor bis despair, nor yet his past deed. We  
Know not yet what we have done, still less what we are  
doing. Wait till evening, and other parts of our day's  
‘work will shine than we had thought at noon, and we  
shall discover the real purport of our toil. As when the  
farmer bes reached the end of the furrow and looks  
back, he can tell best where the pressed earth shines  
most,  
  
‘To one who habitually endeavors to contemplate the  
true state of things, the political state can hardly be said  
to have any existence whatever. Tt is unreal, incredible,  
and insignificant to him, and for him to endeavor to ex-  
tract the truth from such lean material is like making  
sugar from linen rags, when sugarcane may be had.  
Generally speaking, the political news, whether domestic  
or foreign, might be written to-day for the next ten years,  
with sufficient accuracy. Most revolutions in society  
hbave not power to interest sill less alarm us; but tell

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oxpay. 189  
  
ime that our rivers are drying up, or the gents pine  
ying out in the country, and I might attend. Most  
events recorded in history are more remarkable than  
important, like eclipées of the sun and moon, by which  
all are attracted, but whose effects no one takes the  
‘trouble to calculate,  
  
But will the government never be so well adminis-  
tered, inquired one, that we private men shall hear  
nothing about it? “The king answered: At all events,  
T require a prodent and able man, who is capable of  
managing the state afaire of my kingdom. ‘The ex-  
minister said: The criterion, O Sire! of a wise and  
‘competent man is, that be will not meddle with such  
Ike matters” Alas that the ex-minister ehould have  
‘been so nearly right!  
  
In my short experience of human life, the outward  
obstacles if there were any such, have not been living  
‘men, bat the institations of the dead. tis grateful to  
‘make one’s way through this latest generation as through  
dewy grass. Men are as innocent as the morning to the  
‘unsuspicious.  
  
“And round about goed morrow 8,  
  
   
  
‘Asay tanght humanity.”  
Not being Revo of this Shire,  
“The easly pg bith be hated,  
  
   
  
‘That o'er the hills did stray,  
‘Apa many an early huabandwan,  
‘That be met onthe way"";—  
thieves and robbers all, nevertheless. I huve not so  
surely foreseen that any Cossack or Chippeway would  
‘come to distarb the honest and simple commonwealth, as  
‘that some monster institution would at length embrace  
and crush ite free members in its scaly folds; for it is

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140 A WeEE.  
  
not to be forgotten, that while the law holds fast the  
thief and murderer, it lets itself go loose. When I havo  
not paid the tax which the State demanded for that pro-  
tection which I did not want, itself has robbed me; when  
I have asserted the liberty it presumed to declare, itself  
hhas imprisoned me. Poor creature! if it knows no  
better I will not blame it. If it cannot live but by these  
‘means, I can. I do not wish, it bappens, to be asso-  
ciated with Massachusetts, either in holding slaves or in  
conquering Mexico. I am alittle better than herself in  
these respects. — As for Massachusetts, that huge she  
Briareus, Argus and Colchian Dragon conjoined, ect to  
watch the Heifer of the Constitution and the Golden  
Fleece, we would not warrant our respect for her, like  
‘some compositions, to preserve ite qualities through all  
‘weathers. — Thus it has happened, that not the Arch  
Fiend himeelf has been in my way, but these toils which  
tradition says were originally spun to obstruct him.  
‘They are cobwebs and trifing obstacles in an earnest  
‘man’s path, itis true, and at length one even becomes  
attached to his unswept and undusted garret. I love  
man—kind, but I hate the institutions of the dead un-  
ind. Men execute nothing so faithfully as the wills of  
the dead, to the Inst codicil and letter. They rule this  
world, and the living are but their executors. Such  
foundation too have our lectures and our sermons, com=  
monly. They are all Dudleian; and piety derives  
  
gin still from that exploit of pius ineas, who bore  
his father, Anchises, on his shoulders from the ruins of  
‘Troy. Or rather, ike some Indian tribes, we bear about  
with us the mouldering relies of our ancestors on our  
shoulders. If, for instance, a man arserts the value of  
individual liberty over the merely political commonweal,

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MonDar. wut  
  
hhis neighbor still tolerates him, that he who is ving  
rear him, sometimes even sustains him, but never the  
State. Its officer, as a living man, may have human  
‘virtues and a thought in his brain, but as the tool of an  
institution, a jailer or constable it may be, he is not a  
‘whit superior to his prison key or his staff. Herein is the  
tragedy ; that men doing outrage to their proper natures,  
‘even those called wise and good, lend themselves to  
perform the office of inferior and brutal ones. Hence  
come war and slavery in; and what else may not come  
in by this opening? But certainly there are modes by  
which @ man may put bread into his mouth which will  
‘ot prejudice him as a companion and neighbor.  
  
   
  
   
  
“Now tara agai, turn agun, said the pind,  
‘For a wrong way you have gooe,  
  
For you have forsaken tho king's highway,  
‘Aad made a path over the corn.  
  
   
  
‘Undoubtedly, countless reforms are called for, because  
society is not animated, or instinct enough with life, but  
in the condition of some snakes which I have seen in  
‘early epring, with alternate portions of their bodies torpid  
and flexible, so that they conld wriggle neither way. All  
men are partially buried in the grave of custom, and of  
some we see only the crown of the head above ground.  
Better are the physically dead, for they more lively rot.  
Even virtue is no longer such if itbe stagnant, A man’  
life should be constantly as fresh as this river. Tt should  
bbe the same channel, but a new water every instant,  
  
   
  
   
  
\* Virtuon a river pass,  
‘Bot stl romaine that vrtaone man there was.”  
  
‘Most men have no inclination, no rapids, no cascades,  
bat marshes, and alligators, and missma instead. We

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aa A ween,  
  
   
  
read that when in the expedition of Alexander, Onesie  
‘tus was sent forward to meet certain of the Indian sect  
‘of Gymnosophists, and he had told them of those new  
Philosophers of the West, Pythagoras, Socrates, and  
Diogenes, and their doctrines, one of them named Dat  
damis answered, that “They appeared to him to have  
been men of genius, but to have lived with too passi  
regard for the laws.” ‘The philosophers of the West are  
iable to this rebuke still, “They say that Lieou-hia-  
hhoei, and Chao-lien did not sustain to the end their  
resolutions, and that they dishonored their character.  
‘Their language was in harmony with reason and justice ;  
while their acts were in harmony with the sentiments of  
  
Chateaubriand said: “There are two things which  
‘grow stronger in the breast of man, in proportion as he  
advances in years : the love of country and religion. Let  
‘them be never so much forgotten in youth, they sooner or  
later present themselves to us arrayed in all their charms,  
fand excite in the recesses of our hearts an attachment  
Justly dao to their beauty.” It may be so. But even  
this infirmity of noble minds marks the gradual decay of  
youthful hope and faith. Tt is the allowed infidelity of  
age. There is a saying of the Yoloffe, « He who was  
orn first has the greatest number of old clothes,” conse-  
quently M. Chateaubriand has moro old clothes than I  
have. It is comparatively faint and reflected beauty  
that is admired, not an essential and intrinsic one. Tt 1s  
because the old are weak, feel their mortality, and think  
that they have measured the strength of man. ‘They  
will not boast ; they will be frank and humble. Well,  
Jet them have the few poor comforts they can keep.  
Humility is still a very human virtue. They look back

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oxpar. 148  
  
on life, and 60 see not into the future. ‘The prospect of  
the young is forward and unbounded, mingling the future  
with the present. In the declining day the thoughts  
‘make haste to rest in darkness, and hardly look forward  
to the ensuing morning. ‘The thoughts of the old pre-  
pare for night and slumber. ‘The same hopes and pros-  
pects are not for him who stands upon the rosy mountain  
tops of life, and him who expects the setting of bis earthly  
day.  
  
T must conclude that Conscience, if that be the name  
of it, was not given us for no purpose, or for a hinderance.  
However flattering order and expediency may look, it is  
‘but the repose of a lethargy, and we will choose rather  
‘to be awake, though it be stormy, and maintain ourselves  
‘on this earth and in this life, as we may, without signing  
our death-warrant. Let us see if we cannot stay here,  
‘where He bas put us, on his own conditions. Does not  
his law reach as far as bis light? ‘The expedients of  
the nations clash with one another, only the absolutely  
right is expedient for all.  
  
‘There are some passages in the Antigone of Sophocles,  
well known to scholars, of which I am reminded in this  
‘connection. Antigone has resolved to sprinkle sand on  
the dead body of her brother Polynices, notwithstanding  
the edict of King Creon condemning to death that one  
‘who should perform this service, which the Grecks  
deemed 20 important, for the enemy of his country ; but  
Temene. whe is of less resolute and noble spirit, de-  
lines taking part with her sister in this work, and  
says, —  
  
“I, therefore, asking those under the earth to consider me,  
‘that T am compelled to do thus, will obey those who are  
placed in ofce; for to do extreme things isnot wise:”

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srr A Warn.  
  
axTicoNE.  
  
“I would not ask you, nor would you, if you still wished,  
do it joyfully with me. Be such as seems good to you. But  
Iwill bury him. It is glorious for me doing this to die, I  
beloved will lie with him beloved, having, like a criminal,  
one what is holy ; since tho time is longer which itis neces-  
sary for me to please those below, than thowe here, for there  
ball always li. But if it seems good to you, hold in dis-  
hhonor things which are honored by the gods.”  
  
reMENE.  
  
“T indeed do not hold them in dishonor; but to act in op-  
position to the citizens I am by nature unable.”  
  
Antigone being at length brought before King Creon,  
he asks, —  
  
“ Did you then dare to transgross these laws?"  
  
   
  
   
  
ANTIGONE,  
  
“For it was not Zeus who proclaimed there to me, nor  
Justice who dwells with tho gods below; it was not they  
‘who established these laws among men. Nor did I think  
‘that your proclamations were so strong, as, being a mortal,  
‘to be able to transcond the unwritten and immovable laws of  
the gods. For not something now and yesterday, but for-  
fever theve live, and no one knows from what time they ap-  
peared. I was not about to pay the penalty of violating  
‘hese to the gods, fearing the presumption of any man. For  
I well knew that I should die, and why not? even if you had  
not proclaimed it.”  
  
‘This was concerning the burial of a dead body.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘The wisest conservatism is that of the Hindoos. “Im-  
memorial custom is transcendent law,” cays Menu.  
‘That is, it was the custom of the gods before men used  
it.The fault of our New England custom is that it is

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oxpar. 5  
  
‘memorial. What is morality but immemorial custom?  
Conscience is the chief of conservatives. “Perform the  
settled fonctions,” says Kreeshna in the Bhagvat-Geeta  
“action is preferable to inaction. ‘The journey of thy  
‘mortal frame may not succeed from inaction.” —s A.  
man’s own calling with all its faults, ought not to be for-  
saken. Every undertaking is involved in its faults as  
the fire in its smoke.” —“ The man who is acquainted  
with the whole, should not drive those from their works  
who are slow of comprehension, and less experienced  
than himselé” — Wherefore, © Arjoon, resolve to  
fight,” is the advice of the God to the irresolute sol  
dier who fears to slay bis best friends. It is « sublime  
‘conservatism ; a8 wide as the world, and as unwearied as  
time; preserving the universe with Asiatic anxiety, in  
that state in which it appeared to their minds. These  
philosophers dwell on the inevitability and unchangeable-  
ness of laws, on the power of temperament and constitu-  
tion. the three goon or qualities, and the circumstances  
or birth and affinity. ‘Tho end is an immense consola-  
tion ; eternal absorption in Brahms. ‘Their speculations  
never venture beyond their own table-lands, though  
they are high and vast as they. Buoyancy, freedom,  
flexibility, variety, possibility, which also are qualities  
of the Unnamed, they deal not with. ‘Tho undeserved  
reward ia to be earned by an everlasting moral drudg-  
tho incaleulable promise of the morrow is, as it  
‘were, weighed. And who will say that their conserva-  
sm has not been effectual? Ascuredly,” says a  
‘French translator, speaking of the antiquity and du-  
rability of the Chinese and Indian nations, and of the  
wisdom of their legislators, “there are there some vee  
tiges of the eternal laws which govern the work.”  
7 :

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146 A Weer.  
  
Christianity, on the other band, is humane, practical,  
and, in a large sense, radical. So many years and ages  
‘of the gods those Eastern sages cat contemy  
Brahm, uttering in silence the mystic “Om,”  
sorbed into the essence of the Supreme Being, never  
going out of themselves, but subsiding farther and  
deeper within; 0 infinitely wise, yet infinitely stag-  
nant; until, at last, in that same Asia, but in the western  
part of it, appeared a youth, wholly unforetold by them,  
not being absorbed into Brahm, but bringing Brahm  
down to earth and to mankind; in whom Brahm had  
awaked from his long sleep, and exerted himself, and  
‘the day began,—a new avatar. ‘The Brahman. had  
never thought to be a brother of mankind as well as a  
child of God. Christ is the prince of Reformers and  
Radicals. Many expressions in the New Testament  
come naturally to the lips of all Protestants, and it fur-  
nishes the most pregnant and practical texts. ‘There is  
xno harmless dreaming, no wise speculation in it, but  
everywhere a substratum of good sense. It never re-  
flees, but it repents. There is no poetry in it, we may  
‘any, nothing regarded in the light of beauty merely, but  
‘moral truth ia its object. All mortals are convicted by  
its conscience.  
  
The New Testament is remarkable for ite pure mo-  
rality; the best of the Hindo Seripture, for its pure in-  
tellectuality. ‘The reader is nowhere raised into and  
sustained in a higher, purer, or rarer region of thought  
than in the Bhagvat-Geeta, Warren Iastings, in his  
sensible letter recommending the translation of this book  
to the Chairman of the East India Company, declares  
the original to be “of a sublimity of conception, reason  
ing, and diction almost unequalled,” and that the write

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MONDAY. wat  
  
ings oF the Indian philosophers “will survive when the  
British dominion in India shall have long ceased to  
exist, and when the sources which it once yielded of  
wealth and power are lost to remembrance.” It is un-  
questionably one of the noblest and most sacred scrip-  
tures which have come down to us. Books are to be  
distinguished by the grandeur of their topics, even more  
than by the manner in which they are treated. The  
Oriental philosophy approaches, easily, loftier themes  
than the modern aspires to; and no wonder if it some-  
times prattle about them. Zt only assigns their due  
rank respectively to Action and Contemplation, oF  
rathér does full justice to the latter. Western philoso-  
hers have not conceived of the significance of Contem-  
lation in their sense. Speaking of the spiritual dis-  
cipline to which the Brahmans subjected themselves,  
and the wonderful. power of abstraction to which they  
attained, instances of which had come under his notice,  
Hastings says: —  
  
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
“To those who have never beon accustomed to the separa-  
tion of the mind from the notices of the senses, it may not be  
‘easy to conceive by what means such a power is to be at-  
‘tained ; since even the most studious men of our hem'sphere  
will find it dificult eo to restrain their attention, but that it  
will wander to some object of present sense oF recollection ;  
and even the buzzing of a fly will sometimes have the power  
to disturb it. But if wo are told that there have been men  
‘eho were successively, for ages past, in the daily habit of ab-  
stracted contemplation, begun in the earliest period of youth,  
anil continued in many to the maturity of age, each adding.  
some portion of knowledge to the store aceumulated by his  
predecessors; it ia not assuming too mach to conclude, that  
‘as tho mind ever gathers strength, like the body, by exercise,  
so in such an exereise it may in each have acquired the fac

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148, a wee  
  
sity to which they aspired, and that their collective studies  
aay bave led them to the dicovery of new tracts and eom-  
Dinations of sentiment, totally different from the doctrines  
vith which the learned of other nations are acquainted; doc-  
trinea which, however speculative and subtle, still as they  
‘pomes the advantage of being derived from a source 4 free  
from every adventitious mixtare, may be equally founded in  
tu with the most simple of our ows.”  
  
“The forsaking of works” was taught by Kreeshna  
to the most ancient of men, and handed down from age  
  
to age,  
  
“until at length, in the course of time, the mighty art was  
leet.  
  
“In wisdom is to be found every work without exception’  
says Kreesbna.  
  
“ Although thoa wert the greatest of all offenders, thou  
shalt be able to oross the gulf of sin with the bark of wis-  
dom.”  
  
“There is not anything in this world to be compared with  
snadom for purity.”  
  
“The action stands at a distance inferior to the application  
of wisdom.”  
  
‘The wisdom of a Moonee “is confirmed, when, like the tor-  
tose, he can draw in all his members, and restrain them from  
their wonted purposes.”  
  
“Children only, and not the learned, speak of the spocula-  
tive and the practical doctrines as two, ‘They are but one,  
For both obtain the selfsame end, and the place which is  
gained by the followers of the one is gained by the followers  
‘of the other.”  
  
“The man enjoyeth not freedom from action, from the  
rnon-cominencement of that which he hath to do; nor doth  
Iie obtain happiness ftom a total inactivity. No one ever  
resteth a moment inactive. i  
to act by those princi

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owpar. 149  
  
‘The man who réstraineth his active faculties, and sitteth  
down with his mind attentive to the objecta of hie senses, is  
called one of an astrayed soul, and the practiser of deceit  
So the man is praised, who, having subdued all his passione,  
pperformeth with bis active faculties all the functions of lie,  
‘unconcerned about the event.”  
  
“ Let the motive be in the deed and not in the event. Be  
not one whose motive for action is the hope of reward. Let  
not thy life be spent in inaction.”  
  
“For the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without  
‘fection, obtaineth the Supreme.”  
  
“He who may behold, as it were inaction in action, and  
inaction, is wise amongst mankind. He ia a perfect  
performer of all duty.”  
  
“Wise men call him a Pandeet, whose every undertaking  
in free from the idea of desire, and whose actions are con-  
‘sumed by the fire of wiedom. He abandoneth the desire of a  
reward of his actions; he is always contented and indepen-  
dent; and although he may be engaged in a work, he, a it  
were, doeth nothing.”  
  
“Ho ia both a Yogee and a Sannyaree who performet  
‘that which he hath to do independent of the fruit thereof;  
not he who liveth without the sacrificial fre and without  
action.”  
  
“Ho who enjoyeth but the Amrecta which is left of is of  
ferings, obtaineth the eternal spirit of Brahm, the Supreme.”  
  
‘What, after all, does the practicalness of life amount  
to? The things immediate to be done are very trivial.  
T could postpone them all to hear this locust sing. ‘The  
‘most glorious fact in my experience is not anything that  
T have done or may hope to do, but a transient thought,  
or vision, or dream, which I have bad. I would give  
all the wealth of the world, and all the deeds of all the  
hheroes, for one true vision. But how ean I communi  
ceute with the gods who am a pencil-maker on the earth,  
‘and not be inane?

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150 A WEEK.  
  
Tam the same to all mankind,” says Kreeshna; there is  
not one who ia worthy of my love or hatred.”  
  
This teaching is not practical in the sense in which  
the New Testament is. It is not always sound sense  
practice. The Brahman never proposes courageously  
‘to assault evil, bt patiently to starve it out. His active  
faculties are paralyzed by the idea of cast, of impassable  
limits, of destiny and the tyranny of time, Kreeshna’s  
argament, it must be allowed, is defective. No sufficient  
reason is given why Arjoon should fight. Arjoon ma;  
bbe convinced, but the reader is not, for his judgment is  
not ‘formed upon the speculative doctrines of the  
‘Sankhya Sastra.” ‘Seek an asylum in wisdom alone”;  
Dat what is wisdom to a Western mind? ‘The duty  
‘of which he speaks is an arbitrary one, When was it  
established? ‘The Brabman’s virtue consists in doing,  
not right, but arbitrary things. What is that which a  
man “hath to do”? What is “action”? What are  
the “settled functions”? What is “a man's own re-  
ligion,” which is 60 much better than another's? What  
is “a man's own particular calling”? What are the  
duties which are appointed by one’s birth? It is a de-  
fence of the institution of casts, of what is called the  
“natural duty” of the Kshetree, or soldier, to attach  
himself to the discipline,” “not to flee from the field,”  
‘and the like, But they who are unconcerned about the  
consequences of their actions are not therefore uncon-  
cerned about their actions.  
  
Behold the difference between the Oriental and the  
Occidental. ‘The former has nothing to do in this world 5  
the latter is full of activity. ‘The one looks in the sun  
{ill his eyes are put out ; the other follows him prone im.  
his westward course, ‘There is such a thing as caste,

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MONDAY. 151  
  
‘even in the West Lt it is comparatively faint  
conservatism here. It says, forsake not your calling,  
outrage no institution, use no violence, rend no bonds 5  
the State is thy parent. Its virtue or manhood is wholly  
filial. ‘There is a straggle between the Oriental and Oc-  
idental in every nation; some who would be forever  
contemplating the sun, and some who are hastening to-  
ward the sunset. ‘The former class says to the latter,  
‘When you have reached the sunset, you will be no  
nearer to the sun. To which the latter replies, But we  
0 prolong the day. ‘The former “ walketh but in that  
night, when all things go to rest the night of me. ‘The  
contemplative Moonee sleepeth but in the day of time,  
when all things wake.”  
  
To conclude these extracts, T can say, in the words of  
Sanjay, “AsO mighty Prince! I recollect again and  
again this holy and wonderfal dialogue of Kreeshna and  
Arjoon, I continue more and more to rejoice; and as I  
recall to my memory the more than miraculous form of  
Hares, my astonishment is great, and I marvel and re-  
Jjoice agiin and again! Wherever Kreeshna the God  
of devotion may be, wherever Arjoon the mighty bow-  
‘man may be, there too, without doubt, are fortune, riches,  
victory, and good conduet. This is my firm belief.”  
  
I would say to the readers of Scriptures, if they wish  
for a good book, read the Bhagvat-Geeta, an episode 10  
the Mahabharat, said to have been written by Kreesbna  
Dwypayen Veias,—known to have been written by  
—, more than four thousand years ago, — it matters  
not whether three or four, or when, — translated by  
Charles Wilkins. Tt deserves to be read with reverence  
even by Yankees, as a part of the sucred writings of a  
devout people 5 and 1  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
intelligent Hebrew will rejoice

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152 A WEEK.  
  
to.nd in it a moral grandeur and sublimity akin to those  
of his own Scriptures.  
  
To an American reader, who, by the advantage of his  
position, ean see over that strip of Atlantic coast to Asia  
‘and the Pacific, who, as it were, sees the shore slope up-  
weard over the Alps to the Himmaleh Mountains, the  
‘comparatively recent literature of Europe often appears  
partial and clannisb, and, notwithstanding the limited  
range of his own sympathies and studies, the European  
writer who presumes that he is speaking for the world,  
is perceived by him to speak only for that comer of  
which he inhabits. One of the rarest of England's  
scholars and critics, in his classification of the worthies  
of the world, betrays the narrowness of his European  
culture and the exclusiveness of his reading. None of  
her children has done justice to the poets and philoso-  
phers of Persia or of India. They bave even been bet-  
ter known to her merchant scholars than to her poets  
‘and thinkers by profession, You may look in vain  
through English poetry for a single memorable verse  
inspired by these themes. Nor is Germany to be ex-  
cepted, though her philological industry is indirectly  
serving the cause of philosophy and poetry. Even  
Goethe wanted that universality of genius which coald  
hhave appreciated the philosophy of India, if he had more  
nearly approached it, His genius was more practical,  
welling much more in the regions of the understanding,  
and was less native to contemplation than the genius of  
those sages. It ia remarkable that Homer and a few  
Hebrews are the most Oriental names which modern,  
Europe, whose literature has taken its rise since the de~  
cline of the Persian, has admitted into her list of Wor-  
thies, and perhaps the worthiest of mankind, and the

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MoxDAr. 153  
  
fathers of modern thinking, —for the contemplation of  
those Indian sages have infuenced, and still influence,  
the intellectual development of mankind, — whose works  
‘even yet survive in wonderful completeness, are, for the  
‘most part, not recognized as ever having existed. If the  
Jions had been the painters it would have been other-  
fe. \_In every one’s youthful dreams philosophy is still  
vaguely but inseparabiy, and with singular trath, associ-  
ated with the East, nor do after years discover its ocal  
hhabitation in the Westera world. In comparison with  
the philosophers of the East, we may say that modern  
Europe has yet given birth to none. Beside the vast  
‘and cosmogonal philosophy of the Bhagval-Geeta, even  
‘our Shakespeare seems sometimes youthfully green and  
practical merely. Some of these sublime sentences, as  
the Chaldsan oracles of Zoroaster, still surviving after  
‘thousand revolutions and translations, alone make us  
doubt if the poetio form and dress are not transitory, and  
not essential to the most effective and enduring expres-  
sion of thought. Ez oriente luz may still be the motto  
of scholars, for the Western world bas not yet derived  
from the East all the light which it is destined to receive  
thence.  
  
It would be worthy of the age to print together the  
collected Scriptures or Sacred Writings of the soveral  
nations, the Chinese, the Hindoos, the Persians, tho  
Hebrows, and others, as the Scripture of mankind. ‘The  
‘New Testament is still, perhaps, too much on the lips  
‘and in the hearts of men to be called a Scripture in this  
sense. Such a juxtaposition and comparison might help  
to liberalize the faith of men. This is a work which  
‘Time will surely edit, reserved to crown the labors of the  
rinting-press. Tie would be the Bible, or Book of  
  
1

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154 4 were,  
  
Books, which let the missionaries carry to the uttermost  
parts of the earth.  
  
‘While engaged in these reflections, thinking ourselves  
the only navigators of these waters, suddenly canal-  
boat, with its sail set, glided round a point before us,  
like some huge river beast, and changed the scene in an  
instant; and then another and another glided into sight,  
‘and we found ourselves in the eurrent of commerce once  
‘more. So.we threw our rinds in the water for the fishes  
to nibble, and added our breath to the life of living men,  
Little did we think, in the distant garden in which we  
hhad planted the seed and: reared this fruit, where it  
would be eaten. Our melons lay at home on the sandy  
bottom of the Merrimack, and our potatoes in the sun  
and water at the bottom of the boat looked like a fruit  
of the country. Soon, however, we were delivered from  
this feet of junks, and possessed the river in solitude,  
once more rowing steadily upward throogh the noon,  
between the territories of Nashua on the one hand, and  
Hudson, once Nottingham, on the other. From time to  
time we scared up a kingfisher or a summer duck, the  
former flying rather by vigorous impulses than by steady  
‘and patient steering with that short rudder of his, sound-  
ing his rattle along the fluvial street.  
  
Erelong another scow hove in sight, ereeping down  
the river; and hailing it, we attached ourselves to its  
side, and floated back in company, chatting with the  
Doatmen, and obtaining a draught of cooler water from  
their jug. ‘They appeared to be green hands from far  
‘among the hills, who had taken this means to get 10 the  
seaboard, and sce the world; and would possibly visit  
the Falkland Isles, and the China seas, before they again

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MONDAY. 155  
  
saw the waters of the Merrimack, or, perchance, they  
‘would not return this way forever. ‘They had already  
embarked the private interests of the landsman in the  
larger venture of the race, and were ready to moss with  
mankind, reserving only the till of a chest to themselves.  
But they too were soon lost behind a point, and we went,  
ceroaking on our way alone. What grievance has its  
root among the New Hampshire hills? we asked; what,  
is wanting to buman life here, that these men should  
make such haste to the antipodes? We prayed that  
their bright anticipations might not be rudely disap-  
pointed.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘Though all the fates should prove uokind,  
Leave not your native land behind.  
  
‘The ship, becalmed, at length stands stl;  
‘The steed must rest beneath the  
  
Bat ewifly stil our fortunes pace  
‘To ad us out in every place.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘The vossl, though her masta be fim,  
Beneath her copper bears « worm;  
Around the cape acrom the line,  
  
‘Till elds of fe her course confines  
  
Ie matters not how emooth the breeze,  
ow shallow ot how deep the seas,  
“Whether she bears Baill twine,  
  
(Orin her hold Madeira wine,  
  
‘Or China tens, or Spanish hides,  
  
J port oF quarantine she rides;  
  
Far from New Bogland's blustering shore,  
[Now England's worm her hulk shall bore,  
‘And sink he in the Indian aes,  
  
Twine, wine, and hides, and China ten  
  
‘We passed a small desert here on the east benk,  
otween Tyngeborough and Hudson, which was interest-  
  
ing and even refreshing to our eyes in the midst of  
the almost universal grocnness. This sand was indeed

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somewhat impressive and beautifal to us. A very old  
inhabitant, who was at work in a field on the Nashua  
ide, told us that he remembered when corn and grain  
‘grew there, and it was @ cultivated field. But at length  
the fishermen, for this was a fishing place, pulled up the  
bushes on the shore, for greater convenience in hauling  
their eeines, and when the bank was thus broken, the  
wind began to blow up the sand from the shore, until at  
Jength it had covered about fifteen acres several feet  
deep. We saw near the river, where the sand was  
blown off down to some ancient surface, the foundation  
of an Indian wigwam exposed, a perfect circle of burnt  
stones, four or five feet in diameter, mingled with fine  
chareoal, and the bones of small animals which had been  
preserved in the sand. Tho surrounding sand was  
‘sprinkled with other burnt stones on which their fires,  
hha been built, as well as with flakes of arrow-head  
stone, and we found one perfect arrow-head. In one  
place we noticed where an Indian had sat to manufacture  
arrow-heads out of quartz, and the sand was sprinkled  
with « quart of small glass-like chips about as big as a  
fourpence, which he had broken off in his work. Here,  
then, the Indians mast have fished before the whites  
arrived. ‘There was another similar sandy tract about  
half a mile above this,  
  
   
  
   
  
Still the noon prevailed, and wo tuned the prow  
aside to bathe, and recline ourselves under some button-  
woods, by a ledge of rocks, in a retired pasture sloping  
to the water's edge, and skirted with pines and hazels,  
in the town of Hudson. Still had India, and that old  
‘noontide philosophy, the better part of our thougl  
  
It is always singular, but encouraging, to meet with

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MONDAY. 187  
  
common sense in very old books, as the Heetopades of  
‘Veeshnoo Sarma; a playfal wisdom which has eyes  
behind as well as before, and oversees itself. It asserts  
their health and independence of the experience of later  
times. pledge of sanity gannot be spared in a  
book, that it sometimes pleasantly reflect upon itself.  
The story and fabulous portion of this book winds  
loosely from sentence to sentence as #o many oases in a  
esert, and is as indistinct as a camel’s track between  
‘Mourzouk and Darfour. Tt is a comment on the flow  
aand freshet of modern books. The reader leaps from  
sentence to sentence, as from one stepping-stone to  
another, while the stream of the story rushes past unre-  
garded. The Bhagvat-Geeta is Tess sententious and  
pootic, perhaps, but still more wonderfully sustained and  
developed. Its sanity and sublimity have impressed the  
minds even of soldiers and merchants. It is the charac  
teristic of great poems that they will yield of their sense  
{in due proportion to the hasty and the deliberate reader.  
To the practical they will be common sense, and to the  
‘wise wisdom ; as either the traveller may wet his lips,  
or an army may fil its water-casks at a full stream,  
  
One of the most attractive of those ancient books that  
I have met with is the Laws of Menu. According to  
Sir William Jones, “Vyasa, the son of Parasara, has  
decided that the Veda, with its Angas, or the six compo-  
sitions deduced from it, the revealed system of medicin  
the Puranas or sacred histories, and the code of Menu,  
were four works of supremo authority, which ought  
never to be shaken by arguments merely human.” Tho  
last i believed by the Hindoos “to have been promulged  
in the beginning of time, by Menu, son or grandson of  
Brahms,” and “firs of created beings”; and Brabma ia

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158 A were.  
  
said to have “taught his laws to Menu in a hundred  
thousand verses, which Menu explained to the primitive  
world in the very words of the book now translated.”  
Others affirm that they have undergone successive abridg-  
‘ments for the convenience of mortals, “while the gods  
of the lower heaven and the band of celestial musicians  
are engnged in studying the primary code.” —“ A num-  
ber of glosses or comments on Menu were composed by  
the Munis, or old philosophers, whose treatises, together  
with that before us, constitute the Dherma Sastra, in a  
collective sense, or Body of Law.” Culluea Bhatta was  
‘one of the more modern of these.  
  
Every sacred book, successively, has been accepted in  
the faith that it was to be the final resting-place of the  
sojourning soul; but after all, it was but. a caravansary  
‘supplied refreshment to the traveller, and directed  
‘him farther on his way to Tsphahan or Bagdat. ‘Thank  
God, no Hindoo tyranny prevailed at the framing of the  
world, but we are freemen of the universe, and not sen-  
tenced to any caste,  
  
T know of no book which has come down to us with  
grander pretensions than this, and itis so impersonal and  
is never offensive nor ridiculous. Compare  
which modern literature is advertised with  
the prospectus of this book, and think what @ reading  
public it addresses, what criticism it expects. Tt seems  
to have been uttered from some eastern summit, with a  
sober morning prescience in the dawn of time, and you  
cannot read a sentence without being elevated as upon  
the table-Iand of the Ghauts. Tt has such a rhythm as  
the winds of the desert, such a tide as the Ganges, and  
is as superior to criticism as the Himmalch Mou  
Its tone is of such unrelaxed fibre, that even at this ate

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mopar. 159  
  
day, unworn by time, it wears the English and tle San-  
serit dress indifferently; and its fixed sentences keep up  
their distant fires stil, like the stars, by whose dissipated  
rays this lower world is illumined. ‘The whole book by  
noble gestures and inclinations renders many words  
unnecessary. English sense has toiled, but Hindoo  
‘wisdom never perspired. Though the sentences open as  
‘wo reed them, unexpensively, and at first almost un-  
meaningly, as the petals of @ flower, they som  
startle us with that rare kind of wisdom which could  
only have been learned from the most trivial experience ;  
but it comes to us as refined as the porcelain earth which  
subsides to the bottom of the ocean. ‘They are clean and  
ry as fossil truths, which have been exposed to the  
elements for thousands of years, 80 impersonally and  
scientifically true that they are the ornament of the  
parlor and the cabinet. Any moral philosophy is ex-  
‘ceedingly rare. This of Menu addresses our privacy  
more than most. It is a more private and familiar, and,  
fat the same time, a more public and universal word,  
than is spoken in parlor or pulpit now-a-days. As our  
domestic fowls are said to have their original in the  
wild pheasant of India, so our domesti¢ thoughts have  
their prototypes in the thoughts of her philosophers.  
‘We aro dabbling in the very elements of our present  
conventional arid actual lifo; as if it were the primeval  
conventicle where how to eat, and to drink, and to sleep,  
and maintain life with adequate dignity and sincerity,  
were the questions to be decided. It is later and more  
intimate with us even than the advice of our nearest  
friends. And yet it is true for the widest horizon, and  
read out of doors has relation to the dim mountain line,  
fand is native and aboriginal there. Most books belong

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160 a weex.  
  
to the house and street only, and in the fields thetr  
leaves feel very thin. ‘They are bare and obvious, and  
hhave no balo nor haze about them. Nature lies far and  
fair behind them all. But this, as it proceeds from, eo  
it addresses, what is deepest and most abiding in man.  
Tt belongs to the noontide of the day, the midsummer of  
the year, and after the snows have melted, and the  
‘waters evaporated in the spring, still ite truth speaks  
freshly to our experience. It helps the eun to shine,  
and bis rays fall on ita page to ilaatrate it. It spends  
‘the mornings and the evenings, and makes such an  
impression on us overnight as to awaken us before  
dawn, and its influence lingers around us like a fragrance  
late into the day. Tt conveys a new gloss to the mend  
‘ows and the depths of the wood, and its spirit, like a  
more subtile ether, sweeps slong with the prevailing  
winds of a country. . The very locusts and crickets of  
summer day are but later or earlier glosses on the  
Dherma Sastra of the Hindoos, continuation of the  
sacred code. As we have said, there is an orientalism  
in the most restless pioneer, and the farthest west is but  
the farthest east. While we aro reading these sentences,  
this fair modern world seems only a reprint of the Laws  
of Menu with the gloss of Calluca, ‘Tried by a New  
England eye, or the mere practical wisdom of modern  
times, they are the oracles of a race already in its dotage,  
but held up to the sky, which is the only impartial and  
incorruptible ordeal, they are of a piece with ite depth,  
and serenity, and I am assured that they will have =  
place and significance as long as there is a sky. to teat  
them by.  
  
Give me a sentence which no intelligence can under-  
stand. There must be a kind of life and palpitation to

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it, and under its words @ kind of blood must circulate  
forever. It is wonderful that this sound should have  
  
   
  
come down to us from so far, when the voice of man can  
bbe heard #0 little way, and we are not now within ear-  
shot of any contemporary. ‘The woodeutters have here  
felled an ancient pine forest, and brought fo light to  
  
   
  
fas if ite image had travelled hither from eternity.  
Perhaps these old stumps upon the knoll remember  
‘when anciently this lake gleamed in the horizon. One  
‘wonders if the bare earth itself did not experience emo-  
tion at beholding again eo fair a prospect. That fair  
‘water lies there in the sun thus revealed, so much the  
pronder and fairer because ita beauty needed not to be  
seen. It seems yet lonely, sufficient to itself, and su-  
pperior to observation. — So are these old sentences like  
serene lakes in the southwest, at length revealed to us,  
‘which have 0 long been reflecting our own sky in their  
bosom.  
  
‘The great plain of India lies as in a cup between the  
Himmaleh and the ocean on the north and south, and  
the Brahmapootra and Indus, on the east and west,  
wherein the primeval race was received, We will not  
dispute the story. We are pleased to read in the nat-  
ural history of the country, of the “pine, larch, spruce,  
and silver fir,” which cover the southern face of the  
Himmaleh range; of the gooseberry, raspberry, straw=  
berry,” which from an imminent temperate zone over  
look the torrid plains. So did this active modern life  
hhave even then foothold and lurking-place in the  
midst of the stateliness and contemplativeness of those  
Eastern plains. In another era the ‘lily of the valley,

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162 A weex.  
  
cowslip, dandelion,” were to work their way down into  
the plain, and bloom in a level zone of their own reach  
ing round the earth, Already has the era of the tem-  
pperate zone arrived, the era of the pine and the oak, for  
the palm and the banian do not supply the wants of this  
age. The lichens on the summits of the rocks will per-  
chance find their level erelong.  
  
‘As for the tenets of the Brahmans, we are not so  
‘much concerned to know what doctrines they held, as  
that they were held by any. We can tolerate all phi-  
losophies, Atomists, Pneumatologiss, Atheists, Theists,  
—Plato, Aristotle, Lencippus, Democritus, Pythagoras,  
Zoroaster, and Confucius. It is the attitude of these  
men, more than any communication which they make,  
that attracts us. Between them and their commentators,  
it is true, there is an endless dispute. But if it comes to  
this, that you compare notes, then you are all wrong.  
‘As it is, each takes us up into the serene heavens,  
whither the smallest bubble rises as surely as the  
largest, and paints oarth and sky for us. Any sincere  
‘thought is irresistible. The very austerity of the Brah-  
‘mans is tempting to the devotional soul, as a more re-  
fined and nobler luxury. Wants so easily and gracefully  
satisfied seem like a more refined pleasure. ‘Their con-  
ception of creation is peaceful as a dream. “When  
‘that power awakes, then has this world  
sion; but when he slumbers with a tranqi  
the hole system fades  
of their theogony implied. Tt hardly  
allows the reader to rest in any supreme first cause, but  
directly it hints at a supremer still which created the  
last, and the Creator is sill behind increate  
  
Nor will we disturb the antiquity of this Seripture 5

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Mopar. 168  
  
“From fire, from air, and from the sun,” it was “milked  
out” One might as well investigate the chronology of  
light and heat. Let the sun shine. Menu understood  
  
matter best, when he said, “Those best know the  
8 and nights who understand that the day  
of Brahma, which endures to the end of a thousand such  
ages, [infinite ages, nevertheless, according to mortal  
reckoning.) gives rise to virtuous exertions; and that his  
night endures as long as his day.” Indeed, the Mussul-  
man and Tartar dynasties are beyond all dating. Me-  
‘3 T have lived under them myself. In every man's  
brain ie the Sanserit. ‘The Vedes and their Angas aro  
not 60 ancient as serene contemplation. Why will we be  
imposed on by antiquity? Is the babe young? When I  
‘behold it it seems more venerable than the oldest man;  
it is more ancient than Nestor or the Sibyls, and bears  
the wrinkles of father Saturn himself. And do we live  
bat in the present? How broad a line is that? I sit  
‘now on a stump whose rings number centuries of growth.  
‘IFT look around I see that the eoil is composed of the re-  
‘mains of just euch stumps, ancestors to this, ‘The earth  
is covered with mould. I thrust this stick many mons  
deep into its surface, and with my heel make a deeper  
farrow than the elements have ploughed here for a thou-  
sand years. If I listen, I hear the peep of frogs which  
ig older than the slime of Egypt, and the distant drum-  
ming of a partridge on a log, as if it were the pulse-beat  
of the eummer air. I raise my fairest and freshest  
flowers in the old mould. Why, what we would fain  
call new is not skin deep; the earth is not yet stained  
by it. It is not the fertile ground which we walk on,  
but theleaves which fatter over our heads. ‘The newest,  
is but the oldest made visible to our senses. When we

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164 A wenn,  
  
ig up the soil from a thousand feet below the surface,  
we call it new, and the plants which spring from its  
‘and when our vision pierces deeper into space, and de-  
tects a remoter star, we call that new also. The place  
where we sit is called Hudson, —once it was Notting-  
ham, — once —  
  
‘We should read history as little critically gx we oon-  
fider the Inndscape, and be more interested by the at-  
mospherie tints and various lights and shades which the  
  
ng spaces create, than by its groundwork and  
compocition. It is the morning now turned evening and  
seen in the west,—the same sun, bat a now light and  
atmosphere. Tis beauty is like the sunset; not a fresco  
painting on a wall, flat and bounded, but atmospheric  
and roving or free. In reality, history fluctuates as the  
face of the landscape from morning to evening. What  
is of moment is its hue and color, Time hides no  
treasures; we want not its then, but its now. We do  
not complain that the mountains in the horizon are blue  
and indistinct ; they are the more like the heavens.  
  
OF what moment are facts that can be lost, — which  
need to be commemorated? ‘The monument of death  
will outlast the memory of the dead. The pyramids do  
not tell the tale which was confided to them ; the living  
fact commemorates itself. Why look in the dark for  
light? Strictly speaking, the historical societies have  
not recovered one fact from oblivion, but are themselves,  
instead of the fact, that is lost. ‘The researcher is more  
memorable than the researched. The crowd stood ad-  
miring the mist and the dim outlines of the trees seen  
‘through it, when one of their number advanced to ex-  
plore the phenomenon, and with fresh admiration all eyes

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aopar. 165  
  
‘were turned on his dimly retreating Sgure. It is as-  
tonishing with how little co-operation of the societies the  
past is remembered. Its story has indeed had anot  
‘muse than has been assigned it. There is a good  
stance of the manner in which all history began,  
Alvwakidis! Arabian Chronicle: “I was informed by  
Almed Aimatin A¥jorkami, who bad it from Rephda  
Ebn Kais, Alémiri, who had it from Saiph Ein Fab-  
alah Alckdiquarmi, who bad it from Thabet Bbn Al-  
amah, who said he was present at the action.” ‘These  
fathers of history were not anxious to preserve, but to  
earn the fact; and hence it was not forgotten. Critical  
‘tcumen is exerted in vain to uncover the past the past  
cannot be presented; we cannot lenow what we are not.  
Bat one veil hangs over past, present, and future, and it  
is the province of the historian to find out, not what  
‘was, but what is, Where a battle has been fought, you  
will find nothing bat the bones of men and beasts;  
where a battle is being fought, there aro hearts beating.  
We will sit on @ mound and muse, and not try to make  
‘these skeletons stand on their legs again. Does Nature  
remember, think you, that they were men, or not rather  
that they are bones?  
  
Ancient history has an air of antiquity. It should be  
more modern. It is written as if the spectator should  
be thinking of the backside of the picture on the wall,  
fr as if the author expected that the dead would be his  
readers, and wished to detail to them their own expe-  
Fienee. Men seem anxious to accomplish an orderly  
retreat through the centuries, earnestly rebuilding the  
works behind, as they are battered down by the en-  
cronchments of time; but while they loiter, they and  
their works both fall a prey to the arch enemy. His-

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166 A WEEE.  
  
tory has neither the venerableness of antiquity, nor the  
freshness of the modern. It does as if it would go to  
the beginning of things, which natural history might  
with reason assume to do; but consider the Universal  
Tiistory, and then tell us,—when did burdock and  
plantain sprout first? Tt has been so written for the  
most part that the times it describes are with remark-  
able propriety called dark ages. They are dark, as one  
has observed, because we are so in the dark about them.  
‘The sun rarely shines in history, what with the dust and  
confusion ; and when we meet with any cheering fact  
which implies the presence of this luminary, we excerpt  
and modernize it. As when wo read in the history of  
the Saxons that Eawift of Northambria “caused stakes  
to be fixed in the highways where he lad seen a clear  
spring,” and “brazen dishes were chained to them to  
refresh the weary sojourner, whose fatigues Edwin had  
himself experienced.” ‘This is worth all Arthur's twelve  
battles.  
  
“Through the shadow of the word we eneep ito the younger day:  
  
Better fity ears of Europe than a eycl of Cathay.”  
‘Than fity your of Europe better one New England ray!  
  
Biography, too, is liable to the same objection ; it  
should be autobiography. Let us not, as the Germans  
advise, endeavor to go abroad and vex our bowels that  
swe may be somebody else to explain him. If I am not  
J, who will be?  
  
But it is fit that the Past should be dark ; though the  
darkness is not so much @ quality of the past as of tra-  
dition. Tt is not a distance of time, but a distance of  
relation, which makes thus dusky its memorials. What  
is near to the heart of this generation is fair and bright,  
Greece lies outspread fair and sunshiny in floods

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moxpar. 167  
  
of light, for there isthe sun and daylight in her litera-  
tore and art. Homer does inot allow us to forget that  
the sun shone,—nor Phidias, nor the Parthenon. Yet  
‘no era has been wholly dark, nor will we too hastily sub-  
mit to the historian, and congratulate ourselves on a  
blaze of light. If we could pieree the obscurity of those  
remote Fears, we should find it light enough only there  
not our day. Some creatures are made to eee in the  
dark, There has always been the same amount of light  
in the world. ‘The new and missing stare, the comets  
tana eclipses, do not affect the general illumination, for  
only our glasses appreciate them. ‘The eyes of the old-  
est fossil remains, they tell us, indicate that the same  
Jaws of light prevailed then as now. Always the laws  
of light are the same, but the modes and degrees of see-  
ing vary. The gods are partial to no era, but ste  
shines their light in the heavens, while the eye of the  
beholder is turned to stone. ‘There was but the sun and  
the eye from the first. The ages have not added a new  
ray to the one, nor altered a fibre of the other.  
  
Af we will admit time into our thoughts at all, the  
mythologies, those vestiges of ancient poems, wrecks of  
poems, 80 to speak, the world’s inheritance, still reflect-  
ing some of their original splendor, ike the fragmenta of  
clouds tinted by the rays of the departed sun; reaching  
  
"into the latest summer day, and allying this hour to the  
morning of creation; as the poet sings: —  
“Fragments of the lofty strain  
lat down the tide of yee,  
‘An buoyant on the stormy main  
"A parted wreck appear.”  
These are the materials and hints for x history of the  
ise and progress of the race; how, from the condition

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168 a were.  
  
of ants, it arrived at the condition of men, and arta were  
gradually invented. Let thousand surmises shed some  
Tight on this story. We will not be confined by histori-  
cal, even geological periods which would allow us to  
doubt of a progress in human affairs. If we rise above  
‘his wisdom for the day, we shall expect that this morn-  
ing of the race, in which it has been supplied with the  
simplest necessaries, with corn, and wine, and honey,  
‘and oil, and fire, and articulate speech, and agricultural  
‘and other arts, reared up by degrees from the condition  
‘of ants to men, will be succeeded by a day of equally  
progressive splendor; that, in the lapse of the divine  
periods, other divine agents and godlike men will assist  
to clevate the race as much above its present condition.  
But we do not know much aboot it.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘Thue did one voyageur waking dream, while his com-  
panion slumbered on the bank. Suddenly a boatman’s  
hhorn was heard echoing from shore to shore, to give no-  
tice of his approach to the farmer's wife with whom be  
‘was to take his dinner, though in that place only musk-  
vats and kingfishers seemed to hear. ‘The current of our  
reflections and our slumbers being thus disturbed, we  
‘weighed anchor once more.  
  
‘As we proceeded on our way in the afternoon, the  
‘western bank became lower, or receded farther from the  
channel in some places, leaving a few trees only to fringe  
the water's edges while the eastern rose abruptly here  
and there into wooded hills fifty or sixty feet high. ‘The  
ass, Tilia Americana, also called the lime or linden,  
which was a new treo to us, overhung the water with  
its broad and rounded leaf, interspersed with clusters of  
small hard berries now nearly ripe, and made an agree-

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morDAY. 169  
  
able shade for us sailors. ‘The inner bark of this genus  
is the bast, the material of the fisherman's matting, and  
the ropes and peasant’s shoes of which the Russians  
make s0 much use, and also of nets and a coarse cloth  
in some places. According to poets, this was once  
Philyra, one of the Oceanides. ‘The ancients are said  
to have used its bark for the roofs of cottages, for bas-  
kets, and for a kind of paper called Philyra. They also  
made bucklers of its wood, “on account of its flexibility,  
ightmess, and resiliency.” Tt was once much used for  
carving, and is stil in demand for sounding-boards of  
piano-fortes and panels of carriages, and for various uses  
for which toughness and flexibility are required. Baskets  
‘and cradles are made of the twigs. Ite sap affords  
sugar, and the honey made from its flowers is said to be  
preferred to any other. Its leaves are in some coun-  
tries. given to cattle, a kind of chocolate has been made  
of its frait, a medicine has been prepared from an infi-  
sion of its flowers, and finally, the charcoal made of its  
‘wood is greatly valued for gunpowder.  
  
‘The sight of this tree reminded ts that we hed  
reached a strange Iand to us. As we sailed under this  
‘canopy of leaves we saw the sky through its chinks, and,  
as it were, the meaning and idea of the tree stamped in  
1 thousand hieroglyphios on the heavens. The universe  
is so aptly fitted to our organization that the eye wan  
ders and reposes at the same time. On every side there  
is something to soothe and refresh this sense. Look up  
at the tree-tops and see how finely Nature finishes off  
hier work there. See how the pines spire without end  
hhigher and higher, and make a graceful fringe to the  
earth. And who shall count the finer cobwebs that  
‘and float away from their utmo-t tops, and the my:  
  
8

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170 a wees:  
  
insects that dodge between them. Leaves are of more  
various forms than the alphabets of all languages put  
together; of the oaks alone there are hardly two alike,  
and each expresses its own character.  
  
In all her products Nature only develops her simplest  
germs. One would say that it was no great stretch of  
invention to create birds. The hawk, which now takes  
hhis ight over the top of the wood, was at first, per-  
chance, only @ leaf which fluttered in its aisles. From  
rustling leaves she came in the course of ages to the  
lohier flight and clear carol of the bind.  
  
Salmon Brook comes in from the west under the rail-  
road, a mile and a half below the village of Nashus.  
‘We rowed up far enough into the meadows which bor-  
der it to learn its piseatorial history from a haymaker  
‘on its banks. He told us that the silver eel was for-  
merly abundant here, and pointed to some suriken ereels  
‘at its mouth. This man’s memory and imagination were  
fertile in fishermen’s tales of floating isles in bottomless  
ponds, and of lakes mysteriously stocked with fishes, and  
‘would have kept us till nightfall to listen, but we could  
not afford to loiter in this roadstead, and so stood out to  
our sea again, ‘Though we never trod in those me  
ows, but only touched their margin with our hands, we  
still rotain a pleasant memory of them.  
  
Salmon Brook, whose name is said to be a translation  
from the Indian, was a favorite haunt of the aborigines.  
Here, too, the first white settlers of Nashua planted, and  
some dents in the earth where their houses stood and  
the wrecks of ancient apple-trees are still visible. About  
‘one mile up this stream stood the house of old John  
Lovewell, who was an ensign in the army of Oliver  
Cromwell, and the father of “fumous Captain Love.

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MONDAY. am  
  
well.” He settled here before 1690, and died about  
1754, at the age of one hundred and twenty years. Ho  
is thought to have been engeged in the famous Narra-  
gansett swamp fight, which took place in 1675, before  
hhe came here. The Indians are said to have spared him  
{in succeeding wars on accoant of his kindness to them,  
Even in 1700 he was eo old and gray-headed that his  
scalp was worth nothing, since the French Governor  
offered no bounty for euch. I bave stood in the dent of  
  
cellar on the bank of the brook, and talked there  
ith one whose grandfather had, whose father might  
have, talked with Lovewell. Here also he had a mill in  
hhis old age, and Kept a omall store. Ho was reme  
ered by some who wore recently living, as a hale old  
man who rove the boys out of his orchard with bis  
ane. Consider the triumphs of the mortal man, and  
‘what poor trophies it would have to show, to wit:— He  
cobbled shoes without glasses at a hundred, and cat a  
hhandsome swath at a hundred and fve! Lovewel  
hhouse is said to have been the first, which Mrs. Dustan  
reached on her escape from the Indians. Here proba  
bly the hero of Pequawket was born and bred. Close  
by may be seen the cellar and the gravestone of Joseph  
Hassell, who, as is elsewhere recorded, with his wife  
Anna, and son Benjemin, and Mary Marks, “ wore slain  
by our Indian enemies on September 24, [1691,] in the  
evening” As Gookin observed on a previous occasion,  
“The Indian rod upon the English backs had not yet  
done God’s errand” Salmon Brook near its mouth is  
Atill a solitary stream, meandering through woods and  
meadows, while the then uninhabited mouth of the  
‘Nashua now resounds with the din of « manufacturing  
town.

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172 A warn.  
  
A stream from Otternic Pond in Hudson comes in just  
above Salmon Brook, on the opposite side. ‘There was  
1 good view of Uncannunuc, the most conspicuous moun-  
tain in these paris, from the bank here, seen rising over  
the west end of the bridge above. We soon after passed  
the village of Nashus, on the river of the same name,  
where there is a covered bridge over the Merrimack.  
‘The Nashua, which is one of the largest tributaries, flows  
from Wachusett Mountain, through Lancaster, Groton,  
and other towns, where it has formed well-known elm-  
shaded meadows, but near its mouth it is obstructed by  
falls and factories, and did not tempt us to explore it.  
  
Far away from here, in Lancaster, with another com-  
ppanioa, I have crossed the broad valley of the Nashua,  
‘over which we hed 80 long looked westward from the  
Concord hills without seeing it to the blue mountains in  
‘the horizon. So many streams, so many meadows and  
‘woods and quiet dwellings of men had lain concealed  
‘between us and those Delectable Mountains; — from yon-  
der bill on the road to Tyngsborough you may get a good  
‘view of them. There where it seemed uninterrupted  
forest to our youthful eyes, between two neighboring  
pines in the horizon, lay the valley of the Nashua, and  
this very stream was even then winding at its bottom,  
and then, as now, it was here silently mingling its waters  
with the Merrimack. ‘The clouds which floated over its  
meadows and were born there, seen far in the west,  
gilded by the rays of the setting sun, had adorned a  
thousand evening skies for us. But as it were, by &  
turf wall this valley was concealed, and in our journey  
to those hills it was first gradoally revealed to us  
Summer and winter our eyes had rested on the dim out-  
line of the mountains, to which distance and indistinct

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Monpar, 173  
  
ness Tent a grandeur not their own, so that they served  
{to interpret all the allusions of poets and travellers,  
‘Standing on the Concord Cliffs we thus spoke our mind  
‘0 them : —  
  
‘With frontier strength yo stand your ground,  
With grand content yo circle round,  
Tamulteous silence fr all sound,  
‘Ye distant nursery of il  
Monndooek and the Peteboroagh Hil; —  
Firm argument that never ti,  
Ontetrcliog the philosopher, —  
Like some vast fet,  
Saitiog through rain aod sleet,  
‘Through winters cold and summer's heat;  
Sui hong o  
Until ye lad « shore amid the sien;  
‘Not sicaking clove to land,  
‘With eargo contraband,  
For they who sent a ventare ont by ye  
“Have sat tho San to vee  
‘The honesty.  
  
Ships of the lin, each one,  
‘Yo weatward ran,  
Goaroying cious,  
‘Which clste in your shronds,  
Atways before the gal,  
‘Wade pres of si,  
‘With weight of metal all unto, —  
‘asam to feel ye in my frm soat here,  
Immeasurable depth of bold,  
‘And breadth of beam, and length of running gear,  
  
‘Methloks yo take Taxurfos plngare  
{In your novel western leer  
  
‘So cool your brows and fredhly bia,  
‘As Time had nanght for ye to do;  
  
For ye lie at your length,  
  
‘An wospproprated strength,  
  
‘Uahowa primeval timber,  
  
For knees s sti, for masts vo limber;  
‘The stook of which new oarthe are made,

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14  
  
A weer.  
  
(One day to bo our western trade,  
Fit for the stanchions of a world  
‘Which throogh the wens of space is hurled.  
  
   
  
‘While we enjoy «lingering ray,  
‘Ye ill 'etop the western day,  
eposing yonder on God's eroft  
  
Like solid stoke of hay  
  
‘So bold line na no'er was writ  
  
On any page by human wit}  
  
‘The fret glows an if  
  
‘An enemy's camp-Gree shoae  
‘Alog the herizoa,  
  
(Or the day's fonerl pyre  
  
‘Wer light there;  
  
aged with llvor and with gol,  
  
‘The clouds hang o'er in damask fd,  
‘And with auch depth of amber light  
‘The west in dight  
  
‘Where till a fow rays slant  
  
‘That even Honven seems extravagnat,  
‘Watatic Hil  
  
‘Les on the horizon’ fl  
  
Like « child's toy lof overnight  
  
‘And other duds to lef end right,  
  
‘On tho earths edge, mountain end rose  
Stand as they were on air graven,  
(Oras the veel in & haven  
  
“Avralt the momlag breeze.  
  
Tfaney even  
  
‘Through your dafles windeth the way to hesran  
‘And yonder stl, in apto of history's page,  
‘Lingo tho golden and the alver age;  
Upon the laboring gale  
  
‘The news of future cantare fs Brough,  
And of new dynastin of thought,  
  
rom your rametest vale.  
  
   
  
Bat special T remember thes,  
‘Wachosett, who like me  
Standest alone without soaety.

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MONAT. 175  
  
Seen throogh the clearing othe gong,  
(Or from the windows of the forge,  
  
Doth leaven allt passes by.  
  
Nothing is trae  
  
Bat stands "tween me and yo0,  
  
‘Thom western plooeer,  
  
‘Who knowst not skame nor fea,  
  
By ventaroas sprit driven  
  
Under the eaves of heaven  
  
‘And canst expand thee there,  
  
‘And breathe eoough of air?  
  
‘Byen beyond the Weat  
  
‘Thou migrtest,  
  
Toto unclouded tect,  
  
Without «pligrin's exe,  
  
Coating thy toed on high  
  
‘With thy well-tompered brow,  
  
‘And matt thyself a clearing tn the sky.  
‘Upholding heaven, bolding down earth,  
‘Thy pastime from thy births  
  
[Not steadied by the one, nor leaning on the other,  
May Tapprove myself thy worthy brother!  
  
At length, like Rasselas and other inhabitants of happy  
valleys, we had resolved to scale the blue wall which  
bounded the western horizon, though not without mise  
sgivings that thereafter no visible fairy-land would exist  
for us. But it would be long to tell of our adventures,  
and we have no time this afternoon, transporting our-  
selves in imagination up this hazy Nashua valley, to go  
‘over again that pilgrimage. We have since made many  
similar excursions to the principal mountains of New  
England and New York, and even far in the wilderness,  
‘and have pasted a night on the summit of many of them.  
And now, when we look again westward from our native  
hills, Wachusett and Monadnock have retreated once  
‘more among the blue and fabulous mountains in the ho-  
rizon, though our eyes rest on the very rocks on both of

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176 A were,  
  
them, where we have pitched our tent for a night, and  
boiled our hasty-pudding amid the clouds.  
  
As Inte as 1724 there was no house on the north side  
of the Nashus, but only scattered wigwams and grisly  
forests between thie frontier and Canada. In September  
of that year, two men who were engaged in making tar-  
pentive on that side, for such were the first enterprises  
in the wilderness, were taken captive and carried to  
Canada by a party of thirty Indians. Ten of the inhab-  
itants of Dunstable, going to look for them, found the  
hhoops of their barrel cut, and the turpentine spread on  
the ground. I have been told by an inhabitant of  
‘Tyngeborough, who had the story from his ancestors, that  
fone of these captives, when the Indians were about to  
upset his barrel of turpentine, seized a pine knot and  
flourishing it, swore 60 resolutely that he would kill the  
first who touched it, that they refrained, and when at  
length he returned from Canada be found it still stand-  
ing. Perhaps there was more than one barrel. How-  
‘ever this may have been, the scouts knew by marks on  
the trees, made with coal mixed with grease, that the  
men were not killed, but taken prisoners. One of the  
company, named Farwell, perceiving that the turpentine  
bad not done spreading, concluded that the Indians hed  
been gone but a short time, and they accordingly went  
in instant pursuit. Contrary to the advice of Farwell,  
following directly on their trail up the Merrimack, they  
fell into an ambuscade near Thornton's Ferry, in the  
resent town of Merrimack, and nine were killed, only  
‘one, Farwell, escaping after a vigorous pursuit. The  
men of Dunstable went out and picked up their bodies,  
and carried them all down to Dunstable and buried

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aoxpar. ut  
  
them. Tt is almost word for word as in the Robin Hood  
ballad: —  
They carved these freter into fair Nottingham,  
‘As many there did kaow,  
‘They digged thom graves their churchyard,  
  
‘And they aried them all arom.”  
‘Nottingham is only the other side of the river, and they  
‘were notexactly alla-row. You may read in the church-  
yard at Dunstable, under the “Memento Mor,” and the  
‘name of one of them, how they ‘departed this life,” and  
  
\*Thie man with sven more that Iie in  
  
‘his grave was alow allia a day by  
‘th Indias.”  
  
‘Tho stones of some others of the company stand around  
the common grave with their separate inscriptions,  
Bight were buried here, but nine were killed, according  
to the best authorities.  
  
\* Geotleriver, geal iver,  
  
Lo, thy strenms are stained with gor,  
  
Many « brave and noble captais  
Floats along thy willowed shore.  
  
“A bei thy limpid water,  
AIT sie thy ands 0 bre  
adion Chee sod Chinn warriors  
‘oined in Berce and mortal Bight.”  
  
It is related in the History of Dunstable, that on the  
return of Farwell the Indians were engaged by a fresh  
party which they compelled to retreat, and parsued as  
far as the Nashua, where they fought across the stream.  
at its mouth. After the departure of the Indians, the  
figure of an Tndian’s head was found carved by them on  
1 large tree by the shore, which circumstance has given.  
its name to this part of the village of Nashville, — tho  
“Indian Head” It was observed by some judicious,”  
  
se ¥

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178 a wae,  
  
says Gookin, referring to Philip's war, “that at the be-  
ginning of the war the English soldiers made nothing  
of the Indians, and many spake words to this effect:  
‘that one Englishman was sufficient to chase ten Indians:  
many reckoned it was no other but Veni, vidi, vici.”  
But we may conclude that the judicious would by  
time have made a different observation.  
  
Farwell appears to have been the only one who had  
studied his profession, and understood the business of  
hhunting Indians. He lived to fight another day, for the  
next year he was Lovewell’s lieutenant at Pequawket,  
bat that time, ax we have related, he left his bones in the  
wilderness. His name atill reminds us of twilight days  
and forest scouts on Indian trails, with an uneasy scalp 5  
—an indispensable hero to New England. As the  
‘more recent poet of Lovewell’s fight has sung, halting a  
little but bravely still :—  
  
“Then did the crimson streams that owed  
Seem like the waters of the Brook,  
‘That brightly shine, that loudly dash  
Far dowa the clit of Agiochook."  
  
‘These battles sound incredible to us. I think that  
posterity will doubt if such things ever were; if our  
bold ancestors who settled this land were not struggling  
rather with the forest shadows, and not with a copper-  
colored race of men. ‘They were vapors, fever and  
ague of the unsettled woos. Now, only a few arrow-  
heads are turned up by the plough. In the Pelasgic,  
the Etruscan, or the British story, there is nothing 20  
shadowy and unreal.  
  
   
  
   
  
It is a wild and antiquated looking graveyard, over-  
grown with bushes, on the high-road, about a quarter of

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‘Mopar. 179  
  
a mile from and overlooking the Merrimack, with a  
deserted mill-stream bounding it on one side, where lie  
the earthly remains of the ancient inhabitants of Dune  
stable. We passed it three or four miles below here.  
‘You may read there the names of Lovewell, Farwell,  
and many others whose families were distinguished in  
Indian warfare. We noticed there two large masses  
of granite more than a foot thick and rudely squared,  
lying flat on the ground over the remains of the first  
pastor and his wife.  
  
   
  
   
  
It is remarkable that the dead lie everywhere under  
stones, —  
  
“ srntnjacnt passim mo quae sub" lpide —  
corpora, we might say, if the measure allowed. When  
the stone is a slight one, it does not oppress the spirits  
of the traveller to meditate by it; but these did seem  
little heathenish to us; and 60 are all large monuments  
over men’s bodies, from the pyramids down. A monu-  
ment should at least be “star-y-pointing,” to indicate  
whither the spirit is gone, and not prostrate, like the body  
it has deserted. There have been some nations who could  
do nothing but construct tombs, and these are the only  
traces which they have left. ‘They are the heathen.  
But why these stones, so upright and emphatic, like  
exclamation-points? What was there so remarkable  
that lived? Why should the monument be so much  
‘more enduring than the fame which it is designed to per-  
petuate,—a stone toa bone? “Here lies,” —“ Here  
lies” ;— why do they not sometimes write, There rises?  
Is it @ monument to the body only that is intended?  
“Having reached the term of bis natural life”;—  
‘would it not be truer to say, Having reached the term

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180 A were.  
  
of his unnatural life? The rarest quality in an epitaph  
is truth. If any character is given, it should be as  
severely true as the decision of the three judges below,  
‘and not the partial testimony of friends. Friends and  
‘contemporaries should supply only the name and date,  
‘and leave it to posterity to write the epitaph.  
  
ore lesan honest man,  
  
Roar-Admiral Van.  
  
   
  
Fatt, then yo have  
‘Two inone grave,  
orn his favor,  
“ere too lies the Engraver.  
Fame itself is but nn epitaph ; as late, as falso, as true.  
‘But they only are the true epitaphs which Old Mortal-  
ity retouches.  
  
‘A man might well pray that be may not taboo or  
‘earse any portion of nature by being buried in it. For  
the most part, the best man's spirit makes a fearful  
sprite to haunt his grave, and it is therefore much to the  
credit of Little John, the famous follower of Robin Hood,  
‘and reflecting favorably on his character, that his grave  
‘was “long celebrous for the yielding of excellent whet-  
stones.” I confess that I have but litte love for such  
collections as they have at the Catacombs, Pére la  
Chaise, Mount Auburn, and even this Dunstable grave-  
yard. At any rate, nothing but great antiquity ean  
make graveyards interesting to me. I have no friends  
there. It may be that I am not competent to write the  
poetry of the grave. ‘The farmer who has skimmed  
his farm might perchance leave his body to Nature to  
be ploughed in, and in some measure restore ite fertility.  
‘We should not retard but forward her economies.

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MONDAT. 181  
  
Soon the village of Nashua was out of sight, and the  
woods were gained again, and we rowed slowly on be-  
fore sunset, looking for a solitary place in which to spend  
the night. A few evening clouds began to be reflected  
in the water and the surface was dimpled only here and  
there by a muskrat crossing the stream. We camped at  
length near Penichook Brook, on the confines of what  
is now Nashville, by a deep ravine, under the skirt of  
‘8 pine wood, where the dead pine-leaves were our car-  
pet, and their tawny boughs stretched overhead. But  
fire and smoke soon tamed the scenes the rocks con-  
ented to be our walls, and the pines our roof. A wood~  
side was already the fittest locality for us  
  
‘The wilderness is near as well as dear to every man.  
Even the oldest villages are indebted to the border of  
‘wild wood which surrounds them, more than to the gar-  
dens of men. There is something indescribably inspir  
ing and beautiful in the aspect of the forest skirting and  
occasionally jutting into the midst of new towns, which,  
like the sand-heaps of fresh fox-burrows, have sprung,  
up in their midst. ‘The very uprightness of the pines  
‘and maples asserts the ancient rectitude and vigor of na-  
ture. Our lives need the relief of such background,  
where the pine flourishes and the jay still sereams.  
  
‘We had found a safe harbor for our boat, and as the  
sun was setting carried up our furniture, and soon ar-  
ranged our house upon the bank, and while the kettle  
steamed at the tent door, we chatted of distant friends  
and of the sights which we were to-behold, and won-  
dered which way the towns lay from us. Our cocoa was  
s00n boiled, and supper set upon our chest, and we  
engthened out this meal, like old voyageurs, with our  
talk. Meanwhile we spread the map on the ground,

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182 A wees.  
  
‘and read in the Gazetteer when the first settlers came  
here and got a township granted. ‘Then, when supper  
‘was done and we had written the journal of our voyage,  
‘we wrapped our buffaloes about us and lay down with  
our heads pillowed on our arms listening awhile to the  
distant baying of 1 dog, or the murmurs of the river, oF  
to the wind, which had not gone to rest:—  
  
   
  
‘The westor wind came Iambering in,  
Bearing a faiot Paci dio,  
  
‘Oar evening mall, swift at the call  
  
(OF its Postmaster Generals  
  
[Laden with news from Californ'  
‘Whate'er transpired bath since mora,  
How wags the world by brie and brake  
  
   
  
   
  
or half awake and half asleep, dreaming of a star which  
ymered through our eotton roof. Perhaps at mid-  
ight one was awakened by a cricket shrilly singing on  
his shoulder, or by a huating epider in his eye, and was  
lulled asleep again by some streamlet purling its way  
along at the bottom of a wooded and rocky ravine in’out  
neighborhood. It was pleasant to lie with our heads #0  
Jow in the grass, and hear what a tinkling ever-busy  
Iaboratory it was. A thousand litle artisans beat on  
their anvils all night long.  
  
Far in the night as we were falling asleep on the bank:  
of the Merrimack, we heard some tyro beating a drum  
{incessantly in preparation for country muster, as we  
earned, and we thought of the line,—  
  
“When the dram beat at dead of night."  
  
‘We could have assured bim that his beat would be  
answered, and the forces be mustered. Fear not, thoa  
drummer of the night, we too will be there. And sill

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Monpar. 188  
  
he drummed on in the silence and the dark. This stray  
sound from a far-off sphere came to our ears from time  
to time, far, sweet, and significant, and we listened with  
such an unprejudiced sense as if for the first time we  
hheard at all. No doubt he was an insignifeant drum-  
‘mer enough, but bis music afforded us a primo and leis-  
ure hour, and we felt that we were in season wholly.  
‘These simple sounds related us to the stars. Ay, there  
‘was logic in them s0 convincing that the combined  
sense of mankind could never make me doubt their con-  
clusions. I stop my habitual thinking, as if the plough  
hhad suddenly run deeper in its furrow through the crust  
of the world. How can I go on, who have just stepped  
over such a bottomless skylight in the bog of my life.  
Suddenly old Time winked at me,— Ab, you know me,  
‘you rogue,—and news had come that IT was well.  
‘That ancient universe is in such capital health, I think  
‘undoubtedly it will never die. Heal yourselves, doctors s  
by God, I live,  
‘Then idle Time ran gadatog by  
‘And loft me with Rtealy sooo;  
‘hear beyond th range of sound,  
Taso beyood the verge of sight, —  
Tee, smell, taste, hear, feel, that everlasting Something  
to which we are allied, at once our maker, our abode, our  
destiny, our very Selves; the one historic truth, tho  
most remarkable fact which can become the distinct and  
uninvited subject of our thought, the actual glory of the  
universe ; the only fact which a human being cannot  
Avoid recognizing, or in some way forget or dispense with.  
Ti doth expand my privacies  
‘Toll and leave me sngl a the crowd.  
  
have seon how the foundations of the world are laid,

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184 A warn.  
  
and T have not the least doubt that it will stand = good  
while,  
{Now bial ia my natal boar,  
‘And only now my prime oft.  
{will ot doubt the love ato,  
‘Which aot my worth soe want bath bought,  
‘Which wooed me young and wooes me a,  
‘And to this evening hath mo brought  
‘What are care? what is Time? that this particular  
sories of sounds called a strain of music, an invisible and  
fairy troop which never brushed the dew from any mead,  
can be wafted down through the centuries from Homer  
to me, and he have been conversant with that same  
serial and mysterious charm which now so tingles my  
ears? What a fine communication from age to age, of  
the fairest and noblest thoughts, the aspirations of an  
cient men, even such as were never communicated by  
speech, is music! It is the fower of language, thought  
colored and curved, fuent and flexible, its crystal foun  
tain tinged with the sun's rays, and its purling ripples  
reflecting the grass and the clouds. A strain of music  
reminds me of @ passage of the Vedas, and I associate  
with it the idea of infinite remoteness, as well as of  
beauty and serenity, for to the sonses that is farthest  
from us which addresses the greatest depth within us.  
Tt teaches us again and again to trust the remotest and  
finest as the divinest instinct, and makes a dream our  
‘only real experience. We feel a sad cheer when we  
hear it, perchance because we that hear are not one with  
‘that which is heard.  
“Therefore a torrent of sudnes dep,  
‘Throagh the stain of thy tiumph i heard to sweep.  
‘The sadness is ours. ‘The Indian poet Calidas says in  
the Sacontala: “Perhaps the sadness of men on seeing

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aMoxDAY. 185  
  
Dbeautifel forms and hearing sweet music arises from  
some faint remembrance of past joys, and the traces of  
connections in a former state of existence.” As polish-  
ing expresses the vein in marble, and grain in wood, so  
music brings out what of heroic lurks anywhere. ‘The  
hero is the sole patron of music ‘That harmony which  
exists naturally between the hero's moods and the uni-  
verse the soldier would fain imitate with drum and  
trumpet. When we are in health all sounds fife and  
drum for us; we hear the notes of music in the air, or  
‘catch its echoes dying away when we awake in t  
dawn, Marching is when the pulse of the hero beats in  
‘unison with the pulse of Nature, and he steps to the  
‘measure of the universe then there is true courage and  
invincible strength.  
  
‘Platarch says that “ Plato thinks the gods never gave  
men music, the science of melody and harmony, for  
‘mere delectation or to tickle the ear; but that the dis-  
cordant parts of the circulations and beauteous fabric of  
the soul, and that of it that roves about the body, and  
many times, for want of tune and air, breaks forth into  
many extravagances and excesses, might be sweetly re~  
called and artfully wound up to their former consent and  
agreement.”  
  
‘Musi is the sound of the universal laws promulgated.  
Its the only assured tono. ‘There aro in it such strains  
as far surpass any man’s faith in the loftiness of his des-  
1y- ‘Things are to be learned which it will be worth  
the while to learn. Formerly I heard these  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Roxons ynow ax Hous Hane.  
‘There ina vale which none hath soo,  
‘Where foot of man he never been,  
Bach as here lives with toil and azo,  
‘An aazioas and a slat lif.

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186 A Weer.  
  
‘There every virtue sit bie,  
Zio it descends upon the earth,  
‘And thither every ded returns  
‘Which in the generous bovom bara.  
  
‘There love Is warm, and youth ls young,  
And poetry in yet uowang,  
  
For Vitae stil aveatares there,  
  
‘And freely breathes her native alt.  
  
And ever if you hearken wll,  
‘You sill may hear it vesper be,  
  
And trod of high-eoaled men go by,  
‘Theis thoaghts conversing with the sky.  
  
According to Jamblicbus, Pythagoras did not pro-  
ccure for himself a thing of this kind through instruments  
for the voice, but employing @ certain ineffable divinity,  
and which it is dificult to apprehend, he extended hi  
ears and fixed his intellect in the sublime aymphonics  
of the world, he alone hearing and understanding, as it  
appears, the universal harmony and consonance of the  
spheres, and the stars that are moved through them,  
and which produce a fuller and more intense melody  
than anything effected by mortal sounds.”  
  
‘Travelling on foot very early one morning due east  
from here about twenty miles, from Caleb Harriman's  
tavern in Hampstead toward Haverhill, when I reached  
the reilroad in Plaistow, I heard at some distance a  
faint music in the air like an Holian harp, which T  
immediately suspected to proceed from the cord of the  
telegraph vibrating in the just awakening morning wind,  
and applying my ear to one of the posts I was convinced  
‘that it was so. It was the telegraph harp singing its  
‘meseage through the country, its message sent not by  
men, but by gods. Perchance, like the statue of Mem-  
zon, it resounds only in the morning, when the first rays

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xoxpar. 187  
  
‘of the oun fall on it, Tt was like the first lyre or shell  
hheard on the sea-shore, — that vibrating cord high in the  
air over the shores of earth. So havo all things their  
higher and their lower uses. I heard a fairer news  
than the journals ever print. It told of things worthy  
to hear, and worthy of the electric fuid to carry the news  
of, not of the price of cotton and flour, but it hinted at  
the price of the world itself and of things which are  
Priceless, of absolute truth and beauty.  
  
‘Still the drum rolled on, and stirred our blood to fresh,  
extravagance that night. ‘The clarion sound and clang  
of corselet and backler were heard from many « hamlet  
of the soul, and many a knight was arming for the fight  
behind the encamped stars,  
  
“Bator each van  
rick forth the ary knights and couch thetr wears  
  
‘Tl thlckeet loons close; with feats of arms  
From either end of Heaven the welkia barns.”  
  
Away! away! sway! away!  
‘Ye have not kopt your seoret wal,  
1 will abide tha other day,  
‘Thoee other lands ye tall  
  
‘Has time no lieare laf for thas,  
‘The acta that ye rehearse?  
aot eternity « ease  
  
For beta doods than vers’?  
  
"Tin awoet to hear of heroes dead,  
‘To know them ail alive  
Bat ewectar if we earn their bread,  
‘And In us they survive.  
  
(One fe should food the springs of fame  
‘With a perensial ware  
  
‘As ocean feeds the bubbling founta  
‘Which 8nd in it thie grave.

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188 A worn,  
  
‘Ye sea drop gonty round my breast  
‘And be my corselet bine,  
  
‘Yo earth reelve my lance in rst,  
My fulthfal charger you  
  
‘Yo stars my spoar-heads inthe sky,  
  
My arvow-tipe ye are,  
  
eae the roated foeren Ay,  
  
‘My bright spear fixed are, :  
vo mo an angel fora fo,  
  
ix now the place and te,  
  
And straight to met bie T wll go  
‘Above the starry chime.  
  
‘And with our clashing bockler clang  
‘The heavenly spheres shall ring,  
‘While bright tho northern lights shall hang  
‘Bede our tourneying.  
  
And if he love her cbasapon trae,  
  
‘Tell Hoeven not deepal,  
  
or I will bo her champion new,  
  
"Hor fan Iwill repeie.  
  
‘There was a high wind this night, which wo after-  
‘wards learned had been still more violent elsewhere, and  
Ihad done much injury to the comficlds far and near;  
but we only heard it sigh from time to time, as if it had  
no license to shake the foundations of our tent; the  
pines murmured, the water rippled, and the tent rocked  
alittle, but we only laid our ears closer to the ground,  
while the blast swept on to alarm other men, and long  
defor sunrise we were ready to pursue our voyage as  
usual.

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TUESDAY.  
  
0a ater sd he ier  
{ang eld of bare ao 7  
‘Tat lobe the wold td met the sy  
And trough the Ali the road rane by  
‘Temany-srrered Canela”  
‘Tener,

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TUESDAY.  
  
Lone before daylight we ranged abroad, hatchet in  
‘hand, in cearch of fuel, and made the yet slambering and  
reaming wood resound with our blows. ‘Then with our  
fire we burned up a portion of the loitering night, while  
the kettle sang its homely strain to the moming star.  
‘We tramped about the shore, waked all the muskrats,  
‘and scared up the bittern and birds that were asleep  
‘upon their roosts ; we hauled up and upset our boat and  
‘washed it and rinsed out the clay, talking aloud as if it  
were broad day, until at length, by three o'clock, we had  
completed our preparations and were ready to pursue  
‘our voyage as usual; s0, shaking the clay from our feet,  
‘we pushed into the fog.  
  
‘Though we were enveloped in mist as usual, wo  
trusted that there was a bright day behind it,  
  
Pry the oars! away! away!  
In ach dew-rop ofthe morning  
‘Lies the promise of a day.  
  
Rivers frm the sunrise ow,  
Springing with the dewy morn;  
‘Voyageurs "gna the do 70%,  
[le noon nor mnset know,  
vor oven with the dawa,  
  
Belknap, the historian of this State, says that, “In the  
neighborhood of fresh rivers and ponds, a whitish fog in

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192 A were,  
  
the morning lying over the water is a sure indication of  
fair weather for that day ; and when no fog is seen, rain  
in expected before night.” ‘That which seemed to us to  
invest, the world was only a narrow and shallow wreath  
‘of vapor stretched over the channel of the Merrimack  
from the seaboard to the mountains. Bore extensive  
fogs, however, have their own limits. I once saw the  
ay break from the top of Saddle-back Mountain in  
‘Massachusetts, above the clouds. As we cannot diatin-  
‘guish objects through this dense fog, let me tell this story  
more at length.  
  
Thad come over the hills on foot and alone in serene  
summer days, plucking the raspberries by the wayside,  
and occasionally buying a loaf of bread at s farmer's  
hhouse, with a knapsack on my back which held a few  
traveller’s books and a change of clothing, and a staff in  
my hand. I had that morning looked down from the  
Hoosack Mountain, where the road crosses it, on the vil-  
lage of North Adams in the valley three miles away  
under my feet, showing how uneven the earth may  
‘sometimes be, and making it seem an accident that it  
should ever be level and convenient for the feet of man.  
Potting a little rice and sugar and a tin cup into my  
‘knapsack at this village, T began in the afternoon to as-  
‘eend the mountain, whose summit is three thousand six  
Ihundred feet above the level of the sea, and was seven  
or eight miles distant by the path. My route Iay up a  
Jong and spacious valley called the Bellows, because the  
‘winds rush up or down it with violence in storms, slop-  
ing up to the very clouds between the principal rango  
and a lower mountain. ‘There were a few farms scat-  
tered along at different elevations, each commanding &

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‘ToEspay. 193  
  
fine prospect of the mountains to the north, and a stream  
ran down the middle of the valley on which near the  
head’ there was a mill. It seemed a road for the pil-  
grim to enter upon who would climb to the gutes of  
heaven. Now I crossed a hay-field, and now over the  
brook on a slight bridge, still gradually ascending all the  
while with a sort of awe, and filled with indefinite ex-  
pectations as to what kind of inhabitants and what kind  
‘of mature I should come to at last. It now seemed  
tome advantage that the earth was uneven, for one  
could not imagine a more noble position for a farm-  
hhouse than this vale afforded, farther from or nearer  
to its head, from a glen-like seclusion overlooking the  
country at a great elevation between these two mountain  
  
walls.  
  
It reminded me of the homesteads of the Huguenots,  
on Staten Island, off the coast of New Jersey. Tho  
hills in the interior of this ialand, though comparatively  
low, are ponetrated in various directions by similar slop-  
ing valleys on a humble seale, gradually narrowing and  
rising to the centre, and at the head of these the Hu-  
‘guenots, who were the first settlers, placed their houses  
quite within the land, in rural and sheltered places, in  
leafy recesses where the breeze played with the poplar  
and the gum-tree, from which, with equal security in  
calm and storm, they looked out through a widening  
vista, over miles of forest and stretchiog salt marsh, to  
‘the Hoguenot’s ‘Tree, an old elm on the ebore at whose  
root they had landed, and across the spacious outer bay  
of New York to Sandy Hook and the Highlands of  
‘Neversink, and thenoo over leagues of the Atlantic, per-  
chance to some faint veasel in the horizon, almost a day's  
  
sail on her voyage ta that Europe whence they tind  
9 a”

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194 A WEEE.  
  
   
  
come. When walking in the interior there, in the midst  
of rural scenery, where there was as little to remind me  
of the occan as amid the New Hampshire hills, I have  
suddenly, through a gap, a cleft or “clove road,” as the  
Dutch settlers called it, caught sight of a ship under fall  
sail, over a field of corn, twenty or thirty miles at sea.  
‘The effect was similar, since T had no means of mess-  
istances, to seeing a painted ship passed back-  
‘wards and forwards through # magiclantera,  
  
Bat to return to the mountain. Tt seemed as if he  
most be the most singular and heavenly minded man  
‘whose dwelling stood highest up the valley. ‘The thun-  
der had rumbled at my heels all the way, but the shower  
passed off in another direction, though if it had not, I  
half belioved that I should get ubove it, Tat length  
reached the last house but one, where the path to the  
summit diverged to the right, while the summit itself rose  
directly in front. Bat I determined to follow up the val-  
ley to its head, and then find my own route up the steep  
fs the shorter and more adventurous way. I  
thoughts of returning to this house, which was well ept  
and so nobly placed, the next day, and perhaps rémain-  
ing a week there, if I could have entertainment. Its  
‘mistress was a frank and hospitable young woman, who  
stood before me in a dishabille, busily and unconcern-  
ely combing her long black hair while she talked, giv-  
ing her head the necessary tose with each sweep of the  
comb, with lively, sparkling. eyes, and full of interest in  
that lower world from which I had come, talking all the  
‘while as familiarly as if she had known me for years,  
and reminding me of a cousin of mine. She at first: had  
taken me for a stadent from Williamstown, for they  
wen! by in parties, she said, either riding or walking,

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ruEspAY. 195  
  
almost every pleasant day, and were a pretty wild set  
of fellows; but they never went by the way I was go-  
ing. As I passed the last house, a man called out to  
Know what I had to sell, for seeing my knapsack, be  
‘thought that I might be a pedler who was taking this un-  
usual route over the ridge of the valley into South Adams.  
He told me that it was still four or fve miles to the sumamit  
by the path which Thad lef, though not more than two  
in a straight line from where I was, but that nobody ever  
‘went this way; there was no path, and I should find it  
tas steep as the roof of a house. But I knew that I was  
‘more used to woods and mountains than he, and went  
along through his cow-yard, while he, looking at the sun,  
shouted after me that I should not get to the top that  
night. I soon reached the head of the valley, but as I  
‘could not see the summit from this point, I ascended a  
Jow mountain on the opposite side, and took its bearing  
‘with my compass. Tat once entered the woods, and be-  
gan to climb the steep side of the mountain in a diagonal  
Airection, taking the bearing of a tree every dozen rods.  
‘The ascent was by no means difficult or unpleasant, and  
‘occupied much less time than it would have taken to fol-  
low the path. Even country people, I have observed,  
magnify the difficulty of travelling in the forest, and  
‘especially among mountains. ‘They seem to lack their  
usual common senso in this. I have climbed several  
hhigher mountains without guide or path, and have found,  
as might be expected, that it takes only more time and,  
patience commonly than to travel the smoothest high-  
way. It is very rave that you meet with obstacles in  
‘his world which the humblest man has not faculties to  
surmount. It is true we may come to a perpendicular  
precipice, but we need not jump off nor run our heads

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196 A ween.  
  
‘against it, A man may jump down his own cellar stairs  
‘or dash his brains out against his chimney, if he is mad,  
So far as my experience goes, travellers generally ex-  
aggerate the difficulties of the way. Like most evil, the  
Aiffculty is imaginary ; for what's the hurry? If a per-  
‘on lost would conclude that after all he is not lost he is  
rot beside himself, but standing in his own old shoes on  
the very spot where he is, and that for the time being  
‘ke will live there; but the places that have known him,  
they are lost,—how much anxiety and danger would  
vanish, I am not alone if I stand by myself. Who  
Knows where in space this globe is rolling? Yet we  
will not give ourselves up for lost, let it go where it  
will  
  
I made my way steadily upward in a straight line  
through a dense undergrowth of mountain laurel, until  
the trees began to have a seraggy and infernal look, as  
if contending with frost goblins, and at length I reached  
the summit, just as the sun was setting. Several acres  
here had been cleared, and were covered with rocks and  
stumps, and there was a rude observatory in the middle  
‘which overlooked the woods, I had one fait view of the  
country before the sun went down, but I was too thirsty  
to waste any light in viewing the prospect, and set out  
directly to find water. First, going down a well-beaten  
ath for half a mile through the low scrubby wood, till I  
‘eame to where the water stood in the tracks of the horees  
which bad carried travellers up, I lay down flat, and  
drank these dry, one after another, a pure, cold, spring  
Tike water, but yet T could not fill my dipper, though T  
contrived little siphons of grass-stems, and ingenious  
aqueducis on a small scale; it was too slow a process.  
‘Then remembering that T lund passed a moist place near

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‘rurspar. 197  
  
the top, on my way up, I returned to find it again, and  
here, with sharp stones and my hands, in the twilight, I  
made a well about two feet deep, which was soon filled  
  
th pare cold water, and the birds too came and drank  
tit, So I filled my dipper, and, making my way back  
to the observatory, collected some ary sticks, and made  
‘a fire on some flat stones which hed been placed on tho  
floor for that purpose, and so I soon cooked my supper  
of rice, having already whittled wooden spoon to eat  
it with,  
  
I sat up during the evening, reading by the light of  
the fire the scraps of newspapers in which some party  
had wrapped their lancheoo ; the prices current in New  
‘Fork and Boston, the advertisements, and the singular  
editorials which some had seen fit to publish, not fore-  
seeing under what critical cireumstances they would be  
read. I read these things at a vast advantage there,  
and it seemed to me that the advertisements, or what is,  
called the business part of # paper, were greatly the  
Dest, the moet useful, natural, and respectable. Almost  
ail the opinions and sentiments expressed were 60 little  
‘considered, 60 shallow and flimsy, that T thought the  
very texture of the paper must be weaker in that part  
and tear the more easily. The advertisements and the  
prices current were more closely allied to nature, and  
were respectable in some measure as tide and meteoro-  
logical tables aro; but the reading-matter, which I  
remembered was most prized down below, unless it was  
some humble record of science, or an extract from eome  
old classic, struck me aa strangely whimsical, and cru  
‘and one-idea’d, like n school-boy’s theme, such as youth  
‘write and after burn. ‘The opinions were of that kind  
that are doomed to wear a different aspect tomorrow,

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198 A were.  
  
Tike last year’s fashions; as if mankind were very green  
indeed, and would be ashamed of themselves in a few  
years, when they had outgrown this verdant period.  
‘There was, moreover, a singular disposition to wit and  
hhumor, but rarely the slightest real success; and the  
apparent success was a terrible satire on the attempt;  
the Evil Genius of man Inughed the londest at his best  
jokes. The advertisements, as I have said, such as were  
serious, and not of the modern quack kind, suggested  
pleasing and poetic thoughts; for commerce is really as  
  
teresting as nature. ‘The very names of the commodi-  
ties were poetic, and as suggestive as if they had been  
inserted in « pleasing poem,— Lumber, Cotton, Sugar,  
Hides, Guano, Logwood. Some sober, private, and  
original thought would have been grateful to read there,  
‘and as much in harmony with the circumstances as if it  
Ihad been written oo a mountain-top ; for itis of a fashion  
which never changes, and as respectable as hides and  
logwood, or any natural product. What an inestimable  
companion such a scrap of paper would have been, con-  
taining some fruit of a mature life. What a relic!  
‘What a recipe! Tt seemed a divine invention, by which  
not mere shining coin, but shining and current thoughts,  
could be brought up and left there.  
  
‘As it was cold, I collected quite a pile of wood and  
lay down on a board against the side of the building, not  
hhaving any blanket to cover me, with my head to the  
fire, that I might look after it, which is not the Indian  
rule. But as it grew colder towards midnight, I at  
length encased myself completely in boards, managing  
even to put a board on top of me, with a large stone on  
it, to keep it down, and s0 slept comfortably. I was  
reminded, it is true, of the Irish children, who inquired

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‘Torspar. 199  
  
‘what their neighbors did who bad no door to put over  
them in winter nights as they had; but I am convinced  
that there was nothing very strange in the inquiry.  
‘Those who have never tried it can have no idea how far  
8 door, which keeps the single blanket down, may go  
toward making one comfortable. We are constituted a  
‘good deal like chickens, which taken from the hen, and  
put in a basket of cotton in the chimney-corner, will  
often peep till they die, nevertheless, but if you put in  
‘a book, or anything heavy, which will press down the  
cotton, and feel like the hen, they go to sleep directly,  
My only companions were the mice, which came to pick  
up the crumbs that had been left in those scraps of  
I, as everywhere, pensioners on man, and not  
tunwisely improving this elevated tract for their habita-  
tion. They nibbled what was for them ; I nibbled what  
was for me. Once or twice in the night, when I looked  
‘up, I saw a white cloud drifting through the windows  
‘and filing the whole upper story.  
  
This observatory was a building of considerable size,  
erected by the students of Williamstown College, whose  
Duildings might be seen by daylight gleaming far down  
in the valley. It would be no small advantage if every  
college were thus located at the base of a mountain, as  
good at least as one well-endowed professorship. It  
‘were as well to be educated in the shadow of a mountain  
fs in more classical shades. Some will remember, no  
doubt, not only that they went to the college, but that  
they went to the mountain. Every visit to its. summit  
‘would, as it were, generalize the particular information  
‘gained below, and subject it to more entholic tests.  
  
I was up early and perched upon the top of this tower  
to see the daybreak, for some time reading the names

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200 a warn,  
  
‘that had been engraved there, before I could distinguish  
more distant objects. An “untamable fly” buzzed at  
my elbow with the same nonchalance as on a molasses  
hhogshead at tho end of Loog Wharf. Even there I  
‘must attend to his stale humdrum. But now I come to  
the pith of this long digression. — As the li  
T discovered around me an ocean of mist, which by  
‘chance reached up exactly to the base of the tower, and  
shut out every vestige of the earth, while I was left  
floating on this fragment of the wreck of a world, on my  
carved plank, in cloudland; a situation which required  
zo sid from the imagination to render it impressive. As  
the light in the east steadily increased, it revealed to me  
more clearly the new world into which I had risen in  
the night, the new terra firma perchance of my future  
life. ‘There was not a crevice left through which the  
trivial places we name Massachusetts or Vermont oF  
‘New York could be seen, while I still inhaled the clear  
‘atmosphere of a July morning,—if it were July there.  
‘All around beneath me was spread for a hundred miles,  
on every side, as far as the eye could reach, an undalat-  
ing country of clouds, answering in the varied swell of  
its surface to the terrestrial world it Tt was  
such a country as we might see in dreams, with all the  
delights of paradise. There were immense snowy pas-  
tures, apparently smooth-shaven and firm, and shady  
vales between the vaporous mountains; and far im the  
horizon I could see where some luxurious misty timber  
Jjutted into the prairie, and trace the windings of a water-  
course, rome unimagined Amazon or Orinoko, by the  
misty trees on its brink. As there was wanting the  
symbol, so there was not the substance of impurity, no  
spot nor stain. It was a favor for which to be forever

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‘Torspar. 201  
  
silent to be shown this vision. ‘The earth beneath hed  
become such a fitting thing of lights and shadows as the  
clouds had been before. Tt was not merely veiled to  
me, but it bad passed away like the phantom of a shadow,  
crnie drop, and this new platform was gained. As I had  
climbed above storm and cloud, s0 by successive days’  
Journeys T might reach the region of eternal day, beyond  
the tapering shadow of the earth; ay,  
\* Heaven tet shall tide,  
‘And roll away, The malig stare that glide  
‘Along ther olly thread.”  
But when its own sun began to rise on this pure world,  
J found myself a dweller in the daszling halls of Aurora,  
into which poets have had but partial glance over the  
eastern hills, drifting amid the saffron-colored clouds,  
‘and playing with the rosy fingers of the Dawn, in the  
very path of the Sun's chariot, and sprinkled with its  
dewy dust, enjoying the benignant smile, and near at  
hhand the fardarting glances of the god. ‘The inhabi-  
tants of earth behold commonly but the dark and shadowy  
underside of heaven's pavement ; it is only when seer  
at a favornble angle in the horizon, morning or evening,  
‘that some faint streaks of the rich lining of tho clouds  
fare revealed. But my muse would fail to convey an  
impreseion of the gorgeous tapestry by which I was sur-  
‘rounded, such as men see faintly reflected afar off irr the  
chambers of the east. Here, as on earth, I saw the  
gracioas god  
“Flatter the mountaintops with sovereign 674,  
  
   
  
(ttdng pate strona with heavenly alchemy.”  
But never here did “ Heaven's sun” stain himself.  
  
But, alas, owing, as I think, to some unworthiness in  
\*

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202 A wees.  
  
   
  
myself, my private sun did stain himself, and  
“ Anon permit the bases clouds to ride  
‘With aly wrak oa bis celestial face” —  
for before the god had reached the zenith the heavenly  
pavement rose and embraced my wavering virtue, or  
rather I sank down again into that “ forlorn world,” from  
which the celestial sun had hid his visage, —  
“ow may a worm thtt crawls long te dust  
(Camber the axore mountafon, thrown 20 high,  
‘Ad fetch from tence thy fale on jst,  
‘That in thow sunny cours doth hidden lia,  
‘Cotbed with such light as binds the angel's oye ?  
ow may weak mortal ever hope ole  
Lis unemoothtongus, snd bis deprstate style?  
(©, raise thou fom his core thy now entombed exile!  
  
In the preceding evening I bad seen the summits of  
new and yet higher mountains, the Catskills, by which  
I might hope to climb to heaven again, and had set my  
compase for a fair lake in the southwest, which lay in my  
way, for which I now steered, descending the mount  
by my own route, on the side opposite to that by which  
Thad ascended, and soon found myself in the region of  
aloud and drizzling rain, and the inhabitants affirmed  
that it had been a cloudy and drizzling day wholly.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
But now we must make haste back before the fog dis-  
perses to the blithe Merrimack water.  
  
Since that Sat“ Away! away!”  
Maoy a lengthy reach wo 'v rowed,  
Sul the sparrow on the spray  
‘astea to urber inthe day  
‘With her simple stanza’d ode,  
  
   
  
‘We passed a canal-boat before sunrise, groping its  
‘way to the seaboard, and, though we could not see it on

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‘TUEspar. 208  
  
account of the fog, the few dull, thumping, stertorous  
sounds which we heard, impressed us with a sense of  
weight and irresistible motion. One little rill of com-  
merce already awake on this distant New Hampshire  
river. The fog, as it required more skill in the stecr-  
ing, enhanced the interest of our early voyage, and made  
the river seem indefinitely broad. A slight mist,  
through which objects are faintly visible, has the effect  
of expanding even ordinary streams, by a singular mirage,  
{nto arms of the sea or inland lakes. In the present in-  
stance it was even fragrant and invigorating, and we  
enjoyed it as a sort of earlier sunshine, or dewy and  
embryo light.  
  
   
  
Low-anchored eload,  
  
Newfoundland az,  
  
‘Fountin-bead and souroe of rivey,  
Dow-cloth, dream drapery,  
  
‘Aod napkin spread by fays;  
  
Drifting meadow of the ar,  
  
‘Where bloom the dlsid banks and violets,  
‘And in whose fey labyrinth  
  
‘The bittera booms and heron wadens  
Spirit of lakes and eas and rivers,  
  
   
  
‘The same pleasant and observant historian whom we  
{quoted above saye, that, “In the mountainous parts of  
the country, the ascent of vapors, and their formation  
into cbuds, is a curious and entertaining object. The  
‘vapors are seen rising in small columns like smoke from  
many chimneys. When risen to a certain height, they  
apread, meet, condense, and are attracted to the moun  
tains, where they either distil in gentle dews, and re-  
plenish the eprings, or descend in showers, accompanied

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A WEEK.  
  
with thunder, After short intermissions, the process is  
repeated many times in the course of a summer day,  
affording to travellers a lively illustration of what is ob-  
terved in the Book of Job, ‘They are wet with the  
showers of the mountains.’”  
  
Fogs and clouds which conceal the overshadowing  
mountains lend the breadth of the plains to mountain  
vales. Even a small-featured country acquires some  
‘grandeur in stormy weather when clouds are seen drift-  
ing between the beholder and the neighboring hills.  
‘When, in travelling toward Haverhill through Hamp-  
stead in this State, on the height of land between the  
Merrimack and the Piscataqua or the sea, you commence  
the descent eastward, the view toward the const is so  
distant and unexpected, though the sea is invisible, that  
you at first suppose the unobstructed atmosphere to be a  
fog in the lowlands concealing hills of corresponding ele-  
vation to that you are upon ; but itis the mist of preja~  
dice alone, which the winds will not dieperse. ‘The most  
stupendous scenery ceases to be sublime when it becomes  
inct, or in other words limited, and the imagination  
is no longer encouraged to exaggerate it. The actual  
height and breadth of a mountain or a waterfall are al-  
ways ridiculously small; they are the imagined only  
that content us. Nature is not made after such a fashion  
fas we would have her. We piously exaggerate her  
wonders, as the scenery around our home.  
  
Such was the heaviness of the dews along this river  
that we were generally obliged to leave our tent spread  
over the bows of the boat till the sun had dried it, to  
avoid mildew We passed the mouth of Penichook  
Brook, a wild salmon-stream, in the fog, without seeing  
it, At longth the sun’s rays struggled through the mist

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‘TUESDAY. 205  
  
and showed us the pines on shore dripping with dew,  
fand springs trickling from the moist banks, —  
“And now tho taller sons, whom Titan war,  
  
(0 rnsborn moataina blown wit ey winds,  
  
anil the moringseildboo! io thelr arom,  
  
‘nd, hey canon to alip the proud pine,  
  
‘Tho nder corlets dd eatch thelr sine,  
  
To gd thelr avon”  
  
‘We rowed for some hours between glistening banks  
before the sun had dried the grass and leaves, or the day  
hhad established its character. Its serenity at last seemed  
the more profound and secure for the denseness of the  
morning's fog. ‘The river became swifer, and the scen-  
ery more pleasing than before. The banks were steep  
‘and clayey for the most part, and trickling with water,  
‘and where a spring oozed out a few feet above the river  
the boatmen bad cut a trough out of slab with their  
axes, and placed it 20 as to receive the water and fill  
their jugs conveniently. Sometimes this purer and  
cooler water, bursting out from under a pine or a rock,  
‘was collected into a basin close to the edge of and level  
with the river, a fountain-head of the Bferrimack. So  
near along life's stream are the fountains of innocence  
and youth making fertile its sandy margin; and the  
‘voyagear will do well to replenish his vessels often at  
these uncontaminated sources. Some youthful spring,  
perchance, sill empties with tinkling music into the old-  
est river, even when it is falling into the sea, and we  
imagine that its music is distinguished by the river-gods  
from the general lapse of the stream, and falls sweeter  
‘on their ears in proportion as it is nearer to the ocean,  
‘As the evaporations of the river feed thus these unsus-  
pected springs which filter through its banks, so, per-

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206 A ween.  
  
‘chance, our aspirations fall back again in springs on the  
margin of life's stream to refresh and purify it. ‘The  
yellow and tepid river may float his scow, and cheer  
his eye with its reflections and its ripples, but the  
boatman quenches his thirst at this small rill alone,  
It is this purer and cooler element that chiefly sus-  
tains his life. ‘The race will long survive that is thus  
discreet.  
  
Our course this morning lay between the territories of  
‘Merrimack, on the west, and Litchfield, once called  
Brenton’s Farm, on the east, which townships were an-  
ciently the Indian Naticook. Brenton was a fur-trader  
‘among the Indians, and these lands were granted to him  
in 1656. The latter township contains about five hun-  
dred inbabitants, of whom, however, we saw none, and  
but few of their dwellings. Being on the river, whose  
banks are always high and generally conceal the few  
hhouses, the country appeared much more wild and primi-  
tive than to the traveller on the neighboring roads. The  
river is by far the most attractive highway, and those  
bboatmen who have spent twenty or twenty-five years on  
it must have bad a much fairer, more wild, and memora-  
bble experience than the dusty and jerring one of the  
‘teamster who has driven, during the same time, on the  
roads which run parallel with the stream. As one as-  
cends the Merrimack he rarely sees a village, but for the  
‘most part alternate wood and ‘pasture lands, and rome-  
times a field of corn or potatoes, of rye or oats or Eng-  
Tish gease, with a few straggling apple-trees, and, at still  
longer intervals, a farmer's house. ‘The soil, excepting  
the best of the interval, is commonly as light and sandy  
‘as & patriot could desire. Sometimes this forenoon the  
‘country appeared in its primitive state, and as if the

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‘TUESDAY. 207  
  
Indian still inhabited it, and, again, as if many free, new  
settlers occupied it, their slight fences straggling down.  
to the water's edge ; and the barking of dogs, and even  
the pratile of children, were heard, and smoke was seen  
to go up from some hearthstone, and the banks were di-  
vided into patches of pasture, mowing, tillage, and wood-  
land. But when the river spread out broader, with an  
‘uninhabited islet, or a long, low sandy shore which ran  
on single and devious, not answering to its opposite, but  
far off as if it were sea-shore or single coast, and the land  
nno longer nursed the river in its bosom, but they con  
versed as equals, the rustling leaves with rippling waves,  
and few fences were seen, but high oak woods on one  
side, and large herds of cattle, and all tracks seemed a  
point to one centre behind some statelier grove, — we  
imagined that the river flowed through an extensive  
‘manor, and that the few inhabitants were retainers to a  
lord, and a feudal state of things provailed.  
  
‘When there was a suitable reach, we caught sight of  
the Goffstown mountain, the Indian Uncannunue, rising  
Defore us on the west side. It was a calm and beautifal  
ay, with only a slight zephyr to ripple the surface of the  
water, and rustle the woods on shore, and just warmth  
‘enough to prove the kindly disposition of Nature to ber  
children. With buoyant spirits and vigorousimpulses we  
tossed our boat rapidly along into the very middle of this,  
forenoon. The fish-hawk sailed and screamed overhead.  
‘The chipping or striped squirrel, Sciurus striatus (Tamias  
Lyster’, Aud.), sat upon the end of some Virginia fence  
or rider reaching over the stream, twirling a green nut  
with one pave, as in a lathe, while the other held it fast  
against its incisors as chisels. Like an independent  
russet leaf, with a will of its own, rustling whither it

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208 A ween.  
  
could; now under the fence, now over it, now pee  
at the voyageurs through a crack with only its tail visi  
ble, now at its lunch deep in the toothsome kernel, and  
now a rod of playing at hide-and-eoek, with the nut  
stowed away in its chops, where were half a dozen more  
Desides, extending its cheeks to a ludicrous breadth, — as  
if it were devising through what safo valve of frisk or  
somerset to let its superfluous life escape; the stream  
passing harmlessly off, even while it sits, in constant  
electric flashes through its tail, And now with a chuck-  
ling squeak it dives into the root of hazel, and we seo  
no more of it. Or the larger red squirrel or chickaree,  
‘sometimes called the Hudson Bay squirrel (Servurus  
Hadsonius), gave warning of oar approach by that peca~  
liar alarum of his, like the winding up of some strong  
lock, in the top of a pine-tree, and dodged behind its  
stem, or leaped from treo to tree with such caution and  
adroitness, as if much depended on the fidelity of his  
scout, running along the white-pine boughs sometimes  
twenty rods by our side, with such speed, and by such  
‘unerring routes, as if it were some well-worn familiar  
path to him; and presently, when we have passed, he  
returns to his work of cutting off the pine-cones, and  
letting them fall to the ground.  
  
‘We pasted Cromwell's Falla, the first we met with on  
this river, this forenoon, by means of locks, without using  
our wheels. These falls are tho Nesenkeag of the  
Indians. Great Nesenkeag Stream comes in on the  
right just above, and Little Nesenkeag some distance  
below, both in Litchfield. We read in tho Gazetteer,  
under the head of Merrimack, that “The first house in  
this town was erected on the margin of the river [2000  
after 1665] for a house of traffic with the Indians. For

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‘TUESDAY. 209  
  
some time one Cromwell carried on a lucrative trade  
with them, weighing their furs with his foot, tll, enraged  
  
   
   
   
  
to Cromwell, be buried his wealth and made his ereape.  
‘Within a few hours after his flight, a party of the Pena  
cook tribe arrived, and, not finding the object of their  
resentment, burnt his habitation.” Upon the top of the  
hhigh bank here, close to the river, was atill to be seen  
his cellar, now overgrown with trees. It was a con  
venient spot for such a traffic, at the foot of the first falls  
above the settlements, and commanding 9 pleasant view  
up the river, where he could see the Indians coming  
down with their far. ‘The lock-man told us that his  
hovel and tongs bad been ploughed up here, and also a  
stone with bis name on it. But we will not vouch for  
the truth of this story. In the New Hampsbire His-  
torical Collections for 1815 it says, “Some time after  
pewter was found in the well, and an iron pot and  
‘trammel in the eand; the latter are preserved.” These  
were the traces of the white trader. On the opposite  
bank, where it jutted over the stream cape-wise, we  
Picked up four arrow-heads and a small Indian tool  
made of stone, as soon as we had climbed it, where  
Plainly there bad once stood a wigwam of the Indians  
‘with whom Cromwell traded, and who fished and hunted  
here before he came.  
  
As usual the gossips have not been silent respecting  
Cromwel’s buried wealth, and it is said that some years  
‘ago a farmer's plough, not far from here, slid over a flat  
stone which emitted a hollow sound, and, on its being  
raised, a small hole six inches in diameter was discov-  
‘ered, stoned about, from which « sum of money was

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210 A were.  
  
   
  
taken, ‘The lock-man told us another similar std ure  
‘farmer in a neighboring town, who had been  
  
man, but who suddenly bought a good farm, sone was  
well to do in the world, and, when he was quest\toned,  
did not give a satisfactory account of the matter; ¥ how  
few, alas, could! This caused his hired man to reshen-  
bber that one day, as they were ploughing together, the  
plough struck something, and his employer, going back  
to look, concluded not to go round again, saying that the  
sky looked rather lowering, and so put up his team. ‘The  
ike urgency has caused many things to be remembered  
which never transpired. ‘The trath is, there is money  
buried everywhere, and you have only to go to work to  
find it.  
  
‘Not far from these falls stands an onk-tree, on the  
interval, about a quarter of a mile from the river, on the  
farm of « Mr. Lund, which was pointed out to us as the  
spot where French, the leader of the party which went  
in pursuit of the Indians from Dunstable, was killed.  
Farwell dodged them in the thick woods near. It did  
not look as if men had ever hed to run for their lives on  
this now open and peacefal interval.  
  
‘Here too was another extensive desert by the side of  
the road in Litchfield, visible from the bank of the river.  
The sand was blown off in some places to the depth of  
ten or twelve feet, leaving small grotesque hillocks of  
that height, where there was a clump of bushes firmly  
rooted. Thirty or forty years ago, as we were told, it  
‘was a sheep-pasture, but the sheep, being worried by th  
fleas, began to paw the ground, till they broke the sod,  
and so the sand began to blow, till now it had extended  
cover forty or fifty acres. This evil might easily have  
been remedied, at first, by spreading birches with their

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‘TUESDAY. ain  
  
leaves on over the sand, and fastening them down with  
stakes, to break the wind. The fleas bit the sheep, and.  
the sheep bit the ground, and the sore had spread to  
this extent. It is astonishing what a great sore a little  
scratch breedeth. Who knows but Sahara, where cara-  
‘vans and cities are buried, began with the bite of an  
Aftican flea? This poor globe, how it must itch in many  
places! Will no god be kind enough to spread a salve  
of birches over its sores? Here too we noticed where  
the Indians had gathered a heap of stones, perhaps for  
their council-fre, which, by their weight having pre-  
vented the sand under them from blowing away, were  
eft on the summit of a mound. ‘They told us that  
arrow-heads, and also bullets of lead and iron, bed been  
found here. We noticed several other sandy tracts in  
our voyage; and the course of the Merrimack can be  
traced from the nearest mountain by its yellow sand-  
‘banks, though the river itself is for the most part  
invisible, Lawsuits, as we hear, have in some cases  
‘grown out of these causes. Railroads have been made  
‘through certain irritable districts, breaking their eod, and  
0 have set the sand to blowing, till it has converted  
fertile farms into deserts, and the company has had to  
pay the damages.  
  
This sand seemed to us the connecting liok between  
and and water. It was a kind of water on which you  
could walk, and you could see the ripple-marks on its  
surface, produced by the winds, precisely like those at  
the bottom of a brook or lake. Wo had read that Bfus-  
sulmen are permitted by the Koran to perform their  
ablations in sand when they cannot get water, a necessary  
indulgence in Arabia, and we now understood the pro-  
riety of this provision.

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22 a warx,  
  
‘Plum Island, at the mouth of this river, to whose  
formation, perbaps, these very banks have sent their  
contribution, is similar desert of drifting sand, of  
‘various colors, blown into graceful curves by the wind.  
It is a mere sand-ber exposed, stretching nine miles par-  
allel to the coast, and, exclusive of the march on the  
inside, rarely moro than half « mile wide, There aro  
but half @ dozen bouses on it, and isis almost without a  
tree, or a 40d, or any green thing with which a country-  
man is familiar, The thin vegetation stands half beried  
in sand, as in drifting snow. ‘The only shrub, the beach-  
‘plum, which gives the island its name, grows but a few  
feet high; but this ie so abundant that parties of a hun-  
red at ones come from the mainland and down the  
‘Merrimack, in Sepiember, pitch their tents, and gather  
‘the plums, which are good to eat raw and to preserve.  
‘The graceful and delicate beach-pea, too, grows abun-  
dantly amid the sand, and several strange, moss-like and  
succulent plants. ‘The island for ite whole length is  
scolloped into low hills, not more than twenty feet high,  
by the wind, and, excepting 1 faint trail on the edge of  
the marsh, is as trackleas as Sahara. ‘There are dreary  
Dluéis of sand and valleys ploughed by the wind, where  
you might expect to discover the bones of a caravan.  
Schooners come from Boston to load with the sand for  
‘masons’ uses, and in a few hours tho wind obliterates all  
traces of their work. Yet you have only to dig a foot  
‘or two anywhere to come to fresh water; and you are  
surprised to learn that woodehucks abound hore, and  
foxes are found, thongh you see not where they can  
barrow or hide themselves. I have walked dowa the  
whole length of ita broad beach at low tide, at which  
time alone you can find a firm ground to walk on, and

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‘TUESDAY. 218  
  
probably Massachusetts does not furnish a more grand  
and dreary walk. On the seaside there are only a  
distant sail and few coots to break the grand monot-  
ony. A solitary stake stack up, or a sharper sand-bill  
than usual, is remarkable as a landmark for mi  
while for music you hear only the ceaseless sound of the  
surf, and the dreary peep of the beach-birds,  
  
   
  
   
  
‘There were several canal-boats at Cromwell's Falls  
passing through the locks, for which we waited. In the  
forward part of one stood a braway New Hampshire  
‘man, leaning on his pole, bareheaded and in shirt and  
trousers only, a rude Apollo of a man, coming down  
from that “vast uplandish country” to the main; of  
nameless age, with flaxen hair, and vigorous, weather-  
bleached countenance, in whose wrinkles the sun still  
Todged, as little touched by the heats and frosts and  
withering cares of life asa maple of the mountain; an  
undressed, unkempt, uncivil man, with whom we par-  
eyed awhile, and parted not without & sincere interest  
in one another. His humanity was genuine and in-  
‘tinetive, and his rudeness only a manner. He in-  
quired, just as we were passing out of earshot, if we had  
Killed anything, and we shouted after him that we had  
‘shot a duoy, and could see him for a long while scratch  
ing hie head in vain to know if he had heard aright.  
‘There is reason in the distinction of eivil and uncivi  
  
The manners are sometimes 0 rough a rind that we  
doubt whether they cover any core or sap-wood at all.  
‘We cometimes meet uncivil men, children of Amazons,  
who dwell by mountain paths, and are stid to be inhos-  
Pitable to strangers; whose salutation is as rude as the  
‘grasp of their brawny hands, and who deal with men as

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214 A were,  
  
‘unceremoniously as they are wont to desl with the ele-  
ments. They need only to extend their clearings, and  
let in more sunlight, to seek out the southern slopes of  
the hills, from which they may look down on the civil  
plain or ocean, and temper their diet duly with the co-  
real fruits, consuming leas wild meat and acorn, to be-  
come like the inhabitants of cities. A true politeness  
does not result from any hasty and artificial potishing,  
At is true, but grows naturally in characters of the right  
grain and quality, through a long fronting of men and  
events, and rubbing on good and bad fortune. Perhaps  
can tell a tale to the purpose while the lock is filling,  
—for our voyage this forenoon furnishes but few inci-  
dents of importance.  
  
Early one summer morning I had left the shores of  
the Connecticut, and for the livelong day travelled up  
the bank of a river, which came in from the west;  
now looking down on the stream, foaming and rippling  
through the forest a mile off, from the hills over which  
the road led, and now sitting on its rocky brink and  
dipping my feet in its rapids, or bathing adventurously  
in mid-channel. The hills grew more and more fre-  
quent, and gradually swelled into mountains as T ad-  
vanced, hemming in the course of the river, so that at  
Inst I could not seo where it came from, and was at  
Tiberty to imagine the most wonderful meanderings and  
escents. At noon I slept on the grass in the shade  
of a maple, where the river bad found a broader chan-  
nel than usual, and was spread out shallow, with fre-  
quent sand-bars exposed. In the names of the towns  
T recognized some which I had long ago read on team-  
ters! wagons, that had come from far up country 5 quiet,

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‘TUESDAY. 215  
  
uplandish towns, of mountainous fame. I walked  
along, musing and enchanted, by rows of sugar-maples,  
throagh the small and uninguisitive villages, and some-  
times was pleased with the sight of boat drawn up on  
‘asand-bar, where there appeared no inhabitants to use  
Tt seemed, however, as essential to the river as @  
fish, and to lend a certain dignity to it, It was like the  
trout of mountain streams to the fishes of the sea, or  
like the young of the land-crab born far in the interior,  
who have never yet heard the sound of the ocean's surf.  
‘The hills approached nearer and nearer to the stream,  
at last they closed behind me, and I found myself  
Just before nightfall in a romantic and retired valley,  
about half mile in length, and barely wide enough for  
the stream at its bottom. I thought that there could be  
no finer site for a cottage among mountains. You could  
anywhere run across the stream on the rocks, and its  
constant murmuring would quiet the passions of manl  
forever. Suddenly the road, which seemed aiming for  
the mountain-side, turned short to the left, and another  
valley opened, concealing the former, and of the same  
character with it, It was the most remarkable and  
pleasing scenery I had ever scen. I found bere a few  
mild and hospitable inhabitants, who, as the day was not  
Quite spent, and I was anxious to improve the light,  
directed me four or five miles farther on my way to the  
welling of a man whose name was Rice, who occupied  
the last and highest of the valleys thet lay in my path,  
‘and who, they said, was a rather rude and uncivil man.  
But “what is a foreign country to those who have  
science? Who is a stranger to those who have the  
habit of speaking kindly?”  
‘At length, as the sun was setting behind the moun-

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216 a weex.  
  
taios in a still darker and more solitary vale, T reached  
the dwelling of this man, Except for the narrowness  
‘of the plain, and that the stones were solid granite, it was  
the counterpart of that retreat to which Belpherbe bore  
‘the wounded Timias, —  
“Tn 0 plnuant gid,  
‘With mountains round about eavironed,  
‘And mighty woods, which di the valley shade,  
‘And ike w stately theatre it made,  
Spreading itsefinto a spacious pains  
‘Abd in the midst «lite river played  
‘Arooogst the pum stones which sabmed to plan,  
‘With geile marmar, that hls coarse they did restrain.”  
observed, as I drew near, that he was not 60 rude as I  
hhad anticipated, for he kept many cattle, and dogs to watch.  
‘them, and I saw where he had made maple-sugar on the  
«Sides of the mountains, and above all distinguished the  
‘voices of children mingling with the murmur of the tor-  
rent before the door. As I passed his stable I met one  
‘whom I supposed to be a hired man, atzending to his  
caitle, and I inquired if they entertained travellers at  
that house. “Sometimes we do,” he answered, grufiiy,  
‘and immediately went to the farthest stall from me, and  
I perceived that it was Rice himself whom I had ad-  
dressed. But pardoning this incivility to the wildness of  
the scenery, I bent my steps to the house. ‘There was,  
zo sign-post before it, nor any of the usual invitations  
to the traveller, though I saw by the road that many  
‘went and came there, but the owner’s name only was fast  
ened to the outside; 1 sort of implied and sullen invita  
tion, as T thought. I passed from room to room without  
meeting any one, till T came to what seemed the guests’  
apartment, which was neat, and even had an air of re-  
finement about it, and Iwas glad to find a map against

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EspaY. 27  
  
the wall which would direct me on my journey on the  
morrow. At length Theard a step in a distant apart-  
ment, which was the first I had entered, and went to  
see if the landlord had come in; bat it proved to be  
only a child, one of those whose voices I had heard,  
probably his son, and between him and me stood in the  
doorway a large watch-dog, which growled at me, and  
looked as if he would presently spring, but the boy did not  
speak to him; and when I asked for a glass of water,  
he briefly said, “It runs in the comer.” 80 I took a  
ug from the counter and went out of doors, and  
searched round the corner of the house, but could find  
neither well nor spring, nor any water but the stream  
which ran all along the front. I came back, therefore,  
and, setting down the mug, asked the child if the stream  
‘was good to drink; whereupon he seized the mug, and,  
‘going to the corner of the room, where a cool spring  
which issued from the mountain behind trickled through  
2 pipe into the apartment, filled it, and drank, and gave  
it to mo empty again, and, calling to the dog, rushed out  
(of doors. Erelong some of the hired men made their  
appearance, and drank at the spring, and lazily washed  
‘themselves and combed their hair in silence, and some  
sat down as if weary, and fell asleep in their seats.  
But all the while I saw no women, though I sometimes  
‘heard a bustle in that part of the house from which the  
spring came.  
  
At length Rice himself came in, for it was now dark,  
with an ox-whip in his hand, breathing bard, and he too  
soon settled down into his seat not far from me, as if, now  
‘that his day's work was done, he had no farther to travel,  
but only to digest his supper at his leisure. When I  
  
asked him if he could give me a bed, he said there was  
10

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218 A WEEK.  
  
‘one ready, in such a tone as implied that T ought to have  
known it, and the less said about that the better. So far  
10 good. And yet he continued to look at me as if he  
‘would fain have me say something further like a tray-  
eller. I remarked, that it was a wild and rugged coum  
try he inhabited, and worth coming many miles to see.  
«Not so very rough neither,” said he, and appealed to his  
men to bear witness to the breadth and smoothness of  
hhis fields, which consisted in all of one small interval,  
‘and to the size of his erops; “and if we have some  
hills” added he, “there’s no better pasturage any-  
where.” I then asked if this place was the one I had  
hheard of, calling it by a name I had seen on the map,  
or if it was a certain other; and he answered, grofly,  
that it was neither the one nor the others that he had  
settled it and cultivated it, and made it what it was,  
and I could know nothing about it. Observing some  
‘guns and other implements of hunting hanging on  
brackets around the room, and his hounds now sleeping  
‘on the floor, I took occasion to change the discourse,  
‘and inquired if there was much game in that country,  
‘and he answered this question more graciously, having  
some glimmering of my drift; but when I inquired if  
‘there were any bears, he answered impatiently that be  
was no more in danger of losing his sheep than his  
neighbors; he had tamed and civilized that region.  
Afier @ pause, thinking of my journey on the morrow,  
and the few hours of daylight in that hollow and moun-  
‘ainous country, which woald require me.to be on my  
way betimes, I remarked that the day must. be shorter  
by an hour there than on the neighboring plains; at  
which he gruffly asked what I knew about it, and af  
firmed that he had as much daylight as his neighbors;

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‘TURSpAr. 219  
  
be ventured to say, the days were longer there than  
where I lived, as T should find if T stayed; that in some  
way, I could not be expected to understand how, the  
‘sun came over the mountains half an hour earlier, and  
stayed half an hour later there than on the neighboring  
plains, And more of like sort he said. He was, in-  
deed, as rude as a fabled satyr. But I enffered him to  
pass for what he was,—for why shoold I quarrel with  
nature? —and was even pleased at the discovery of euch  
f singular natural phenomenon. I dealt with him as  
if to mo all manners were indifferent, and he had a  
sweet, wild way with him. I would not question na-  
ture, and I would rather have him as he was than as I  
‘would have him. For I had come up here not for sym-  
pathy, or kindness, or society, but for novelty and ad-  
‘venture, and to see what nature had produced here. I  
therefore id not repel his rudeness, but quite innocently.  
welcomed it all, and knew how to appreciate it, as if I  
were reading in an old drama a part well sustained,  
‘He was indeed a coarse and sensual man, and, as I  
hhave said, uncivil, bat he had his just quarrel with na-  
ture and mankind, I have no doubt, only he had no  
artificial covering to his ill-humors. He was earthy  
‘enough, but yet there was good soil in him, and even a  
long-suffering Saxon probity at bottom. If you could  
represent the case to him, he would not let the race die  
‘out in him, like a red Indian.  
  
At length I told him that he was a fortunate man, and  
I trasted that he was grateful for so much light; and,  
ising, said T would take a lamp, and that I would pay  
hhim then for my lodging, for I expected to recommence  
my journey even as early as the sun rose in his country ;  
‘but he answered in baste, and this time civilly, that I

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220 A WEEK.  
  
should not fail to find some of his househcld stirring,  
however early, for they were no sluggards, and T could  
take my breakfast with them before I started, if I chose ;  
‘and as he lighted the lamp I detected a gleam of true  
hospitality and ancient civility, a beam of pure and even  
gontle humanity, from his bleared and moist eyes. Tt  
‘was a look more intimate with me, and more explana-  
tory, than any words of his could have been if he had  
tried to his dying day. Tt was more significant than  
‘any Rice of those parts coald even comprehend, and  
long anticipated this man's culture,—a glance of his  
pure genius, which did not much enlighten him, but did  
impress and role him for the moment, and faintly con-  
strain his voice and manner. He cheerfully led the way  
‘to my apartment, stepping over the limbs of his men,  
‘who were asleep on the floor in an intervening chamber,  
‘and showed me a clean and comfortable bed. For many  
pleasant hours after the household was asleep I sat at  
the open window, for it was a sultry night, and heard  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘With geottemarmar, that bis conree they dl restrain.”  
But I arose as usual by starlight the next morning, be-  
fore my host, or his men, or even his dogs, were awake  
‘and, having left a ninepence on the counter, was already  
half-way over the mountain with the sun before they  
hhad broken their fast.  
  
Before I had left the country of my host, while the  
first rays of the sun slanted over the mountains, as I  
stopped by the wayside to gather some raspberries, a  
very old man, not far from a hundred, came slong with  
‘2 milking-pail in his hand, and turning aside began to  
  
the little river  
“Amongst the pamy sone, which seemed to plain,  
1  
|  
pluck the berries near mo:— ¢

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‘TUESDAY. 221  
  
© His reverend looks  
In comelye cures dia wave;  
  
‘And on his aged temples grew  
‘The blowoms of the grave.”  
  
But when I inguired the way, he answered in a low,  
rough voice, without looking up or seeming to regard my  
presence, which I imputed to his years; and presently,  
muttering to himself, he proceeded to collect his cows in  
‘a neighboring pasture; and when he had again returned  
near to the wayside, he suddenly stopped, while his cows  
went on before, and, uncovering his head, prayed aloud  
in the cool morning air, as if he had forgotten this  
cercise before, for his daily bread, and also that He who  
Jetteth hhis rain fall on the just and on the unjust, and  
without whom not a sparrow falleth to the ground,  
‘would not neglect the stranger (meaning me), and with  
even more direct and personal applications, though  
mainly according to the long-established formula com-  
mon to lowlanders and the inhabitants of mountains.  
‘When he hed done praying, I made bold to ask him if  
Iho bad any cheese in his hut which he would sell me,  
‘bat he answered without looking up, and in the same  
ow and repulsive voice as before, that they did not  
make any, and went to milking. It is written, “Tho  
stranger who turneth away from a house with disap-  
pointed hopes, leaveth there his own offences, and de-  
parteth, taking with him all the good actions of the  
owner.”  
  
   
  
Being now fairly in the stream of this week's com-  
mere, we began to meet with boats more frequently,  
‘and hailed them from time to time with the freedom of  
  
sailors. The boatmen appeared to lead an easy and  
  
|  
{

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a  
  
222 a war. i  
  
contented life, and we thought that we should prefer  
their employment ourselves to many professions which  
fare much moro sought after. ‘They suggested how  
few circumstances are necessary to the well-being and  
serenity of man, how indifferent all employments are,  
‘and that any may seem noble and poetic to the eyes  
of men, if parsued with sufficient buoyancy and free-  
dom. With liberty and pleasant weather, the simplest  
‘occupation, any unquestioned country mode of life which  
detains us in the open air, is alluring. ‘The man who  
picks peas steadily for a living is more than respectable,  
he is even envied by his shop-worn neighbors. We are  
as happy as the birds when oar Good Genius permits  
us to pursue any out-door work, without a sense of dis-  
sipation. Our penknife glitters in the sun; our voice is  
echoed by yonder wood ; if an oar drops, we are fain to  
let it drop again.  
  
‘Tho canal-boat is of very simple construction, requir-  
{ng bat little ship-imber, and, as we were told, costa about  
‘two hundred dollars. ‘They are managed by two men.  
In ascending the stream they use poles. fourteen or fif-  
teen feet long, pointed with iron, walking about one  
third the length of the boat from the forward end.  
Going down, they commonly keep in the middle of the  
stream, using an oar at each end; or if the wind is fa-  
vorsble they raise their broad sail, and have only to  
steer. They commonly carry down wood or bricks, —  
fifteen or sixteen cords of wood, and as many thousand  
bricks, at a time,—and bring back stores for the coun-  
try, consuming two or three days each way between Con-  
‘cond and Charlestown. ‘They sometimes pile the wood  
0 a8 to leave a shelter in one part where they may retire |  
from the rain. Ono can hardly imagine a more health- i

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‘TUESDAY. 228  
  
fal employment, or one more favorable to contemplation  
and the observation of nature. Unlike the mariner,  
‘they have the constantly varying panorama of the shore  
to relieve the monotony of their labor, and it seemed to  
‘us that as they thus glided noiselessly from town to  
‘town, with all their furniture about them, for their very  
homestead is @ movable, they could comment on the  
character of the inhabitants with greater advantage and  
security to themselves than the traveller in a coach, who  
would be unable to indulge in such broadsides of wit  
and homor in so small a vessel for fear of the recoil.  
They are not subject to great exposure, like the lumber-  
  
in any weather, but inhale the healthful-  
lest breezes, being slightly encumbered with clothing,  
frequently with the head and feet bare. When we met  
them at noon as they were leisurely descending the  
stream, their busy commerce did not look like toil, but  
rather like some ancient Oriental game still played on a  
large scale, as the game of chess, for instance, handed  
down to this generation, From morning till night, un-  
Jess the wind is so fair that his single sail will safice  
without other labor than steering, the boatman walks  
backwards and forwards on the side of his boat, now  
stooping with his shoulder to the pole, then drawing it  
back slowly to set it again, meanwhile moving steadily  
forward through an endless valley and an everchanging  
scenery, now distinguishing his course for a mile or two,  
‘and now shut in by a sudden turn of the river in a small  
‘woodland lake. All the phenomena which surround him  
are simple and grand, and there is something impressive,  
even majestie, in the very motion he causes, which will  
naturally be communicated to his own character, and he  
feels the slow, irresistible movement under him with  
pride, as if it were his own energy.

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224 A weex.  
  
‘The news epread like wildfire among us youths, when  
formerly, once in a year or two, one of these boats came  
up the Concord River, and was scen stealing mysteri-  
ously through the meadows and past the village. It  
came and departed as silently as a cloud, without noise  
or dust, and was witnessed by few. One summer day  
‘this huge traveller might be seen moored at some mead-  
ow’s wharf, and another summer day it was not there.  
‘Where precisely it came from, or who these men were  
who knew the rocks and soundings better than we who  
bathed there, wo could never tel. We knew somo  
river's bay only, but they took rivers, from end to end.  
‘They were a sort of fabulous river-men to us. It was  
inconceivable by what sort of mediation any mere lands  
‘man could hold communication with them. Would they  
heave to, to gratify bis wishes? No, it was favor enough  
to know faintly of their destination, or the time of their  
possible return, I have seen them in the summer when  
the stream ran low, mowing the weeds in mid-channel,  
‘and with hayers’ jests cutting broad swaths in three  
feet of water, that they might make a passage for their  
cow, while the grass in long windrows was carried  
down the stream, undried by the rarest hay-weather.  
‘We admired unweariedly how their vessel would float,  
Tike a huge chip, sustaining 90 many casks of lime,  
and thousands of bricks, and such heaps of iron oro,  
‘with wheelbarrows aboard, and that, when we stepped  
on it, it did not yield to the pressure of our feet It  
ave us confidenes in the prevalence of the law of buoy=  
ancy, and we imagined to what infinite uses it might be  
ut. The men appeared to lead a kind of life on it, and  
it was whispered that they slept aboard. Some affirmed  
that it carried sail, and that such winds blew here as

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‘TURSDAT. 225  
  
filled the sails of vessels on the ocean; which again  
others much doubted. ‘They had been seen to sail across  
our Fair Haven bay by lucky fishers who were out, bot  
unfortunately others were not there to see. We might  
then say thet our river was navigable,—why not? Tn  
after-years I read in print, with no little satisfaction, that  
it was thought. by come that, with a little expense in re-  
‘moving rocks and deepening the channel, “there might  
be a profitable inland navigation.” Ithen lived some-  
where to tell of.  
  
Such is Commerce, which shakes the cocoa-nut and  
bread-fruit tree in the remotest isle, and sooner or later  
dawns on the duskiest and most simple-minded savage.  
If we may be pardoned the digression, who ean help  
being affected at the thought of the very fine and slight,  
Dat positive relation, ia which the savage inhabitants of  
some remote isle stand to the mysterious white mariner,  
the child of the sun?— as if we were to hav8 dealings  
with an animal higher in the scale of being than oar-  
es Tein barely recognized fact to the natives that  
he exists, and has his home far away somewhere, and is  
glad to buy their fresh fruits with his superfluous com-  
modities, Under the same eatholic sun glances his  
white ship over Pacific waves into their emooth bays,  
‘and the poor savage’s paddle gleams in the air.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Ma's lite acta are grand,  
Bebe from land to land,  
‘There a they lie in time,  
Within their native clime.  
the nooatide weigh,  
efor its ray  
‘Tonome retired bay,  
‘Theis eon,  
‘Whence, under trop san,  
we °

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226 a WEEK.  
  
Again they ran,  
Bearing gum Seooga! and Tragiesot.  
  
For this wan ocean meno  
  
‘For tia the wan was toh,  
  
‘And moon was lot,  
  
‘And winds in distant cavers pent  
  
Since our voyage the railroad on the bank has been  
  
‘extended, and there is now but little boating on the  
‘Merrimack. All kinds of produce and stores were  
formerly conveyed by water, but now nothing is carried  
up the stream, and almost wood and bricks slone are  
‘carried down, and these are also carried on the railroad.  
The locks are fast wearing out, and will soon be impas-  
sable, since the tolls will not pay the expense of repair=  
ing them, and s0 in a few years there will be an end  
of boating on this river. ‘The boating at present  
principally between Merrimack and Lowell, or Hook-  
sett and Manchester. ‘They make two or three trips  
in a week, according to wind and weather, from Mer-  
rimack to Lowell and back, about twenty-five miles  
each way. The boatman comes singing in to shore late  
‘at night, and moors his empty boat, and gets his supper  
‘and lodging in some house near at hand, and again  
early in the morning, by starlight perhaps, he pushes  
‘away up stream, and, by a shout, or the fragment of a  
song, gives notice of his approach to the lock-man, with  
‘whom he is to take his breakfast. IF he gets up to his  
‘wood:-pile before noon he proceeds to load his boat, with  
the help of his single “band,” and is on his way down  
again before night. When he gets to Lowell he un-  
Jonds his boat, and gets his receipt for his cargo, and,  
having heard the news at the public house at Middlesex  
‘or elsewhere, goes back with his empty boat and his re-  
ceipt in his pocket to the owner, and to get a new load.

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‘rorspAr. 227  
  
We were frequently advertised of their approach by  
some faint sound behind us, and looking round saw them  
a mile off, creeping stealthily up the side of the stream  
Tike alligators. It was pleasant to hail these sailors of  
the Merrimack from time to time, and learn the news  
which circulated with them. We imagined that the sun  
shining on their bare heads had stamped a liberal and  
public character on their most private thoughts.  
  
‘The open and sunny interval still stretched away  
from the river sometimes by two or more terraces, to  
the distant hill-country, and when we climbed the bank  
‘we commonly found an irregular copse-wood skirting  
the river, the primitive having floated down-stream long,  
ago to—— the “King’s navy.” Sometimes wo saw the  
river-road a quarter or half a mile distant, and the per-  
ticolored Concord stage, with its cloud of dust, its van  
of earnest travelling faces, and its rear of dusty trunks,  
reminding us that the country had its places of rendez-  
vous for restless Yankee men. There dwelt slong at  
‘considerable distances on this interval a quiet agricul-  
tural and pastoral people, with every house its well, a8  
‘we sometimes proved, and every household, though  
never 80 still and remote it appeared in the noontide, its  
dinner about these times. ‘There they lived on, those  
‘New England people, farmer'lives, father and grand-  
father and greatgrandfather, on and on without noise,  
keeping up tradition, and expecting, beside fair weather  
and abundant harvests, we did not learn what. They  
‘were contented to live, sineo it was so contrived for  
‘hem, and where their lines had fallen.  
  
ur uninqaiing corps le more low  
‘Than ou lifes curoity doth go.  
‘Yet these men had no need to travel to be as wise #-

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228 a were.  
  
   
  
Solomon in all his glory, #0 similar are the lives of men  
in all countries, and fraught with the same homely ex-  
perienoes. One half the world knows how the other  
half lives.  
  
About noon wo passed a emall village in Merrimack  
‘at Thornton's Ferry, and tasted of the waters of Nati-  
cook Brook on tho same side, where French and his  
companions, whose grave we saw in Dunstable, were am-  
Duscaded by the Indians. ‘The humble village of Litch-  
ficld, with its steepleless mecting-house, stood on the  
opposite or east bank, near where a dense grove of wil-  
lows backed by maples skirted the shore. ‘There also  
we noticed some shagbark-trees, which, as they do not  
grow in Concord, were as strange a sight to us as tho  
palm would be, whose fruit only we have seen. Our  
‘course now curved gracefully to the north, leaving a low,  
flat shore on the Merrimack side, which forms a sort of  
harbor for canal-boats. We observed some fair elms  
and particularly large and handsome white-maples stand~  
{ng conspicuously on this interval ; and the opposite shore,  
a quarter of a mile below, was covered with young elms  
and maples six inches high, which had probably sprang  
from the seeds which had been washed across.  
  
Some carpenters were at work here mending a scow  
‘on the green and sloping bank. ‘The strokes of their  
mallets echoed from shore to shore, and up and down the  
river, and their tools gleamed in the sun a quarter of a  
mile from us, and we realized that boat-building was as  
ancient and honorable an art as agricalture, and that  
there might be a naval as well as a pastoral life. The  
whole history of commerce was made manifest in that  
seow turned bottom upward on the shore. ‘Thus did  
‘men begin 10 go dowo upon the sea in ships 5 quaeque diu

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‘TORSDAY. 229  
  
‘steterant in montibus altis, Fluctibus ignotis insultavére  
carina; “and keels which had long stood on high  
mountains careered insultingly (ineullavére) over un-  
Known waves” (Ovid, Met. I. 198.) We thought that it  
would be well for the traveller to build his bost on the  
Dank of a stream, instead of finding a ferry or a bridge.  
In the ‘Adventures of Henry the fur-trader, it is pleasant  
to read that when with his Indians he reached the shore  
fof Ontario, they consumed two days in making two  
‘canoes of the bark of the elm-tree, in which to transport  
‘thomselves to Fort Niagara. It is a worthy incident in  
‘a joamey, a delay as good as much rapid travelling. A  
‘good share of our interest in Xenophon’s story of his re-  
treat is in the manceuvres to get the army safely over  
the rivers, whether on rafts of logs or fagots, or sheep-  
‘skins blown up. And where could they better afford to  
tarry meanwhile, than on the banks of a river?  
  
‘As we glided past at a distance, these out-door work-  
‘men appeared to have added some dignity to their labor  
by ite very publicness. It was a part of the industry of  
nature, like the work of hornets and mud-wasps.  
  
‘The waves slomy bea  
  
ast to keep the noon sweet,  
  
‘And no sound is Sonted  
  
Save the male on shore,  
  
‘Which echoing on high  
  
Seema salkiog the sky.  
‘The haze, the sun's dust of travel, had a Lethean infiu-  
‘ence on the land and its inhabitants, and all creatures  
resigned themselves to float upon the inappreciable tides  
of nature.  
  
Woot ofthe sn, thre pnts,  
  
‘Woven of Nature's ribet stat  
‘Visible eat, ai-water, and dy 200,

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280 A Were.  
  
Last conquest ofthe 0703  
  
‘Tol ofthe day daplayed,eun-dust,  
  
Aerial aart wpon the shore of exth,  
‘Ethereal estoary,fith of fight,  
  
Breakers ofr, billows of heat,  
  
Fine summer spray oo ioland seas  
  
[Bird of the sun, transparect-winged  
  
Omlet of noon, sof-pinioned,  
  
‘From heath of subble rising withoot song  
tabla thy vorenity ofr the fils,  
  
‘The routine which is in the sunshine and the finest  
days, as that which has conquered and prevailed, com-  
mends iteclf to us by its very antiquity and apparent  
solidity and necessity. Our weakness needs it, and our  
strength uses it, We cannot draw on our boots without  
bracing ourselves against it. If there were but one  
erect and solid standing tree in the woods, all creatures,  
‘would go to rub against it and make sure of their footing.  
‘During the many hours which we spend in this waking  
sleep, the hand stands still on the face of the clock, and  
wwe grow like com in the night. Men are as busy as the  
brooks or bees, and postpone everything to their busi-  
ness; as carpenters disouss polities between the strokes  
of the hammer while they are shingling a roof.  
  
   
  
‘This noontide was a ft occasion to make some pleasant  
aro, nd there edt ral ome veya ke [  
coarselres, not too moral nor inquisitive, and which would  
  
arb the noon; or else some old classic, the very |  
flower of all reading, which we bad postponed to such & |  
  
   
  
Of Syrian posce, immortal lise.”  
  
But, alas, our chest, like the cabin of a coaster, contained  
only its well-thumbed “Navigator” for all literature,

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‘TUESDAY. 231  
  
and we were obliged to draw on our memory for theso  
things.  
  
‘We naturally remembered Alexander Henry's Adven-  
tures here, as a sort of classic among books of American  
travel. It contains scenery and rough sketching of men  
‘and incidents enough to inspire poeta for many years,  
‘and to my faney is ss full of sounding names as any  
page of history,— Lake Winnipeg, Hudson Bay, Otta-  
‘way, and portages innumerable ; Chipeways, Gens de  
Terres, Les Pilleurs, The Weepers ; with reminiscences  
of Hearne’s journey, and the like; an immense and  
shaggy but sincere country, summer and winter, adorned  
with chains of lakes and rivers, covered with enows,  
‘with hemlocks, and fir-trees. There is a naturalness, an  
‘unpretending and cold life in this traveller, as in a  
Canadian winter, what life was preserved through low  
temperatures and frontier dangers by furs within a stout  
heart. He has truth and moderation worthy of the  
father of history, which belong only to an intimate ex-  
perience, and he does not defer too much to literature.  
The unlearned traveller may quote his single line from  
the poets with as good right as the scholar. He too  
may speak of the stars, for he eces them shoot perhaps  
‘when the astronomer does not. The good sense of this  
‘author is very conspicuous. He is a traveller who does  
not exaggerate, but writes for the information of bi  
readers, for science, and for history. His story is told  
with as much good faith and directness as if it were &  
Feport to his brother traders, or the Directors of the  
‘Hudson Bay Company, and is fitly dedicated to Sir Jo-  
‘epb Banks. It reads like the argument to a great poom  
on the primitive state of the country and its inhabitants,  
‘and the reader imagines what in each ease, with the ine

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232 a were, Hl  
  
vocation of the Mase, might be sung, and leaves off with  
suspended interest, a if the full account were to follow.  
In what school was this fur-trader educated? He seems  
to travel the immense snowy country with such purpose  
aly as the reader who accompanies him, and to the  
Intter’s imagination, itis, as it were, momentarily created.  
to be the scene of his adventures. What is most inter-  
‘sting and valuable in it, however, is not the materials  
for the history of Pontiac, or Braddock, or the North-  
‘west, which it furnishes ; not the annals of the country,  
Dat the natural facts, or perennials, which are ever with-  
‘out date, When out of history the truth shall be ex-  
tracted, it will have shed its dates like withered leaves.  
  
‘The Soubegan, or Crooked River, as some translate  
it, comes in from the west about & mile and a half above  
‘Thornton's Ferry. Babboosuck Brook empties into it  
near its mouth. There are said to be some of the finest  
‘water privileges in the country still unimproved on the  
former stream, at a short distance from the Merrimack.  
One spring morning, March 22, in the year 1677, an in- |  
cident oocurred on the banks of the river here, which is |  
interesting to us as a slight memorial of an interview  
Detween two ancient tribes of men, one of which is now |  
extinct, while the other, though represented by  
1 miserable remnant, has long sinco disappeared from  
its ancient hunting-grounds. A Mr. James Parker, at  
“Mfr. Hinchmanne’s farme ner Meremack,” wrote thus  
“to the Honred Governer and Council at Bostown,  
Hast, Post Hast  
  
\* Sagamore Wanalancet come this morning to informe mo,  
and then went to Mr. Tyng’s to informe him, that his son be-  
ing on ye other si of Meremack river over against Souhegan

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‘rorspar. 288  
  
‘upon the 22 day of this instant, about tene of the clock in  
‘the morning, he discovered 15 Indians on this sid the river,  
which he soposed to be Mohokes by ther apech. He called  
to them they answered, but he could not understand ther  
spech ; and be having 8 conow ther in the river, he went to  
Deck his conow that they might not have ani ues of it. In  
‘the mesn time they shot about thirty guna at him, and he  
being much frighted fled, and come home forthwith to Nae  
Ihameock [Pawtucket Falls or Lowell], wher ther wigowames  
now stand”  
  
Penacooks and Mohawks! ubigue gentium sunt ? In  
the year 1670, a Mohawk warrior scalped a Naamkeak  
or else a Wamesit Indian maiden near where Lowell  
now stands, She, however, recovered. Even as late as  
1685, Jobn Hogkins, a Penacook Indian, who describes  
his grandfather as having lived “at place called Mala-  
make rever, other name chef Natukkog and Panukkog,  
that one rever great many names,” wrote thus to the  
governor: —  
“May 154, 1685.  
  
“Honor governor my ftiend, —  
  
“You my friend I desire your worship and your power,  
‘because I hope you can do som great matters this one. Tam  
poor and naked and I havo no men at my place because I  
afraid allwayes Mohoge he will kill me every day and night.  
I your worship when please pray help me you no let Mobogs  
Kill me at my place at Malamake river called Pannulkkog.  
and Natukkog, I will submit your worship and your power.  
‘And now I want pouder and such alminishon shatt and guns,  
becaute I have forth at my hom and I plant theare.  
  
“This all Indian hand, but pray you do consider your  
‘bumble servant, Jonx Hoorme.”  
  
Signed alio by Simon Detogkom, King Hary, Sam Livia,  
‘Mr. Jorge Rodunnonukgus, Jobn Owamosimmin, and nine  
‘other Indians, with their marks against their names.

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284 a Ware.  
  
But now, one hundred and fifty-four years having  
lapsed since the date of this letter, we went unalarmed  
on our way without “brecking” our “conow,” reading  
the New England Gazetteer, and seeing no traces of  
 Mohogs” on the banks.  
  
‘The Souhegan, though’a rapid river, seemed to-day to  
‘have borrowed its character from the noon.  
  
‘Whore gleaming Selds of haze  
Meet the voyegear’s gue,  
‘And above, the heated a  
‘coms to make a river there,  
‘The pioes stand up with pride  
By the Souhegun's side,  
‘Aad the heralock and the larch  
‘With their triampbal are  
‘Aro waving o'er its march  
  
To the ren,  
[No wind str ita waves,  
‘Bt the epiia of the braves  
  
Hov'ring o'er,  
“Whove antiquated graves  
Ite sill water laren  
  
‘On the shore.  
  
sn Toda’ stealthy tread,  
  
[goon sleeping in its bed,  
‘Without joy o grief,  
Or the rastle of ea,  
‘Without a ripple o sbillow,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
With «louder din  
Did ite current begin,  
  
‘When melted the tow  
  
(On the fur mountain's brow,  
  
   
  
   
  
Hast thoa flowed forever ?  
Souhogea soundeth old,

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rurspar. 235,  
  
During the heat of the day, we rested on large  
{sland a mile above the mouth of this river, pastured by  
a herd of cattle, with steep banks and scattered elms and  
‘oaks, and a sufficient channel for canal-boats on each  
side. When we made a fire to boil some rice for our  
inner, the flames spreading amid the dry grass, and the  
smoke curling silently upward and casting grotesque  
‘shadows on the ground, seemed phenomena of the noon,  
and we fancied that we progressed up the stream with-  
‘out effort, and a2 naturally as the wind and tide went  
down, not outraging tho calm days by unworthy bustle  
‘or impatience. ‘The woods on the neighboring shore  
‘were alive with pigeons, which were moving south, look-  
ing for mast, bat now, like ourselves, spending their  
noon in the shade. We could hear the slight, wiry, win-  
nowing sound of their wings as they changed their roosts  
from time to time, and their gentle and tremulous cooing.  
‘They sojourned with us during the noontide, greater  
travellers far than we. You may frequently discover a  
single pair sitting upon the lower branches of the white-  
pine in the depths of the wood, at this hour of the day,  
0 silent and solitary, and with euch @ hermit-like ap-  
pearance, as if they had never strayed beyond its skirts,  
While the acorn which was gathered in the forests of  
Maine is still undigested in their crops. We obtained

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236 A ware,  
  
cone of these handsome birds, which lingered too long  
‘upon ite perch, and plucked and broiled it here with  
some other game, to be carried along for our supper ;  
for, beside the provisions which we carried with us, we  
depended mainly on the river and forest for our supply.  
Itis true, it did not seem to be putting this bird to its  
right use to pluck off ita feathers, and extract its entrails,  
‘and broil its carcass on the coals ; but we heroically per-  
severed, nevertheless, waiting for further information,  
‘The same regard for Nature which excited our sympa-  
thy for her creatures nerved our hands to carry through  
‘what we had begun. For we would be honorable to  
the party we deserted ; we would full fate, and #0 at  
length, perhaps, detect the secret innocence of these  
incessant tragedies which Heaven allows.  
  
Too quick reslves do resoation wrong,  
‘What, part so soon tobe divorced so long?  
‘Things to be dove ar long tobe debated;  
‘leaven isnot day'd, Bepantance isnot dated.”  
  
‘We are double-edged blades, and every time we whet  
‘our virtue the return stroke straps our vice. Where is  
the skilful swordeman who ean give clean wounds, and  
not rip up his work with the other edge?  
  
Nature herself has not provided the most graceful  
end for hor creatures. What becomes of all theso birds  
that people the air and forest for our solacement? ‘The  
sparrows seem always chipper, never infirm. We do  
not see their bodies lie about. Yet there is a tragedy at  
‘the end of each one of their lives. ‘They must perish  
iserably ; not one of them is translated. ‘True, “not a  
sparrow falleth to the ground without our Heavenly  
Father’s knowledge,” but they do fall, nevertheless.

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‘rurspar. 237  
  
‘The carcasses of some poor squirrels, however, the  
‘same that frisked so merrily in the morning, which we  
hhad skinned and embowelled for our dinner, we aban-  
doned in disgust, with tardy humanity, a8 too wretched a  
resource for any but starving men. It was to perpetuate  
the practice of a barbarous era. If they had been larger,  
cour crime had been less. Their small red bodies, little  
Dundles of red tiseue, mere gobbets of venison, would  
not have “fattened fire” With a sudden impulse we  
threw them away, and washed our hands, and boiled  
some rice for our dinner. ‘Bebold the difference be-  
tween the one who eateth flesh, and him to whom it  
Ibelonged! The first hath a momentary enjoyment, whilst  
the latter is deprived of existence !” \* Who would com-  
mit go great a crime against poor animal, who is fed  
only by the herbs which grow wild in the woods, and  
‘whose belly is burnt up with hunger?” We remem-  
bered a picture of mankind in the hunter age, chasing  
hares down the mountains; O me miserable! Yet sheep  
‘and oxen are but larger squirrels, whose hides are saved  
‘and meat is salted, whose souls perchance are not 60  
large in proportion to their bodies.  
  
‘There should always be some flowering and maturing  
of the fruits of nature in the cooking process. Some  
simple dishes recommend themselves to our imaginations  
aa well as palates. Tn parched corn, for instance, there is  
‘a manifest sympathy between the bursting seed and the  
more perfect developments of vegetable life. It is « per  
feet flower with ita petals, like the houstonia or anemone.  
‘On my warm hearth these cereslian blossoms expanded ;  
here ia the bank whereon they grew. Perhaps some  
such visible blessing would always attend the simple and  
‘wholesome repast,

Page-7718

288 A wEEK,  
  
Here was that “pleasant harbor” which we had  
sighed for, where the weary voyageur could read the  
Journal of some other sailor, whose bark had ploughed,  
pperchance, more famous and classic seas. At the tables  
of the gods, after feasting follow music and song; we  
will recline now under these island trees, and for our  
rinstrel call on  
  
ANACREON.  
  
“Nor hase cose his charmiag tong for til hat Ire,  
‘Though hei dead eps not In Had.”  
Simoni’ Bpigrom on Anacren,  
  
J lately met with an old volume from a London book-  
shop, containing the Greek Minor Poets, and it was a  
pleasure to read once more only.the words, Orpheus,  
Linus, Museus,— those faint poetic sounds and echoes  
of a name, dying away on the cars of us modern  
‘men; and those hardly more substantial sounds, Mim-  
nermas, Ibycus, Aleeus, Stesichorus, Menander. They  
lived not in vain. We can converse with these bodi-  
less fames without reserve or personality.  
  
Tknow of no studies so composing as those of the clas-  
sical scholar. When we havo sat down to them, life  
‘seems as still and serene as if it were very far off, and I  
believe it is not habitually seen from any common plat-  
form so traly and unexaggerated as in the light of liter-  
ature. In serene hours we contemplate the tour of the  
Greek and Latin authors with more pleasure than the  
traveller does the fairest scenery of Greece or aly.  
‘Where shall we find a more refined society ? That high-  
way down from Homer and Hesiod to Horace and Ju-  
‘venal is more attractive than the Appian. Reading the  
classics, or conversing with those old Greeks and Latins

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‘TUESDAY. 239  
  
in their surviving works, ia like walking amid the stars  
and constellations, a high and by way serene to travel.  
Indeed, the true scholar will be not a little of an astrono-  
mer in his habits, Distracting cares will not be allowed  
to obstruct the field of his vision, for the higher regions  
of literature, like astronomy, are above storm and dark-  
ness.  
  
Bot passing by these rumors of bards, let us pause for  
‘8 moment at the Teian poet.  
  
There is something strangely modern sbout him. He  
sa very easily turned into English. Is it that our lyric  
ppoets have resounded but that Iyre, which would sound  
only light subjects, and which Simonides tells us does  
not sleep in Hadeo? His odes are like gems of pure  
ivory. They possess an ethereal and evanescent beanty  
like summer evenings, & xpi o¢ roti wow dyer — which  
\_you must perceive with the flower of the mind, — and show  
hhow slight a beauty could be expressed. You have to  
consider them, as the stare of lesser magnitude, with tho  
side of the eye, and look aside from them to behold  
‘them, ‘They charm us by their serenity and freedom  
from exaggeration and passion, and by a certain flower-  
‘beauty, which does not propose itself, but. must be  
approached and studied like a natural object. But per-  
haps their chief merit consists in the lightness and yet  
security of their tread ;  
  
“The young and tend tae  
{Nelor bends when they do walk”  
  
‘True, our nerves are never strung by them;  
too constantly the eound of the lyre, and never the note  
of the trumpet; but they are not gross, as has been pre-  
sumed, but always elevated above the sensual.  
  
‘These are some of the best that have come down to us.

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240  
  
A were.  
ON HIS LYRE.  
  
wish to sing the Atride,  
‘And Cadmus I wish to ang;  
‘But my lyre sounds  
Only love with It ebords.  
Lataly ¥chaged the strings  
‘And ail he Ipres  
‘And T begna to sing the labors  
‘OF Heresler; but my lyre  
Resounded loves.  
Farewell, henceforth, for ma,  
roe! for my lyre  
  
only loves.  
  
   
  
TO A SWALLOW.  
  
‘Thon indeed, doar swallow,  
‘Yearly going and coming,  
  
a sommer wenvest thy Best,  
‘And in winter gost disappearing  
Either to Nie o to Memphis.  
But Love always weaveth  
  
is nest in my heart...  
  
   
  
OW A SILVER cur.  
  
‘Taming the silver,  
  
Valean, make for me,  
  
Not indsed panoply,  
  
For what are battles 9 me?  
Bata hollow up,  
  
‘As deap as thon cane  
  
‘Aad make for ms fait  
Neither star, nor wagoos,  
Nor sad Or  
  
‘What are the Pleiades to me?  
‘What the shining Bootes?  
Make vines forme,  
  
‘Ad closers of grapes int,  
‘hod of gold Love and Babylon  
‘Treading tho grapes  
  
‘With the fair Lywan,

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‘TUESDAY.  
ON HIMSELF.  
  
‘Thon sings the afar of Thebes,  
‘And be the battles of Troy,  
  
But Iof my own defeats  
  
‘Mo horee have wasted m0,  
  
Nor foot, nor sips;  
  
Bot anew and diferent hot,  
From eyes siting me.  
  
70 A DOVE.  
  
Lovely dove,  
‘Whence, whence dost thon fy?  
‘Whence, running on alr,  
  
‘Dost thou waft aod difise  
  
‘So many sweet ointments?  
  
‘Who art? What thy errand? —  
‘Anaeroon sent me  
  
‘Toa boy, to Batbyllag,  
  
‘Who lately is ralor and tyrant ofa,  
Gythore has sold mo  
  
For ove lite 100g,  
  
‘And I'm doing this service  
  
For Anacreon.  
  
‘And now, a8 you 00,  
  
{ear letiors from i.  
  
‘Aod bo myo that directly  
  
He'll make me fre,  
  
But though he release me,  
  
‘is steve I wil tary with him.  
For why should I fy  
  
Over moantaina and Sold,  
  
‘And perch upon toes,  
  
Eating some wild thing?  
  
[Now indeod I eat broad,  
  
‘Placking it fom the bands  
  
OF Anacreon himself  
  
‘And be gives me to drink  
‘The wine which he tastes,  
‘And drinking, I dance,  
‘And shadow tay master's  
n  
  
   
  
   
  
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242,  
  
A ween,  
  
ace with oy wings;  
‘And, ging t rst,  
  
‘Oa the tyr itself I steep.  
  
‘That is alls get thee gooe.  
  
‘Thom bast made me more talkative,  
Man, than a crow.  
  
ON LOVE  
  
Love walking swift,  
‘With hyscinthioe staf,  
  
‘Bade me to take a ran with bins  
  
‘And hastening through swift torrent,  
‘And woody places, and over prosipioe  
‘Areateranake stang me.  
  
‘And my heart leaped up to  
  
My mouth, and Tabould have falntods  
Bat Love faaning my brows  
  
‘With his soft wings, ld,  
  
Saray, thou art notable to love.  
  
   
  
ON WOMEN.  
  
‘Natures given horns  
‘To bala, and boofs to hors,  
Swifts to hares,  
  
‘Tolions yawaing teoth,  
  
To Gahen swioning,  
  
To binds Sight,  
  
‘To men wisdom.  
  
‘For woman sho had nothing beside;  
‘What then does abe give? Beaty, —  
aston ofall shies,  
  
Iatead of al speary  
  
‘And she conquers even iron  
  
‘And fre, who is beantfal  
  
   
  
   
  
ON Lovers.  
  
“Horsos have the mark  
OOF Bre on their sides,

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‘ToRspar. 2s,  
  
‘And some have distinguished  
‘The Parthian men by thelr cretas  
80, seeing lovers,  
  
‘Kaow them at onc,  
  
or they havo a cortain alight  
[Brand on thelr hears.  
  
TO A SWALLOW.  
  
‘What doa thou wish me to do to thee, —  
‘What, thou loquacious swallow?  
  
Dot thou wish mo taking thes  
  
‘Thy light platens to clip?  
  
Or rather to plock oat  
  
Thy toogue from within,  
  
‘As that Tereus id?  
  
‘Why with thy nots in the dawn  
  
ist thou plundered Baylis  
From my beeatifl dreams?  
  
70 A coLT.  
  
‘Taracian colt, why af mo  
‘Looking aslant with thy eye,  
  
Dost thou crully flo,  
  
‘And think that [now nothing wise?  
Koow I could well,  
  
Pot the bridle on the,  
  
‘And holding therein, tara  
  
‘Bound the bounds of the cour.  
  
But now thou broweet the meads,  
‘And gambling lightly dot play,  
For tho hast no skilfl horseman  
‘Mounted upon thy back.  
  
‘CUPID WOUNDED.  
  
Love ones among rose  
Baw not  
  
A nleoping bes, bat was stangs  
‘And being wounded in the foger

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244 A Were.  
  
Otis hand, ried for pain.  
Bunning as wel a fying  
  
‘To the beautiful Venus,  
  
am killed, mother, side,  
  
Tam kiled and 1 ds,  
  
A litle serpent has stang me,  
‘Winged, which they call  
  
‘A bes, — the husbabdmen.  
  
‘Aod she sald, Ifthe wtiog  
  
Ofa bes aficts yon,  
  
‘ow, think you, ae they alloted,  
Love, whom you smite?  
  
Late in the afternoon, for we bed lingered long on the  
fsland, we raised our sail for the first time, and for a  
short hour the southwest wind was our ally ; but it did  
not please Heaven to abet us along. With one sail  
raised we swept slowly up the eastern side of the stream,  
steering clear of the rocks, while, from the top of hill  
which formed the opposite bank, some Iumberers were  
rolling down timber to be rafted down the stream. We  
could see their axes and levers gleaming in the sun, and  
the logs came down with a dust and a rombling sound,  
which was reverberated through the woods beyond us on  
our side, like the roar of artillery. But Zephyr soon  
took us out of sight and hearing of this commerce. Hav-  
ing passed Read’s Ferry, and another island called Mo-  
Gaw’s Island, we reached some rupids called Moore's  
Falls, and entered on “that section of the river, nine  
niles in extent, converted, by law, into the Union Canal,  
comprehending in that space six distinct falls; at each  
of which, and at several intermediate places, work has  
bbeen done.” After passing Moore's Falls by means of  
locks, we again had recourse to our oars, and went mer-

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TUESDAY. 245  
  
rily on our way, driving the small sandpiper from rock  
to rock before us, and sometimes rowing near enough to  
cottage on the bank, thongh they were few and far be-  
tween, to see the sunflowers, and the seed vessels of the  
poppy, like small goblets filled with the water of Lethe,  
defore the door, but without disturbing the slu  
household behind, ‘Thus we held on, sailing or dippi  
‘our way slong with the paddle up this broad river,  
smooth and placid, flowing over concealed rocks, where  
we could see the pickerel lying low in the transparent  
‘water, eager to double some distant cape, to make some  
great bend as in the life of man, and see what new per-  
spective would open; looking far into a new country,  
broad and serene, the cottages of settlers seen afar for  
the first time, yet with the moss of a century on their  
roofs, and the third or fourth generation in their shadows.  
Strango was it to consider how the sun and the summer,  
the buds of spring and the seared leaves. of autumn,  
‘were related to these cabins along the shore; how all the  
rays which paint the landscape radiate from them, and  
‘the flight of the crow and the gyrations of the hawk  
have reference to their roofs. Still the ever rich and  
fertile shores accompanied us, fringed with vines and  
alive with small birds and frisking equirrels, the edge of  
some farmer’s field or widow's wood-lot, or wilder, per-  
chance, where the muskrat, the little medicine of the  
river, drage itself along stealthily over the: alder-leaves,  
and muscle-shells, and man and the memory of man are  
‘banished far.  
  
At length the unwearied, never-sinking shore, still  
holding on without break, with its cool copees and serene  
asture-grounds, tempted us to disembark; and we ad-  
‘Yenturously Innded on this remote coast, to survey it,

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246 A WERK.  
  
‘without the knowledge of any human inhabitant probably.  
to this day. But wo still remember the gnarled and  
hospitable oaks which grew even there for our entertain.  
ment, and were no strangers to as, the lonely horse in  
hin pasture, and the patient cows, whose path to the  
river, #0 judiciously chosen to overcome the difficulties  
of the way, we followed, and disturbed their ruminations  
in the shade; and, above all, the cool, free aspect of the  
wild apple-trees, generously proffering their fruit to os,  
‘though still green and crude, — the hard, round, glossy  
fruit, which, if not ripe, otill was not poison, but New-  
English too, brought hither its ancestors by ours once.  
‘These gentler trees imparted a half-civilized and twi-  
light aspect to the otherwise barbarian land. Still far-  
ther on we scrambled up the rocky channel of a brook,  
which had long served nature for a sluice there, leaping,  
ike it from rock to rock through tangled woods, at the  
Dottom of a ravine, which grew darker and darker, and  
more and more boarse the murmurs of the stream, until  
we reached the ruins of a mill, where now the ivy grew,  
and the trout glanced through the crumbling flume; and  
there we imagined what had been the dreams and spec-  
ulations of some early settler. But the waning day  
compelled us to embark once more, and redeem this  
‘wasted time with long and vigorous sweeps over the  
rippling stream,  
  
It was still wild and solitary, except that at intervals  
of & mile or two the roof of a cottage might be seen over  
the bank. This region, as we read, was once famous for  
the manufacture of straw bonnets of the Leghora kind,  
of which it claims tho mvention in these parts ; and oo-  
casionally somo industrious danisel tripped down to the  
water's edge, to pat her straw a-soak, as it appeared, and

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‘TUESDAY. 247  
  
stood awhile to watch the retreating voyageurs, and  
catch the fragment of a boat-song which we had made,  
wafted over the water.  
‘Thos, perchance the Tian Banta,  
any = legging yar age,  
Gliding ee thy vppling watery,  
{lowly bummed soatral sng.  
  
Yow the sun's behing the willomy  
+ \_ Now be gleams along the waves  
Fatty ofr the weared blows  
‘Conte the pita of the braves  
  
‘ust before sundown we reached some more falls in  
the town of Bedford, where some stone-masons were em  
ployed repairing the locks in a solitary part of the river.  
‘They were interested in our adventure, especially one  
young man of our own age, who inquired at fret if we  
‘were bound up to “'Skeag”; and when he bad heard  
our story, and examined our outfit, asked us other ques  
tions, but temperately still, and always turning to his  
work again, though as if it were become his duty. It  
was plain that he would like to go with us, and, as he  
looked up the river, many a distant cape and wooded  
shore were reflected in his eye, as wall as in his  
thoughts. When we were ready he left his work, and  
helped us through the locks with a sort of quiet enthu-  
siasm, telling us that we were at Coos Falls and we could  
  
ill distinguish tho strokes of his chisel for many sweeps  
after we had left him.  
  
‘We wished to camp this night on a large rock in the  
middle of the stream, just abovo these falls, but the  
‘want of fuel, and the difficulty of fixing our tent firmly,  
Provented us; so we made our bed on the main-land  
‘posit, on the west bank, in the town of Bedford, in a  
retired place, ag we supposed, there being no houso  
in sight, -

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WEDNESDAY.  
  
“han te mans fo nd dag”  
‘Corma.

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WEDNESDAY.  
  
Eantr this morning, as we were rolling up oar buffa-  
Joes and loading our boat amid the dew, while our em-  
bbers were still smoking, the masons who worked at the  
Jocks, and whom we had seen crossing the river in their  
boat the evening before while we were examining the  
rrock, came upon us as they were going to their work, and  
‘we found that we had pitched our tent directly in the  
path to their boat. ‘This was the only time that we were  
‘observed on our camping-ground. Thus, far from the  
beaten highways and the dust and din of travel, we be+  
hheld the country privately, yet freely, and at our leisure.  
Other roads do some violence to Nature, and bring the  
traveller to stare at her, but the river steals into the  
scenery it traverses without intrusion, silently creat  
and adorning it, and is as free to come and go as the  
zephyr.  
  
‘As we shoved away from this rocky coast, before sun-  
tise, the smaller bittern, the genius of the shore, was  
moping along its edge, or stood probing the mud for its  
food, with ever an eye on us, though so demurely at  
work, or else he ran slong over the wet stones  
wrecker in his storm-coat, looking out for wrecks of  
snails and cockles. Now away he goes, with a limping  
fight, uncertain where he will alight, until a rod of clear  
sand amid the alders invites his feet; and now our

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252 a ween.  
  
steady approach compels him to seek anew retreat. Tt  
is a bird of the oldest TThalesian school, and no doubt  
believes in the priority of water to the other elements;  
the relic of twilight antediluvian age which yet in-  
habits these bright American rivers with us Yankees.  
There is something venerable in this melancholy and  
contemplative race of birds, which may have trodden  
the earth while it was yet in a slimy and imperfect state.  
Perchanco their tracks too are still visible on the stones.  
Tt still lingers into our glaring summers, bravely sup-  
porting its fate without sympathy from man, as if it  
looked forward to some second advent of which he has  
‘no assurance. One wonders if, by its patient study by  
rocks and sandy capes, it has wrested the whole of her  
secret from Nature yet. What a rich experience it  
must have gained, standing on one leg and looking out  
from its dull eye #0 long on sunshine and rain, moon  
and stare! What could it tell of stagnant pools and  
reeds and dank night-fogs! It would be worth the  
while to look closely into the eye which has been open  
and seeing at such hours, and in such solitudes, its dull,  
yellowish, greenish eye, Bfethinks my own soul must  
be a bright invisible green. I have seen these birds  
stand by the half-dozen together in the shallower water  
slong the shore, with their bills thrust into the mud at  
the bottom, probing for food, the whole head being con-  
cealed, while the neck and body formed an arch above  
the water.  
  
Cobass Brook, the outlet of Massabesic Pond,—  
which last is five or six miles distant, and contains 8f  
teen hundred acres, being the largest body of fresh  
water in Rockingham County,—comes in near here  
from the east. Rowing between Manchester and Bed-

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‘WEDNESDAY. 258  
  
ford, we passed, at an early hour, a ferry and some fall  
called Goff's Falls, the Todian Cohasset, where there is  
‘a small village, and a handsome green islet in the mid-  
le of the stream. From Bedfard and Merrimack have  
‘been bosted the bricks of which Lowell is mado.  
About twenty years before, as they told us, one Moore,  
of Bedford, having clay on his farm, contracted to fur-  
nish eight millions of bricks to the founders of that city  
within two years, He fulilled his contract in one year,  
‘and since then bricks have been the principal export  
{from these towns. ‘The farmers found thus a market for  
‘their wood, and when they had brought a load to the  
kilns, they could cart a load of bricks to the shore, and  
80 make a profitable day's work of it, Thus all parties  
‘were benefited. It was worth the while to see the  
place where Lowell was “dug out.” So likewise Man-  
chester is being built of bricks made stil higher up the  
xriver at Hooksett.  
  
‘There might be seen here on the bank of the Merri-  
‘mack, near Gof’s Falls, in what is now the town of Bed-  
ford, famous “ for hops and for its fine domestic manu-  
factures,” some graves of the aborigines. ‘The land still  
‘Dears this scar here, and time is slowly crumbling the  
ones of a race. Yet, without fail, every spring, sinco  
they first fished and hunted here, the brown thrasher  
has heralded the morning from a birch or alder spray,  
and the undying race of reed-birds still rustles throogh,  
‘the withering grase. But these bones rustle not. ‘These  
mouldering elements are slowly preparing for another  
‘metamorphosis, o serve new masters, and what was the  
Indian's will erelong be the white man’s sinew.  
  
‘We learned that Bedford was not so famous for hops  
‘as formerly, since the price is fluctuating, and poles are

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254 A were,  
  
now scarce. Yet if the traveller goes back a few miles  
from the river, the hop-kilns will still excite his curi-  
‘Foe aie iid fn r ‘voyage this forenoon,  
though the river was now more rocky and the falls more  
frequent than before. It was a pleasant change, after  
owing incessantly for many hours, to lock ourselves  
through in some retired place,— for commonly there  
was no lock-man at hand,—one sitting in the boat,  
while the other, sometimes with no little labor and  
hheave-yo-ing, opened and shat the gates, waiting patient-  
ly to see the locks fill. We di not once use the wheels  
which we had provided. Taking advantage of the  
eddy, we were sometimes floated up to the locks almost  
in the face of the falls; and, by the same cause, any  
floating timber was carried round in a circle and repeat-  
edly drawn into the rapids before it finally went down |  
the stream. ‘These old gray structures, with their quiet |  
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farms stretched over the river in the eun, appeared like  
natural objects in the scenery, and the kingfisher and  
sandpiper alighted on them as readily as on stakes or  
rocks.  
  
‘We rowed leisurely up the stream for several hours,  
‘until the sun had got high in the sky, our thoughts mo-  
notonously beating time to our oars. For outward va-  
riety there was only the river and the receding shores, a  
vista continually opening behind and closing before us,  
1s we sat with our backs up-stream ; and, for inward, such  
thoughts as the muses grudgingly lent us. We were  
always passing some low, inviting shore, oF some over~  
hanging bank, on which, however, we never landed.  
  
Such near aspects had wo  
(OF our lis scsoery.

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‘WEDNESDAY. 255  
  
Tt might be seen by what tenure men held tho earth.  
‘Tho smallest stream is mediterranean sea, a smaller  
‘ocean creck within the land, where men may steer by  
their farm-bounds and cottage-lights, For my own part  
but for the geographers, I should hardly have known  
hhow large a portion of our globo is water, my life has  
chiefly passed within so deep a cove. Yet I have some-  
times ventured as far as to the mouth of my Soug Har-  
dor. From an old ruined fort on Staten Island, I have  
Joved to watch all day some vessel whose name I had  
ead in the morning through the telegraph-glass, when  
she first came upon the coast, and her hull heaved up  
and glistened in the sun, from the moment when the  
pilot and most adventurous news-boats met her, past the  
‘Hook, and up the narrow channel of the wide outer bay,  
till she was boarded by the health-officer, and took her  
station at Quarantine, or held on her unquestioned  
course to the wharves of New York. It was interest-  
ing, too, to watch the less adventurous newsman, who  
made his assault as the vessel swept through the Nar-  
rows, defying plague and quarantine law, and, fastening  
his little cockboat to her huge side, clambered up and  
disappeared in the cabin. And then I could imagine  
‘what momentous news was being imparted by the cap-  
tain, which no American ear had ever heard, that Asia,  
Africa, Burope—were all sunk; for which at length  
ho pays the price, and is seen descending tho ship's side  
with his bundle of newspapers, but not where he first  
got up, for these arrivers do not stand still to gossip;  
‘and he hastes away with steady sweeps to dispose of  
wares to the highest bidder, and we shall erclong read  
something startling,— ‘By the latest arrival,” —“ by  
the good chip——” On Sunday I beheld, from some

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256 a were.  
  
{interior hill, the long proceseion of vessels getting to sea,  
reaching from the city wharves through the Narrows,  
‘and past the Hook, quite to the ocean stream, far as the  
eye could reach, with stately march and silken sails, all  
counting on lucky voyages, but each time some of the  
number, no doubt, destined to go to Dary’s locker, and  
never come on this coast again. And, again, in the  
evening of a pleasant day, it was my amusement to  
‘count the sails in sight. But as the setting sun continu  
ally brought more and more to light, etill farther in the  
horizon, the last count always had the advantage, till, by  
the time the last rays streamed over the sea, I had  
doubled and trebled my first number ; though I could  
no longer class them all under the several heads of  
ships, barks, brigs, schooners, and sloops, but moat  
were faint generic vessels only. And then the temper-  
ate twilight light, perchance, revealed the floating home  
‘of some sailor whose thoughts were already alienated  
from this American coast, and directed towards the Eu-  
rope of our dreams. I have stood upon the same hille  
top when a thunder-shower, rolling down from the Cats-  
kills and Highlands, passed over the island, deluging the  
land and, when it had euddenly left us in sunshine, have  
seen it overtake successively, with its hugo shadow and  
dark, desoonding wall of rain, the vessels in the bay.  
‘Their bright sails were suddenly drooping and dark, like  
the sides of barns, and they seemed to shrink before the  
storm ; while still far beyond them on the soa, through  
this dark veil, gleamed the sunny sails of those vessels  
which the storm had not yet reached. And at mid-  
night, when all around and overhead was darkness, I  
have seen a field of trembling, silvery light far out on  
‘the sa, the reflection of the moonlight from the occas,

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‘WeDNespar. 287  
  
‘as if beyond the precincts of our night, where the moon  
traversed cloudless heaven,—and sometimes a dark  
speck in its midst, where some fortunate vessel was pur-  
‘suing its happy voyage by night.  
  
But to us river sailors the sun never rose out of ocean  
‘waves, but from some green coppice, and went down  
behind some dark mountain line. We, too, were but.  
Awellers on the shore, like the bittern of the morning  
and our pursuit, the wrecks of snails and cockles. Ne  
ertheless, we were contented to know the better one fair  
articalar shore,  
  
My lifes ikea srl upon the bench,  
‘As near the conta’ egy as can go,  
  
My tardy stoe ita waves sometimes o'errech,  
Sometimes I siay to let them overtow.  
  
My sole employment ti, and serapaloes car,  
“To place my gaina beyond the reach of tides  
ach smoother pele, and each sell more rare,  
  
Which ooean kindly to my band conde.  
  
have but fow companions on the shor,  
‘They scorn the strand who sil upon the sea,  
‘Yot of think the osenn they "e ailed o'er  
1a deoper known upon th strand to me.  
  
   
  
"The middle sea contains no crimson dalsa,  
Ita deeper waves cast up no pearls to view,  
‘Along ths shore my haod is on its pase,  
“And converse with many a shipwrecked crew.  
  
‘The small houses which were scattered along the  
fiver at intervals of a mile or more were commonly out  
of sight to us, but sometimes, when we rowed near the  
shore, we heard the peevish note of a hen, or some  
slight domestic sound, which betrayed them. ‘The lock-  
‘men's houses were particularly well placed, retired, and  
  
high, always at falls or rapids, and commanding tho  
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258 A wae  
  
   
  
pleasantest reaches of the river,—for it is generally  
‘wider and more lake-like just above a fall, —and there  
they wait for boats. ‘These humble dwellings, homely  
and sincere, in which a hearth was still the essential  
part, were more pleasing to our eyes than palaces or  
castles would have been. In the noon of these days, a8  
‘we have said, we occasionally climbed the banks and  
‘approached these houses, to get glass of water and  
make acquaintance with their inhabitants. High in the  
leafy bank, surrounded commonly by a small patch of  
corn and beans, squashes and melons, with sometimes &  
  
graceful hop-yard on one side, and some running vine  
‘over the windows, they appeared like beehives set to  
gather honey for a summer. I have not read of any  
“Arcadian life which surpasses the actual Iuxury and  
serenity of these New England dwellings. For the out-  
‘ard gilding, at least, the age is golden enough. As  
you approach the sunny doorway, awakening the echoes  
dy your steps, still no sound from these barracks of  
repose, and you fear that the gentlest. knock may seem  
rode to the Oriental dreamers. ‘The door is opened, per-  
chance, by some Yankee-Hindoo woman, whose small-  
‘voiced but sincere hospitality, out of the bottomless  
depths of a quict nature, has travelled quite round to the  
‘opposite side, and fears only to obtrude its kindness.  
‘You step over the white-scoured floor to the bright  
“dresser” lightly, as if afraid to disturb the devotions  
of the housel old, —for Oriental dynasties appear to have  
passed away since the dinner-table was last spread here,  
—and thenes to the frequented curd, where you see  
your long-forgotten, unshaven face at the bottom, in  
Juxtaposition with new-made butter and the trout in  
the well. “Perhaps you would like some molasses and

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‘WeDNesDar. 259  
  
ginger,” suggests the faint noon voice. Sometimes  
there sits the brother who follows the sea, their repre-  
sentative man; who knows only how far it is to the  
nearest port, no more distances, all the rest is sea and  
distant eapes, — patting the dog, or dandling the kitten  
in arms that were stretched by the cable and the oar,  
polling against Boreas or the trade-winds, He looks  
up at the stranger, half pleased, half astonished, with  
‘mariner’s eye, as if he were a dolphin within cast. If  
‘men will believe it, sua si bona nérint, there are no more  
‘quiet Tempes, nor more poetic and Arcadian lives, than  
may be lived in these New England dwellings. We  
‘thought that the employment of their inhabitants by day  
‘would be to tend the flowers and herds, and at night,  
Tike the shepherds of old, to cluster and give names to  
the stars from the river banks.  
  
‘We passed a large and densely wooded island this  
forenoon, between Short’s and Grifith’s Falls the fair-  
est which we had met with, with a handsome grove of  
elms at its head. IP it had been evening we should have  
‘been glad to camp there. Not long after, one or two  
‘more were passed. The boatmen told us that the cur-  
rent had recently made important changes here. An  
island always pleases my imagination, even the smallest,  
‘as a small continent and integral portion of the globe.  
T have a fancy for building my hut on one. Even a  
bare, grassy isle, which I can seo entirely over at a  
glance, has some undefined and mysterious charm for  
me. There is commonly such a one at the junction of  
‘two rivers, whose currents bring down and deposit their  
respective sands in the eddy at their confluence, as it  
were the womb of continent. By what a delicate and  
far-stretched contribution every island is made! What

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960 a WEEE.  
  
‘an enterprise of Nature thus to lay the foundations of  
and to build up the future continent, of golden and silver  
sands and the ruins of forests, with ant-like industry!  
Pindar gives the following account of the origin of  
‘Thera, whence, in after times, Libyan Cyreno was set-  
‘led by Battus. Triton, in the form of Eurypylus, pro-  
‘ents a clod to Euphemus, one of the Argonanta, as they  
‘are about to return home.  
  
“Ho knew of our haste,  
‘And immediately selsing a slod  
  
‘With hin ight hand, strove to give it  
  
‘As a chance stranger's git  
  
[Nor did the hero disregard him, but leptng on the shore,  
Stzeiching hand to hand,  
  
Received the myuticclod.  
  
‘Bot [hear it sinking from the deck,  
  
Go with the so brine  
  
‘At evening, accompanying the watery see.  
  
(Ren indeod 1 urged the careons  
  
‘Mecals to guard it, but thelr minds forgot  
  
‘And now Ia this aland the imperishable seed of spaclons Libya  
is aplled befor ts boar.”  
  
It is a beautiful fable, also related by Pindar, how  
Helius, or the Sun, looked down into the sea one day,—  
  
   
  
‘aprioging up from the bottom,  
‘Capable of feeding many mea, and suitable for Socks;  
  
and at the nod of Zeus,  
  
“The iland wprang from the watery  
ea ; and the genial Father of pooetrating beams,  
Baler of fire-reathiog bore, fst."  
‘The shifting islands! who would not be willing thas  
hhis house should be undermined by such a foe! The

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‘WEDNESDAY. 261  
  
{inhabitant of an island can tell what carrents formed the  
land which he cultivates; and his earth is still being  
created or destroyed. ‘There before his door, perchance,  
still empties the stream which brought down the mate-  
ial of his farm ages before, and is still bringing it down  
or washing it away, —the graceful, gentle robber!  
  
Not long after this we saw the Piscataquoag, or  
Sparkling Water, emptying in on our left, and heard the  
Falls of Amoskeag above. Lange quantities of lumber,  
2 we read in the Gazetteer, were still annually floated  
down the Piscataquoag to the Merrimack, and there are  
‘many fine mill privileges on it, Just above the mouth  
of this river wo passed the artifcial falls where tho  
canals of the Manchester Manufacturing Company die-  
charge themselves into the Merrimack. ‘They are strik-  
ing enough to have a name, and, with the scenery of a  
Bashpish, would be visited from far and near. Tho  
water falls thirty or forty feet over seven or eight steep  
‘and narrow terraces of stone, probably to break its forve,  
and is converted into one mass of foam. This canal-  
water did not seem to be the worse for the wear, but  
foamed and famed as purely, and boonied & savagely  
‘and impressively, as mountain torrent, and, though it  
came from under a factory, we saw a rdinbow here.  
These are now the Amoskeag Falls, removed » mile  
down-stream. But we did not tarry to examine them  
minutely, making haste to get past the village here col-  
lected, and out of hedring of the hammer which was  
Iaying the foundation of another Lowell on the banks.  
‘At the time of our voyage Manchester was a village of  
bout two thousand inhabitants, where we landed for a  
‘moment to get some cool water, and where an inhabitant  
told us that he was accustomed to go across the river

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262 A ween.  
  
{nto Goffstown for his water. Bat now, as T have been  
told, and indeed bave witnessed, it contains fourteen  
thousand inhabitants. From a hill on the road between  
Goffstown and Hooksett, four miles distant, I have seen  
‘8 thunder-thower pass over, and the sun break out and  
shine on a city there, where I had landed nine years  
bofore in the fields; and there was waving the flag of its  
‘Museum, where “ the only perfect skeleton of a Green-  
land or river whale in the United States” was to be  
seen, and I also read in its directory of a “ Manchester  
Athenseum and Gallery of the Fine Arts.”  
  
According to the Gazeticer, the descent of Amoskeag  
Falls, which are the most considerable in the Merrimack,  
fs fifty-four feet in half a mile. We locked ourselves  
through here with much ado, surmounting the successive  
‘watery steps of this river’s staircase in the midst of «  
crowd of villagers, jumping into the canal to their amuse-  
‘ment, to save our boat from upsetting, and consuming  
much river-water in our service. Amoskeag, or Nama  
kkeak, is said to mean “great fishing-place.” It was  
hereabouts that the Sachem Wannalancet resided. ‘Tra-  
Gition says that his tribe, when at war with the Mo-  
hhawks, concealed their provisions in the cavities of the  
rocks in the upper part of these falls. ‘The Indians, who  
hid their provisions in thoso holes, and affirmed “ that  
God had cut them out for that purpose,” understood  
their origin and use better than the Royal Society, who  
in their Transactions, in the Inst century, speaking of  
these very holes, declare that they seem plainly to be  
artificial” Similar “potholes” may be seen at the  
Stone Flume on this river, on the Ottaway, at Bellows’  
Falls on the Connecticut, and in the limestone rock at  
Shelburne Falls on Deerfield River in Massachusetis,  
  
   
  
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‘WEDNESDAT. 268  
  
   
  
‘and more or less generally abont all falls. Perhaps the  
‘most remarkable curiosity of this kind in New England  
is the well-known Basin on the Pemigewasset, one of  
the head-waters of this river, twenty by thirty feet in  
extent and proportionably deep, with a smooth and  
rounded brim, and filled with a cold, pellucid, and green-  
ish water: At Amoskeag the river is divided into many  
separate torrents and trickling ills by the rocks, and its  
‘volume is so much reduced by the drain of the canals,  
that it does not fill its bed. There are many pot-holes  
hhere on a rocky island which the river washes over in  
high freshets. As at Shelburne Falls, where I first ob-  
served them, they are from one foot to four or five in  
diameter, and as many in depth, perfectly round and  
regular, with smooth and gracefully curved brims, like  
goblets. Their origin is apparent to the most careless  
observer. A stone which the current has washed down,  
meeting with obstacles, revolves as on a pivot where it  
Jies, gradually sinking in the course of centuries deeper  
and deeper into the rock, and in new freshets receiving  
the aid of fresh stones, which are drawn into thi  
and doomed to revolve there for an indefini  
doing Sisyphuslike penance for stony sins, until they  
either wear out, or wear through the bottom of their  
prison, or else are released by some revolution of na-  
ture. There lie the stones of various sizes, from a peb-  
Ble to a foot or two in diameter, some of which have  
rested from their Inbor only since the spring, and some  
higher up which have lain still and dry for ages,—we  
noticed some here at least sixteen feet above the present  
level of the water,— while others are still revolving,  
‘and enjoy no respite at any season. In one instance, at  
Shelbume Falls, they have worn quite through the rock,

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tion of the fall. Some of these pot-poles at Amoskeag,  
in s very hard brown-stone, bad an oblong, cylindrical  
stone of the same material loosely fiting them. One, as,  
much as fifteen feet deep and seven or eight in diameter,  
which was worn quite through to the water, had a huge  
rock of the same material, smooth but of irregular form,  
lodged in it. Everywhere there were the rudiments or  
the wrecks of a dimple in the rock; the rocky shells of  
whirlpools. As if by force of example and sympathy  
after so many lessons, the rocks, the hardest material,  
had been endeavoring to whirl or flow into the forms of  
the most fluid. The finest workers in stone are not cop-  
per or steel tools, but the gentle touches of air and water  
‘working at their leisure with a liberal allowance of time.  
Not only have some of these basins been forming for  
countless ages, but others exist which must have been  
completed in a former geological period. In deepening  
the Pawtucket Canal, in 1822, the workmen came to  
Yadgee wth polales In ices, where. probally was Goce |  
(  
  
   
  
264 A WEEK. |  
0 that a portion of the river leaks through in anticipa-  
(  
{  
|  
  
the bed of the river, and there are some, we are told, in  
the town of Canaan in this State, with the stones still ia  
them, on the height of land between the Merrimack and  
Connecticut, and nearly a thousand feet sbove these  
rivers, proving that the mountains and the rivers ha  
  
changed places. There lie the stones which completed  
their revolutions perhaps before thoughts began to re-  
yolve in the brain of man. ‘The periods of Hindoo and  
Chinese history, though they reach back to the time  
‘when the race of mortals is confounded with the race of  
gods, are as nothing compared with the periods which  
these stones have inseribed. ‘That which eommenoed a  
rock when time was young, shall conclude a pebble in

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WEDNESDAY. 265  
  
‘the unequal contest. With such expense of time and  
natural forces are our very paviug-stones produced.  
‘They teach us lessons, these Jumb workers; vevily there  
‘are ‘sermons in stones, and books in the running  
streams.” In these very holes the Indians hid their  
provisions; but now there is no bread, but only its old  
neighbor stones at the bottom, Who knows how many  
‘races they have served thus? By as simple a lav, some  
accidental by-law, perchanee, our system itself was made  
ready for its inhabitants.  
  
These, and such as these, must be our antiquities, for  
Jack of human vestiges. The monuments of heroes and  
‘the temples of tho gods which may once have stood on  
‘the banks of this river are now, at any rate, returned to  
Gust and primitive coil. The murmur of unchronicled  
nations has died away along these shores, and once  
more Lowell and Manchester are on the trail of the  
India  
  
‘The fact that Romans once inhabited her reflects no  
little dignity on Nature herself that from some particu  
lr hill the Roman once looked out on the sea. She  
need not be ashamed of the vestiges of her children,  
‘ow gladly the antiquary informs us that their vessels  
penetrated into this frith, or up that river of some re-  
mote isle! Their military monuments still remain on  
the hills and under the sod of the valleys. The oft-  
repeated Roman story is written in still legible charac-  
ters in every quarter of the Old World, and bat to-day,  
perchance, a new coin is dug up whose inscription re-  
eats and confirms their fame. Some “Judea Capta,”  
‘with a woman mourning under a palm-tree, with silent  
argument and demonstration confirms the pages of his-  
tory.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
8

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266 A WEEE.  
  
“Rome living was the word's sole orpament;  
‘And dead fs now the world's sole moosimeat.  
  
th her own weight down pressed now she lag  
‘And by her heape ber hogesea testes." \  
  
If one doubts whether Grecian valor and psiriotism |  
fre not a fiction of the poets, he may go to Athens and  
see till upon the walls of the temple of Minerva the cir-  
cular marks made by the shields taken from the enemy |  
in the Persian war, which were suspended there. We  
hhave not far to seek for living and unquestionable evi-  
dence. ‘The very dust takes shape and confirms some  
story which we had read. As Fuller said, commenting  
fon the zeal of Camden, “A broken um is a whole evi-  
dence; or an old gate still surviving out of which the  
city is run out” When Solon endeavored to prove that  
Salamis had formerly belonged to the Athenians, and  
not to the Megareans, he caused the tombs to be opened,  
tnd showed that the inhabitants of Salamis turned the  
faces of their dead to the same side with the Athenians,  
  
‘but the Megareans to the opposite side. ‘There they  
were to be interrogated.  
  
‘Some minds are as little logical or argumentative as  
nature; they can offer no reason or “ guess,” but they  
exhibit the solemn and incontrovertible fact. If a his-  
torical question arises, they cause the tombs to be  
opened. ‘Their silent and practical logic convinces the  
reason and the understanding at the same time. Of — ,  
such sort is always the only pertinent question snd the  
only satisfactory reply.  
  
Our own country furnishes antiquities as ancient and  
durable, and as useful, as any; rocks at least as well  
covered with lichens, and a soil which if it is virgin, is  
but virgin mould, the very dust of nature. What if we

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‘WEDKESDAT. 267  
  
‘cannot read Rome, or Greece, Etruria, or Carthage, or  
Egypt, or Babylon, on these; are our cliffs bare? The  
Tichen on the rocks is a rude and simple shield which  
‘beginning and imperfect Nature suspended there.  
hangs her wrinkled trophy. And here too the poet’s  
eye may still detect the brazen nails which fastened  
‘Time's inscriptions, and if he has the gift, decipher them  
by this clew. ‘The walls that fence our fields, a2 well as  
modern Rome, and not less the Parthenon itself, are all  
built of ruin, Here may be heard the din of rivers,  
and anclent winds which have long since lost their  
ames sough through our woods; — the first faint sounds  
of spring, older than the summer of Athenian glory, the  
titmouse lisping in the wood, the jay’s scream, and blue~  
bird's warble, and the hum of  
  
   
  
   
  
been that dy.  
-Aboat the Inughing biotoms of sallow.”  
  
‘Here is the gray dawn for antiquity, and our to-mor-  
row's futare should be at least paulo-post to theirs which  
wwe have put behind us. ‘There are the red-maple and  
birchen leaves, old runes which are not yet deciphered 5  
catkins, pine-cones, vines, oak-leaves, and acorns; the  
very things themselves, and not their forms in stone, —  
80 much the more ancient and venerable. And even to  
the eurrent summer there has come down tradition of a  
hhoary-headed master of all art, who once filled every  
field and grove with statues and god-like architecture,  
of every design which Greece has lately copied ; whose  
ruins are now mingled with the dust, and not one block  
remains upon another. ‘The century sun and anwearied  
rain have wasted them, till not one fragment from that  
‘quarry now exists; and poets perchance will feign that  
‘gods sent down the material from heaven,

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368 A wEEx.  
  
‘What thoogh the traveller tell us of the ruins of  
Egypt, are we so sick or idle, that we must sacrifice our  
‘America and to-day to some man’s ill-remembered and  
indolent story? Carnac and Luxor are but names, or if  
‘their skeletons remain, still more desert sand, and at  
length a wave of the Mediterranean Sea are needed to  
‘wath away the filth that attaches to their grandeur.  
Carnac! Carnac! here is Carnac for me. I behold the  
columns of a larger and purer temple.  
  
‘Tale u my Carma, whose unmeasured dome  
‘Shelters the metanring art and messnrer's home,  
Behold thee lowers, lt us be up with ine,  
  
Not dreaming of thee thousand years ago,  
[Erect ourselves snd let thoes cofomos li,  
  
ot stoop to raise a fll agalast the sky.  
  
‘Where isthe aprt ofthat time bat fa  
  
‘Tha preset day, perchance the present line?  
‘Three thousand years ago are not agooe,  
  
‘They are sil Hngoring In this summer mora,  
‘And Memoon's Mother sprightly groota us nom,  
‘Wearing her youthfal radiance on ber brow.  
  
1 Carnac’s colon ail stand on the pain,  
  
‘To enjoy our opportunities they romain.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
In these parts dwelt the famous Sachem Pasacona-  
way, who was seen by Gookin “at Pawtucket, when he  
‘was about one bundred and twenty years ol.” He was  
reputed a wise man and @ powwow, and restrained his  
people from going to war with the English. ‘They be-  
Tieved “ that he could make water burn, rocks move, and  
trees dance, and metamorphose himself into a flaming  
‘man; that in winter he could raise a green leaf out of  
the ashes of a dry one, and produce a living snake from  
the skin of a dead one, and many similar miracles.” In  
1660, according to Gookin, at a great feast and dance,  
hhe made his farewell speech to his people, in which he

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WEDNESDAY. 269  
  
‘aid, that as he was not likely to see them met together  
again, he would leave them this word of advice, to take  
heed how they quarrelled with their English neighbors,  
for though they might do them much mischief at fit, it  
‘would prove the means of their own destruction. He  
himself, he said, had been os much an enemy to the  
English at thieir fret coming as any, and had used all  
his arts to destroy them, or at least to prevent their  
settlement, but could by no means effect it, Gookin  
thought that he “possibly might have such a: kind of  
it upon him as was upon Balam, who in xxi  
‘Numbers, 23, said ‘Surely, there is no enchantment  
‘against Jacob, neither is there any divination against  
Israel” His son Wannalancet carefully followed his  
‘advice, and when Philip's War broke oat, he withdrew  
his followers to Penacook, now Concord in New Hamp-  
shire, from the scene of the war. On his return after-  
‘wards, be visited the minister of Chelmsford, and, as is  
stated in the history of that town, “wished to know  
‘whether Chelmsford had suffered much during the war 5  
and being informed that it had not, and that God should  
bbe thanked for it, Wannalancet replied, ‘ Mo next.”  
Manchester was the residence of Jobn Stark, @ hero  
of two wars, and survivor of a third, and at his death  
the last but one of the American generals of the Revo-  
lution. He was born in the adjoining town of London-  
derry, then Nutfield, in 1728. As early as 1752, he  
‘was taken prisoner by the Indians while hunting in the  
wilderness near Baker's River; he performed notable  
tervice as a captain of rangers in the French war; com-  
manded a regiment of the New Hampshire militia at the  
battle of Bunker Hill; and fought and won the baitle of  
Bennington in 1777. He was past service in the last

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270 awe.  
  
‘war, aod died here in 1892, at the age of 94. His mon-  
‘ument stands upon the seoood bank of the river, about  
mile and half above the falls, and commands « pros-  
pect severs! miles up and down the Merrimack. It sug-  
‘gested bow moch more impressive in the landscape is  
the tomb of a hero than the dwellings of the inglorious  
living. ‘Who is most desd,—a hero by whove monu-  
‘ment you stasd, or his descendants of whom you have  
never heard?  
  
‘The graves of Passconaway and Wannalancet are  
marked by no monument on the bank of their native  
iver.  
  
‘Brery town which we passed, if we may believe the  
Gazotioer, had been the residence of some great man.  
Bat though we knocked at many doors, and even made  
artioular inquiries, we could not find that there were  
any now living. Under the heed of Litchfield we  
read: —  
  
“The Hon. Wyseman Clagett closed his life in this town.”  
According to another, “ He was a clamical echolar, a good,  
lawyer, a wit, and a poot.” We saw his old gray howe just  
‘below Groat Nesenkoug Brook. — Under the head of Merri-  
mack: “Hon. Mathew Thornton, one of the signers of the  
Declaration of American Independence, resided many years  
in this town.” His hougo too we saw from the river. —" Dr.  
Jonathan Gove, a man distinguished for his urbanity, his tal-  
ents and professional ekill, resided in this town [Goffstown].  
‘Ho was one of the oldest practitioners of medicine in the  
He was many years an active member of the legis-  
lature.” —“'Hon. Robert Means, who died Jan. 24, 1828, at  
the age of 80, was for a long period a resident in Amberst  
‘Ho was a native of Ireland. In 1764 be came to this coun-  
try, where, by his industry and application to busines, be  
aquired » largo property, and great respect” —« William

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‘WEDNESDAY. 271  
  
Btinson [one of the first settlers of Dunbarton], born io Tre-  
land, came to Londonderry with his father. He was much  
respected and was a useful man. James Rogers was from  
Ireland, and father to Major Robert Rogers. He was shot  
in the woods, being mistaken for a bear.” — “Rev. Matthew  
‘Clark, socond minister of Londonderry, was a native of Ire-  
land, who had in early fe been an officer inthe army, and  
Alistinguished himself in the defence of the city of London-  
erry, when besieged by the army of King James 1A. D.  
1688-9, He afterwards relinquished a military life for the  
Clerical profession. He possessed a strong mind, marked by  
8 considerable degree of eccentricity. He died Jan. 25,  
1735, and was borne to the grave, at his particular request, by  
his former companions in arms, of whom there were a consid  
erable number among the early setlers of thi town. soveral  
‘of them had beea made free from taxes throughout the Brit-  
ith dominions by King William, for their bravery in that  
‘memorable siege.” —Col. George Reid and Capt. David  
‘MClary, aloo citizens of Londonderry, were \* distinguished  
‘and bravo” officers. —““Major Andrew M'Clary, a native  
of this town (Epsom), fell at the battle of Breeds Hill” —  
‘Many of these heroos like the iustrions Roman, were plough~  
ing when the news of the massacre at Lexington arvived, and  
straightway left their ploughs in the furrow, and repaired to  
the scene of action. Some miles from where we now were,  
there once stood guide-post on which ware the words, “3  
niles to Squire MacGawis.”  
  
   
  
   
  
But generally speaking, the land is now, at any rate,  
very barren of men, and we doubt if there are as many  
hundreds as we read of, Tt may be that we stood too  
  
‘Uneannunue Mountain in Goffstown was visible from  
Amoskeag, five or six miles westward. It is the north  
easternmost in the horizon, which we see from our na-  
tive town, but seen from there is too ethereally Llue to

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272 a were.  
  
be the same which the like of us have ever climbed.  
ts name is said to mean “The Two Breasts,” there be-  
ing two eminences some distance apart. The highest,  
which is sbout fourteen hundred feet above the sea,  
probably affords a more extensive view of the Merri-  
mack valley and the adjacent country than any other  
Lill, though it ia somewhat obstructed by woods. Only  
1 few short reaches of the river are visible, but you can  
trace its course far down stream by the sandy tracts on  
ite banks.  
  
‘A ttle south of Uncannunue, about sixty years ago,  
1 the story goes, an old woman who went out to gather  
pennyroyal, tript her foot in the bail of a emall brass  
Kettle in the dead grass and bushes. Some say that  
‘ints and charcoal and some traces of a camp were also  
found. This kettle, holding about four quarts, is still  
preserved and used to dye thread in. It is supposed to  
hhave belonged to some old French or Indian hunter, who  
‘was killed in one of his hunting or scouting excursions,  
‘and #0 never returned to look after his kettle.  
  
But we were most interested to bear of the penny-  
royal, itis soothing to be reminded that wild nature pro-  
duces anything ready for the use of man. Men know  
that something is good. Ono says that it is yellow-dock,  
another that itis bittersweet, another that itis slippery-  
elm bark, burdock, catnip, ealamint, elicampane, thor-  
foughwort, or pennyroyal. A man may esteem himself  
happy when that which is his food is also his medicine.  
‘There is no kind of herb, but somebody or other says  
that itis good. Tam very glad to hear it. It reminds  
ime of the first chapter of Genesis. But how should they  
Know that it is good? That is the mystery to me. I  
am always agreeably disappointed it is incredible that

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WEDNESDAY. 278  
  
they should have found it out. Since all things are  
‘good, men fail at last to distinguish which is the bane,  
‘and which the antidote. ‘There are sure to be two pre-  
scriptions diametrically opposite. Stuff a cold and starve  
f cold are but two ways. They are the two practices  
both always in full blast. Yet you must take advice of  
the one school as if there was no other. In respect to  
religion and the healing art, all nations are st  
state of barbarism. In the most civilized countries the  
priest is sil but a Powwow, and the physician a Great  
‘Medicine. Consider the deference which is everywhere  
Paid to a doctor’s opinion. Nothing more strikingly be-  
‘rays the credulity of mankind than medicine. Quack-  
ery is a thing universal, and universally successful. In  
this case it becomes literally true that no imposition is  
too great for the credulity of men. Priesta and” physi-  
ans should never look one another in the face. They  
hhave no common ground, nor is there any to mediate  
between them. When the one comes, the other goes.  
‘They could not come together without laughter, or a sige  
nificant silence, for the one’s profession is satire on tho  
other’, and either's success would be the other's failure.  
Isis wonderful that the physician should ever die, and  
‘that the priest should ever live. Why is it that the priest  
is never called to consult with the physician? Is it be-  
‘cause men believe practically that matter is independent  
of spirit, But what is quackery? It is commonly an  
‘attempt to cure the diseases of a man by addressing his  
body alone. There is need of a physician who shall  
tminister to both soul and body at once, that is, to man,  
Now he falls between two souls.  
  
‘After passing through the locks, we had poled our  
selves through the canal here, about half a mile in length,  
  
iat 2

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274 A WEEK.  
  
to the boatable part of the river. Above Amoskeag the  
‘river spreads out into a lake reachiog # mile or two with-  
‘out a bend. ‘There were many canal-boata here bound  
up to Hooksett, about eight miles, and as they were going  
up empty. with a fair wind, one boatman offered to take  
us in tow if wo would wait. But. when we came along-  
side, we found that they meant, to take us on board, since  
otherwise we should clog their motians too much; but  
fs our boat was too heavy to be lifted aboard, we pur-  
sued our way up. the stream, as before, while the boat-  
‘men were at their. dinner, and came to anchor at length  
‘under some alders on the opposite shore, where we could  
take our lunch. Though far on one side, every sound was  
wafted over to us from the opposite bank, and from the  
harbor of the canal, and we could see everything that  
passed. By and by came several canal-boats, at inter-  
vals of a quarter of a mile, standing up to Hooksett with  
‘a light breeze, and one by one disappeared round a point  
above. With their broad sails set, they moved slowly  
‘up the stream in the sluggish and fitfel breeze, like one~  
winged antedilavian birds, and as if impelled by spme  
‘mysterious counter-current. It was a grand motion, 80  
slow and stately, this “standing out,” as the phrase is,  
expressing the gradual and steady progress of a vessel, as  
if it were by mere rectitude and disposition, without shuf-  
‘fing. ‘Their sails, which stood 0 still, were like. chips  
cast into the current of the air to show which way i  
  
‘At length the boat which we bad spoken came along,  
keeping the middle of the stream, and when within  
speaking distance the steersman called out ironically to  
say, that if we would come alongside now he would tgke  
us in tow; but not heeding his taunt, we still loitered  
in the shade till we had finished our lunch, and when

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‘WEDNRSDAY. 275  
  
the last boot had disappeared round the point with fap-  
ping sail, for the breeze had now sunk to a zephyr, with  
our own sails set, and plying our oars, we shot rapidly  
up the stream in pursuit, and as we glided close along-  
side, while they were vainly invoking Holus to their  
aid, we returned their compliment by proposing, if they  
‘would throw us a rope, to “take them in tow,” to which  
these Merrimack sailors had no suitable answer ready.  
‘Thus we gradually overtook and passed each boat in  
succession ‘until we had the river to ourselves again.  
  
Our course this afternoon was between Manchester  
and Goffstown,  
  
   
  
‘While we float here, far from that tributary stream  
‘on whose banks our Friends and kindred dwell, our  
thoughts, like the stars, come out of their horizon still  
for there circulates a finer blood than Lavoisier has dis-  
covered the laws of, — the blood, not of kindred merely,,  
bat of kindness, whose palse still beats at any distance  
‘and forever.  
  
‘Troe Riodoen tea pare divine aay,  
  
ot founded upon aman consangusity.  
  
is pit nota blood relation,  
  
Superior to family and tation.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘After years of vain familiarity, some distant gesture or  
‘unconscious bebavior, which we remember, apeaks 10 us  
with more emphasis than the wisest or kindest words.  
‘We aro sometimes made aware of a kindness long  
passed, and realize that there have been times when our  
Friends’ thoughts of us were of so pure and lofty a  
character that they passed over us like the winds of  
heaven unnoticed; when they treated us not as what

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276 A WEEK.  
  
wwe were, but as what we aspired to be. There has just  
reached us, it may be, the nobleness of some such silent  
behavior, not to be forgotten, not to be remembered,  
and we shudder to think how it fell on ué cold, though  
in some true bat tardy hour wo endeavor to wipe off  
these scores.  
  
In my experience, persons, when they are made the  
subject of conversation, though with a Friend, are come  
monly the most prosaic and trivial of facts. ‘The uni-  
verse scems bankrupt as soon as we begin to discuss  
the character of individuals. Our discourse all runs to  
slander, and our limits grow aarrower as we advance.  
How i it that wo are impelled to treat our old Friends  
0 ill when we obtain new ones? ‘The housekeeper  
says, I never had any new crockery in my life but I  
began to break the old. I say, let us speak of rmush-  
rooms and forest trees rather." Yet we can sometimes  
afford to remember them in private,  
  
Lately, alan, new a gent boy,  
  
‘Whoee features all were cat a Virtue'e mou,  
‘As one she bed designed for Beauty's toy,  
  
‘But after manned him for her owa stronghold.  
  
   
  
   
  
(On every side e open was s day,  
  
‘That you might see no lack of strength within,  
For walla and port do only serve alway  
  
"Fora pretence to feeblenoa and aa.  
  
Sey not that Coser was viotorions,  
"With toll and arte who stormed the House of Fame,  
1a other senso this youth was glorious,  
“Himself a kingdom wheresc'er he came.  
  
No strength went out to gt him vitory,  
"Whos all was income of ts owa ncoord  
  
For where he went none other was to 20%  
Bat all were parcel of ther noble lord.

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‘WEDNESDAY. 277  
  
“Ho forayed tka tho sable hazo of summer,  
‘That silly show frosh landscapes to our eyes,  
And revolutions works without « mare,  
‘Or rusting of «leaf beneath the skies.  
  
‘So was I taken uoawares by this,  
alte forgot my homage to confess  
  
‘Yet bow am forced to know, though hard its,  
Tamight have loved hien had I Joved hn loss.  
  
Each moment as we nearer drew to each,  
‘A sara reapect withheld ua farther yo  
  
So that we seemed beyond each other's reach,  
‘Aod les acquaintd than whan frst we met.  
  
“We two were one while we did aympathien,  
So could we not the simplest bargain ives  
  
‘And what availa it now that we aro wise,  
‘absence doth this doubleness contrive?  
  
   
  
teraity may not the chance repeat,  
‘Bat Tust tread my alagle way alone,  
  
Tn tad remembrance that we once did meet,  
‘And know that bliss irevocably gooe.  
  
‘The spheres heoceorth my elegy shall sing,  
or elogy has other subject nooo  
  
‘Bach strain of muaio in my eae shall ring  
‘Knell of departare from that other one.  
  
‘Make haste and celebrate oy tragedy;  
‘With Siting strain resound ye woods and lds;  
Sorrow is dearer in such cae to me  
"Than al the joys other oeasion yields.  
  
   
  
   
  
n't then to Into the damage to repair?  
Distance, frsoth, from my weak grasp hath ref  
  
‘The empty honk, apd clutched the useless tare,  
‘Bat in my hands the wheat and keroel et  
  
{ETbut love that virtue whieh be ie,  
‘Thongh it be sceated in the morning air,  
Sui ehall wo be truest acquaintances  
‘Nor mortals Know a sympathy more rare

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278 a ween.  
  
Friendship is evanescent in every man's experience,  
‘and remembored like heat lightning in past summers. +  
‘Fair and fitting like a summer cloud ;— there is always  
‘some vapor in the air, no matter how long the drought;  
there are even April showers. Surely from time to  
time, for its vestiges never depart, it floats through our  
‘atmosphere. It takes place, like vegetation in #0 many  
raterials, because there is such a law, but always with-  
‘out permanent form, though ancient and familiar as the  
ssun and moon, and as sure to come again. ‘The heart  
is forever inexperienced. They silently gather as by  
‘magic, theso never failing, never quite deceiving visions,  
like the bright and fleecy clonds in the calmest and  
clearest days. ‘The Friend is some fair floating isle of  
palms eluding the mariner in Pacific seas. Many are  
the dangers to be encountered, equinoctial gales and  
coral reefs, ere he may sail before the constant trades.  
But who would not sail through matiny and storm, even  
over Atlantic waves, to reach the fabulous retreating  
shores of some continent man? ‘The. imagination still  
clings to the faintest tradition of  
  
   
  
‘THE ATLANTIDES.  
  
   
  
‘The smothered streams of love, which Sow  
‘More bright than Pblogethoo, more low,  
  
Talend us over like the sea,  
  
In an Atlantic myrtery.  
  
(Or fabled shores none ever reach,  
  
‘No mariaer has found oar beach, .  
‘Bearcly our mirage now Is seen,  
  
‘And neighboring waves with Boating gree,  
  
Yet stil the oldeet chars contain  
  
‘Some doted otline of our main;  
  
in encoot times midsummer daye  
  
Unto the weatern islands’ gue,

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‘WEDNESDAY. 279  
  
‘To.Teneride and the Azores,  
“Have shown ont fit and cloudke shores.  
  
Bat sink not yo yo dosoato ines,  
‘Anon your eget with commerce smiles,  
‘And richer freighte el farnsh far  
‘Than Afvicn or Malabar.  
  
Be fair, be fertile evermore,  
  
‘Yo rumored but untrodden shore,  
PPrinoes and mooarche wil eoatand  
‘Who frat unto your land shal send,  
And pawn the jewels ofthe crown  
  
‘To cal your datant soil thelr own.  
  
Columbus has sailed westward of these isles by the  
mariner’s compass, but neither he nor his successors  
have found them. We are no nearer than Plato was.  
‘The earnest secker and hopeful discoverer of this New  
‘World always haunts the outskirts of his time, and walks  
‘through the densest crowd uninterrupted, and as it were  
in a straight line,  
  
   
  
Sea and land are bat hs neighbor,  
‘And companions in hs labors  
‘Who on the ocean's verge and frm land's end  
‘Dt Jong and truly seek hia Friend.  
Many men dell fa nland,  
Bathe alone ats on the strand.  
‘Whother he ponders men or books,  
Aways ail be seaward looks,  
Marine noma he over reeds,  
‘And the lightest glances boeda,  
ea breezo on his ohetk,  
‘word the landsmen speak,  
Ta every companion's eye  
‘A mailing vouel doth deserys  
nthe ocean's sllen roar  
From some distant pot he hears,  
‘Of wrecks upon a distant shoe,  
‘And the voutares of past youre

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280 A wees.  
  
‘Who does not walk on the plain as amid the columns — {  
‘of Tedmore of the desert? ‘There is on the earth no  
institution which Friendship has established; it is not  
taught by any religion; no scripture contains its maxims.  
  
Te has no temple, nor even a solitary column. There |  
{goes a rumor that the earth is inhabited, but the ship-  
wrecked mariner bas not seen footprint on the shore.  
  
‘The hunter has found only fragments of pottery and the  
‘monuments of inhabitants.  
  
However, our fates at least are social. Our courses  
do not diverge; but as the web of destiny is woven it is  
falled, and we are cast more and more into the centre.  
‘Men naturally, though feebly, seck this alliance, and  
their actions faintly foretell it. Wo are inclined to lay  
the chief stress on likeness and not on difference, and in  
foreign bodies we admit that there are many degrees of  
‘warmth below blood heat, but none of cold above it.  
  
‘Mencius says: “If one loses a fowl or @ dog, be  
Knows well how to seck them again; if one loses the  
sentiments of his heart, he does not know how to seek j  
them again. .... The duties of practical philosophy  
consist only in seeking after those sentiments of the heart \*  
which we have lost; that is all”  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
One or two persons come to my house from time to  
time, there being proposed to them the faint possibility  
of intercourse. ‘They are as full as they are silent, and  
wait for my plectrum to stir the strings of their lyre.  
If they could ever come to the length of @ sentence, or  
‘hear one, on that ground they are dreaming of! ‘They  
speak faintly, and do not obtrude themselves. They  
Ihave heard some news, which none, not even they them-  
selves, can impart. Tt is a wealth they can bear about

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WEDNESDAY. 281  
  
them which can be expended in various ways. What  
came they out to seek?  
  
No word is ofiener on the lips of men than Friend-  
ship, and indeed no thought is more familiar to their  
‘All men are dreaming of it, and its drama,  
ways a tragedy, is enacted daily. It is the  
secret of the universe. You may thread the town, you  
may wander the country, and none shall ever speak of  
it, yet thought is everywhere busy about it, and the  
idea of what is possible in this respect affects our be-  
havior toward all new men and women, and a great,  
many old ones. Nevertheless, I can remember only  
two or three essays on this subject in all literature. No  
wonder that the Mythology, and Arabian Nights, and  
Shakespeare, and Scott’s novels entertain us,—we are  
poets and fablers and dramatists and novelists ourselves.  
‘We are continually acting a part in a more interesting  
Grama than any written. We are dreaming that our  
‘Friends are our Friends, and that we are our Friends’  
Friends. Our actual Friends are but distant relations  
of those to whom we are pledged. We never exchange  
more then three words with a Friend in our lives on  
that level to which our thoughts and feelings almost  
Ihabitualy rise. One goes forth prepared to say, “ Sweet  
Friends!” and the salutation is “Damn your eyes!”  
But never mind; faint heart never won true Friend.  
O my Friend, may it come to pass once, that when you  
are my Friend I may be yours.  
  
‘OF what use the friendliest. dispositions even, if there  
fare no hours given to Friendshi is forever poste  
poned to unimportant duties and relations? Friendship  
is first, Friendship last. But it is equally impossible to  
forget our Friends, and to make them answer to our

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282 A ween,  
  
‘ideal. When they say farewell, then indeod we begin  
to keep them company. How often we find ourselves  
turning our backs on our actaal Friends, that we may go  
and meet their ideal cousins. I would that I wore wor-  
thy to be any man's Friend.  
  
‘What is commonly honored with the name of Friend-  
ship is no very profound or powerful instinct. Men do  
not, after all, Jove their Friends greatly. Ido not often  
see the farmers made seers and wise to the verge of i  
sanity by their Friendship for one another. They are  
not often transfigored and translated by love in each  
other's presence. I do not observe them purified, re-  
fined, and elevated by the love of a man. If one abates  
alittle the price of his wood, or gives a neighbor his  
vote at town-meeting, or a barrel of apples, or lends im  
his wagon frequently, it is esteemed a rare instance of  
Friendahip. Nor do the farmers! wives lead lives con-  
secrated to Friendship. I do not see the pair of farmer  
Friends of either sex prepared to stand against the  
world. There are only two or three couples in history.  
To say that a man is your Friend, means commonly no  
‘more than this, that he is not your enemy. Most con-  
‘template only what would be the accidental and trifling  
advantages of Friendship, as that the Friend ean assist  
in time of need, by his substance, or his influence, or  
hhis counsel ; but he who foresees such advantages in th  
relation proves himself blind to its real advantage, or i  
deed wholly inexperienced in the relation itself. Such  
services are particular and menial, compared with the  
perpetaal and all-embracing service which itis. Even  
the utmost good-will and harmony and practical kindness  
are not sufficient for Friendship, for Friends do not live  
in harmony merely, as some say, but in melody. We

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‘WEDNESDAY. 288  
  
do not wish for Friends to feed and clothe our bodies, —  
aeighbors are kind enough for that,— but to do the like  
‘office to our spirits. For this few are rich enough, how-  
fever well disposed they may be. For the most part we  
stupidly confound one man with another. ‘The dull dis-  
tinguish only races or nations, or at most classes, but the  
‘wise man, individuals. ‘To his Friend a man’s peculiar  
character appears in every feature and in every action,  
‘and itis thus drawn out and improved by him.  
  
‘Think of the importance of Friendship in the educa-  
tion of men.  
  
“Bo that bath love and judgment too,  
Sous, more than any other do  
  
It will make a man honest it will make him a hero;  
it will make him a.saint, It is the state of the just deal-  
ing with the just, the magnanimous with the maguani-  
‘mous, the sincere with the sincere, man with man.  
  
‘And it is well said by another post,  
  
“Why love amoog the virtue isnot know,  
1s that love is them all contract in one”  
  
All the abuses which are the object of reform with the  
philanthropist, the statestnan, and the housekeeper are  
‘unconsciously amended in the intercourse of Friends.  
A Friend is one who incessantly pays ue the compli-  
‘ment of expecting from us all the virtues, and who can  
‘appreciate them in us. It takes two to speak the truth,  
—one to speak, and another to hear. How can one  
treat with magnanimity mere wood and stone? If we  
dealt only with the false and dishonest, we should at Inst  
forget how to npeak truth. Only lovers know the value  
‘and magnanimity of truth, while traders prize @ cheap  
honesty, and neighbors and acquaintance a cheap civility.

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284 A were,  
  
Jn our daily intercourse with men, our nobler faculties  
are dormant and suffered to rust. None will pay us the  
compliment to expect nobleness from us ‘Though we  
have gold to give, they demand only copper. We ask  
our neighbor to suffer himself to be dealt with traly, sin-  
cerely, nobly ; but he answers no by his deafness. Ho  
does not even hear this prayer. He says practically,  
Iwill be content if you treat me as “no better than I  
should be,” as deceitful, mean, dishonest, and selfish.  
For the most part, we are contented 20 to deal and to be  
ealt with, and we do not think that for the mass of men  
there is any truer and nobler relation possible, A man  
may have good neighbors, 60 called, and acquaintances,  
and even companions, wife, parents, brothers, sisters,  
children, who meet himself and one another on this  
  
   
  
ground only. The State does not demand justice of its ~  
  
‘members, but thinks that it succeeds very well with the  
Teast degree of it, hardly more than rogues practise ; and  
120 do tho neighborhood and the family. What is com-  
monly called Friendship even is only a little more  
hhonor among rogues.  
  
But sometimes we are said to love another, that is, to  
stand in a true relation to him, so that we give the best  
to, and receive the best from, him. Between whom  
there is hearty truth, there is love; and in proportion to  
‘our truthfulness and confidence in one another, our lives  
fare divine and miraculous, and answer to our ideal.  
‘There are passages of affection in our intercourse with  
‘mortal men and women, euch as no prophecy had taught  
us to expect, which transcend our earthly life, and anti=  
cipate Heaven for us. What is thie Love that may come  
right into the middle of a prosaic Goffstown day, equal  
to any of the gods? that discovers a new world fair and

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‘WEDNESDAY. 285  
  
fresh and eternal, occupying the place of the old one,  
when to the common eye a dast has settled on the uni-  
verse? which world cannot else be reached, and does  
not exist. What other words, we may almost ask, are  
‘memorable and worthy to be repested than those which  
Jove has inspired? It ia wonderful that they were ever  
uttered. They are few and rare, indeed, but, like a  
strain of musi, they are incessantly repeated and modu-  
lated by the memory. All other words crumble off with  
the stucco which overlies the heart. We should not  
‘daro to repeat these now aloud. We are not competent  
to hear them at all times.  
  
‘The books for young people sy a great deal about,  
the selection of Friends ; it is because they really have  
nothing to say about Friends. ‘They mean associates and  
confidants merely. “Know that the contrariety of foe  
and Friend proceeds from God.” Friendship takes  
place between those who have an affinity for one anoth-  
er, and is a perfectly natoral and inevitable result. No  
professions nor advances will avail. Even speech, at  
first, necessarily has nothing to do with it; but it follows  
after silence, as the buds in the graft do not put forth into  
leaves till long after the graft has taken. It is a drama  
in which the parties have no part to act. We are all  
‘Musoulmen and fatalists in this respect. Impatient and  
uncertain lovers think that they must say or do some-  
thing kind whenever they meet; they must never be  
cold. But they who are Friends do not do what they  
think they must, but what they must. Even their Friend~  
ship is to some extent but @ sublime phenomenon to  
them.  
  
‘The true and not despairing Friend will address hia  
‘Friend in some such terms as thes

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286 A weer.  
  
“T never asked thy leave to let me love thee, —I  
hhave a right, I love thee not as something private and  
personal, which is your on, but as something universal  
and worthy of love, which Ihave found. O, how I thik  
of you! You are purely good, — you are infinitely good.  
can trust you forever. I did not think that humanity  
‘was so rich, Give me an opportunity to live.”  
  
“You are the fact in a fiction,— you are the truth  
more strange and admirable than fiction. Consent only to  
be what you are. I alone will never stand in your way.”  
  
“Thisis what I would like,—to be as intimate with  
you as our spirits are intimate, — respecting you as I  
respect my ideal. Never to profane one another by  
‘word or action, evea by a thought. Between us, if ne-  
cessary, let there be no acquaintance.”  
  
“I have discovered you; how can you be concealed  
from me?”  
  
   
  
   
  
‘Tho Friend asks no return but that his Friend will  
religiously accept and wear and not disgrace his apothe-  
‘sis of him. They cherish each other's hopes. ‘They  
are kind to each other's dreams.  
  
‘Though the poet says, “Tis the preeminence of  
Friendship to impute excellence,” yet we can never  
praise our Friend, nor esteem him praiseworthy, nor let  
hhim think that he ean please us by any behavior, or ever  
treat us well enough. That kindness which as so good  
‘a reputation elsewhere can least of alll consist with this  
relation, and no such affront ean be offered to a Friend,  
‘as @ conscious good-will, a friendliness which is not a  
necessity of the Friend's nature.  
  
‘The sexes aro naturally most strongly attracted to one  
nother, by constant constitutional differences, and are

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‘Wepxespar. 287  
  
most commonly and surely the complements of each  
other. How natural and easy it is for man to secure the  
attention of woman to what interests himself. Men and  
‘women of equal culture, thrown together, are sure to be  
‘fa certain value to one another, more than men to men.  
There exists already a natural disinterestedness and  
berality in such society, and I think that any man will  
more confidently earry his favorite books to read to some  
circle of intelligent women, than to one of his own sex.  
‘The visit of man to man is wont to be an interruption,  
‘but the sexes naturally expect one another. Yet Friend-  
ship is no respecter of sex; and perhaps it is more rare  
Detween the sexes than between two of the same sex.  
  
Friendship is, at any rate, a relation of perfect equal-  
ity. Tt cannot well spare any outward sign of equal  
obligation and advantage. ‘Tho nobleman can never  
have a Friend among his retainers, nor the king among  
his subjects. Not that the parties to it are in all re-  
spects equal, but they are equal in all that respects or  
affects their Friendship. The one’s love is exactly  
balanced and represented by the other’s. Persons are  
only the vessels which contain the nectar, and tho  
hydrostatic paradox is the symbol of love's law. Tt  
finds its level and rises to its fountain-head in all breasts,  
and its slenderest column balances the ocean.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
“And love as well the shepherd can  
‘As an the mighty nobleman.”  
  
‘The one sex is not, in this respect, more tender than the  
other. A hero's love is as delicate es a maiden  
  
Confucius said, “ Never contract Friendship with a  
‘man who is not bettor than thyself” Tt is the merit  
‘and preservation of Friendship, that it takes place on a

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288 A ween.  
  
evel higher than the actual characters of the parties  
would seem to warrant, The rays of light come to us  
fn such a curve that every man whom we meet appears  
to be taller than he actaally is. Such foundation has  
civility. My Friend is that one whom I can associate  
with my choicest thought I always assign to him a  
nobler employment in my absence than I ever find  
hhim engeged in; and I imagine that the hours which he  
devotes to mo were snatched from a higher society.  
‘The sorest insult which I ever received from » Friend  
‘was, when he behaved with the license which only long  
‘and cheap acquaintance allows to one’s faults, in my  
presence, without shame, and fill addressed me in  
friendly accents. Beware, leat thy Friend learn at last  
to tolerate one frailty of thine, and 0 an obstacle be  
raised to the progress of thy love. ‘There are times  
when we bave had enough even of our Friends, when  
‘wo begin inevitably to profane one another, and must  
‘withdraw religiously into solitude and silence, the better  
to prepare ourselves for a loftior intimacy. Silence is  
the ambrosial sight in the intercourse of Friends, in  
which their sincerity is recruited and takes deeper root.  
  
Friendship is never established as an understood re-  
lation. Do you demand that I be less your Friend that  
you may know it? Yet what right have I to think  
that another ch  
is @ miracle which requires constant proofs. It is an  
exerciso of the purest imagination and the rarest faith.  
It says by a silent but eloquent behavior, —«I will be  
10 related to thee as thow canst imagine; even 80 thou  
ruayest believe. I will spend truth, — all my wealth on  
thee,”—and the Friend responds silently through his  
ature and life, and treats his Friend with the same

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‘WEDNESDAY. 289  
  
divine courtesy. He knows us literally through thick  
and thin, He never asks for a sign of love, but can dis-  
tinguish it by the features which it naturally wears.  
‘We never need to stand upon ceremony with him with  
regard to his visits. Wait not till I invite thee, but  
observe that Iam glad to see thee when thou comest. \*  
It would be paying too dear for thy visit to ask for it  
‘Where my Friend lives there are all riches and every  
attraction, and no slight obstacle can keep me from him.  
Let me never have to tell thee what I have not to tell.  
Let our intercourse be wholly above ourselves, and draw  
us ap toit,  
  
‘The language of Friendship is not words, but mean-  
ings. It is an intelligence above language. One im-  
agines endless conversations with his Friend, in which  
the tongue shall be loosed, and thoughts be spoken with=  
‘out hesitancy or end; but the experience is commonly  
far otherwise. Acquaintances may come and go, and  
hhave a word ready for every occasion ; but what puny  
‘word shall he utter whose very breath is thought and  
meaning? Suppose you go to bid farewell to your  
Friend who is setting out on a journey ; what other  
‘outward sign do you know than to shake his hand ?  
Mave you any palaver ready for him then ? any box of  
salve to commit to his pocket? any particular message  
to send by him? any statement which you had forgotten  
to make ?— as if you could forget anything. — No, itis  
much that you take his hand and say Farewell; that  
‘you could easily omit so far custom has prevailed. It  
is evon painful, if he is to go, that he should linger so  
ong, If he must go, let him go quickly. Have you  
any last words? Alas, it is only the word of words,  
hich you have so long sought and found not; you have  
  
13 \*

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290 A WEEK.  
  
not a first word yet. There are few even whom I  
  
ould ‘venture to call earnestly by their most proper  
names. A name pronounced is the recognition of the  
individoal to whom it belongs. He who can pronounce  
my name aright, he can call me, and is entitled to my  
love and service. Yet reserve is the freedom and aban-  
donment of lovers. It is the reserve of what is hostile  
‘or indifferent in their natures, to give place to what is  
‘kindred and harmonious.  
  
‘The violence of love is as much to be dreaded as that  
of hate. When it is durnble it is serene and equable.  
Even its famous pains begin only with the ebb of love,  
for few are indeed lovers, though all would fain be. Tt  
is one proof of a man’s fitness for Friendship that he is  
able to do without that which is cheap and passionate.  
tender. ‘The par-  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
and know no other law nor kindness. It is not extray-  
aagant and insane, but what it says is something estab-  
lished henceforth, and will bear to be stereotyped. It is  
fa truer truth, itis better and fairer news, and no time  
will ever shame it, or prove it false. ‘This is a plant  
which thrives best in a temperate zone, where summer  
and winter alternate with one another, ‘The Friend is  
a necessarius, and meets his Friend on homely ground ;  
not on carpets and cushions, but on the ground and on  
rocks they will sit, obeying the natural and primitive  
Jaws. ‘They will meet without any outery, and part  
without loud sorrow. ‘Their relation implies such quali-  
ties as the warrior prizes ; for it takes a valor to open  
‘the hearts of men as well as the gates of castles. It is  
not an idle sympathy and mutual consolation merely, but  
‘heroic sympathy of aspiration and endeavor.

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‘wepwespar. 291  
  
“When manhood shall be matched 49  
‘That fear can take no pace,  
"Then weary works make warriors  
‘Each other to exbrace.  
  
‘The Friendship which Wawatam testifed for Henry  
the furtrader, as described in the latter’s “ Adventures,”  
‘0 almost bare and leafless, yet not blossomless nor fruit-  
Jess, is remembered with satisfaction and security. ‘The  
‘stern, imperturbable warrior, after fasting, solitude, and  
mortification of body, comes to the white man’s lodge,  
and affirms that he is the white brother whom be saw in  
his dream, and adopts him henceforth. He buries the  
hatchet as it regards bis friend, and they hunt and feast  
and make maple-sugar together. “Metals unite from  
fuxility ; birds and beasts from motives of convenience  
fools from fear and stupidity ; and just men at sight.”  
If Wawatam would taste the “white man's milk” with  
his tribe, or take his bow! of human broth made of the  
trader's fellow-countrymen, he first finds a place of safe-  
ty for his Friend, whom he has rescued from a similar  
fate. At length, after a long winter of undisturbed and  
hhappy intercourse in the family of the chieftain in the  
wilderness, hunting and fishing, they return in the  
spring to Michilimackinae to dispose of their furs; and  
it becomes necessary for Wawatam to take leave of his  
Friend at the Isle aux Outardes, when the latter, to  
his enemies, proceeded to the Sault de Sainte  
‘Marie, eupposing that they were to be separated for  
short time only. “Wo now exchanged farewells.” says  
Henry, with an emotion entirely reciprocal. I did not  
quit the lodge without the most grateful sense of the  
‘many acta of goodness which I had experienced in it,  
nor without the sincerest respect for the virtues which I

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992 4 ween.  
  
hhad witnessed among its members. All the fumily ac-  
companied me to the beach; and the canoe had no  
sooner put off than Wawatam commenced an address to  
the Kichi Manito, beseeching him to take care of me,  
his brother, till we should next meet. We had pro |  
ceeded to too great a distance to allow of our hearing  
his voice, before Wawatam had ceased to offer up his  
prayera” We never hear of him aguin.  
  
Friendship is not so kind as is imagined ; it bas not  
‘much human blood in it, but consists with @ certain dis-  
regard for men and their erections, the Christian datios  
‘and humanities, while it purifies the air like electricity.  
‘There may be the sternest tragedy in the relation of two  
‘more than usually innocent and true to their highest in-  
stineis. We may call it an essentially heathenish inter-  
course, free and irresponsible in its nature, and practis-  
ing all the virtues gratuitously. It is not the highest  
sympathy merely, but a pure and lofty society, a frag-  
‘mentary and godlike intercourse of ancient date, still  
kept up at intervals, which, remembering itself, does not  
hesitate to disregard the humbler rights and duties of  
humanity. It requires immaculate and godlike qualities  
full-grown, and exists at all only by condescension and \*  
ion of the remotest future. We love nothing  
merely good and not fair, if such a thing is pos-  
Nature puts some kind of blossom before every  
fruit, not simply a calyx behind it. When the Friend  
comes out of his heathenism and superstition, and breaks  
his idols, being converted by the precepts of a newer  
testament ; when he forgets his mythology, and treats  
his Friend like a Christian, or as be can afford; then  
Friendship ceases to be Friendship, and becomes char-  
ity s that principle which established the almshouse is

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‘wepwespar. 208  
  
‘now beginning with its charity at home, and establishing  
‘n almsbouse and pauper relations there,  
  
As for the namber which this society admits, itis at  
any rate to be begun with one, the noblest and greatest  
that we know, and whether the world will ever carry it,  
farther, whether, as Chaucer affirms,  
  
“There be mo stars in tho skie than pie”  
remains to be proved;  
  
“And carting be is well begoae  
“Anoog « thousand that fadath ove."  
  
‘We shall not surrender ourselves heartily to any while  
we are conscious that another is more deserving of our  
Jove. Yet Friendship does not stand for numbers; the  
Friend does not count his Friends on his fingers; they  
are not numerable. ‘The more there are included by  
this bond, if they are indeed included, the rarer and  
diviner the quality of the love that binds them. Tam  
ready to believe that as private and intimate a relation  
‘may exist by which three are embraced, as between two.  
Indeed, we cannot have too many friends; the virtue  
‘which we appreciate we to some extent appropriate, 0  
‘that thus wo are made at last more fit for every relation  
of life. A base Friendship is of a narrowing and exclu-  
tendency, but a noble one is not exclusive ; its very  
superfiuity and dispersed love is the humanity which  
‘sweetens society, and sympathizes with foreign nations ;  
for though ita foundations are private, it is, in effect, a  
public affair and a public advantage, and the Friend  
more than the father of a family, deserves well of the  
state,

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294 a were,  
  
‘The only danger in Friendship is that it will end. Tt  
is a delicate plant, though a native. ‘The least unworthi-  
ness, even if it be unknown to one’s self, vitiates it. Let  
the Friend know that those faults which he observes in  
his Friend his own faults attract. ‘There is no rule |  
‘more invariable than that we are paid for our suspicions  
by finding what we suspected. By our narrowness and  
Prejudices wé say, I will have 60 much and such of you,  
my Friend, no more. Perhaps there are none charita-  
ble, none disinterested, none wise, noble, and heroic  
enough, for a true and lasting Friendship.  
  
I sometimes hear my Friends complain finely that I  
do not appreciate their fineness. I shall not tell them  
whether I do or not. As if they expected vote of  
thanks for every fine thing which they uttered or did.  
‘Who knows but it was finely appreciated. It may be  
that your silence was the finest thing of the two. ‘There  
fre some things which a man never speaks of, which are  
much finer kept silent about. ‘To the highest communi-  
cations we only lend a silent ear. Qur finest relations  
are not simply kept silent about, but buried under a pos-  
itive depth of silence never to be revealed. It may be  
that we are not even yet acquainted. In human inter  
course the tragedy begins, not when there is misunder- |  
standing about words, but when silence is not under-  
stood. ‘Then there can never be an explanation. What  
avails it that another loves you, if he does not under-  
stand you? Such love is a curse. What sort of com-  
anions are they who are presuming always that their  
silence is more expressive than yours? How foolish,  
and inconsiderate, and unjust, to conduct as if you wero  
the only party aggrieved! Hs not your Friend always  
equal ground of complaint? No doubt my Friends

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WEDNESDAY. 295  
  
sometimes speak to me in vain, but they do not know  
what things I hear which they are not aware that they  
have spoken. I know that I have frequently disap-  
pointed them by not giving them words when they ex-  
pected them, or such as they expected. Whenever I  
see my Friend I speak to him; but the expecter, the  
man with the ears, is not he. ‘They will complain too  
that you are hard. O ye that would have the cocoa-nut  
wrong side outwards, when next I weep I will let you  
Know. ‘They ask for words and deeds, when a true ree  
lation i word and deed. If they know not of these  
‘things, how can they be informed? We often forbear  
to confess our feelings, not from pride, but for fear that  
‘we could not continue to love the one who required us  
to give such proof of our affection.  
  
   
  
I know a woman who possesses a restlese and intelli-  
gent mind, interested in her own culture, and earnest to  
‘enjoy the highest possible advantages, and I meet her  
‘with pleasure as a natural perton who not a little pro-  
‘yokes me, and I suppose is stimulated in turn by myself.  
‘Yet our acquaintance plainly does not attain to that de~  
‘gree of confidence and sentiment which women, which  
all, in fact, covet. Tam glad to help her, as Tam helped  
bby hers I like very well to know her with a sort of  
stranger's privilege, and hesitate to visit her often, like  
her other Friends. My nature pauses here, I do not  
well know why. Perhaps she does not make the high  
est demand on me, a religious demand. Some, with  
whose prejudices or peculiar bias I have no sympathy,  
yet inspire me with confidence, and I trust that they  
confide in me slso as a religious heathen at least, —a  
good Greek. I, too, have es as well founded as

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296 A ween.  
  
their own. If this person could conceive that, without  
wilfalness, I associate with her as far as oar destinies  
‘are coincident, as far as our Good Geniuses permit, and  
afill value such intercourse, it would be a grateful assur-  
‘ance to me, I feel as if T appeared careless, indifferent,  
and without principle to her, not expecting more, and  
yet not content with less. If she could know that T  
‘make an infinite demand on myself, as well as on all  
others, she would see that this trae though incomplete  
intercourse, is infinitely better than a more unreserved  
bat falsely grounded one, without the principle of growth  
in it, Fore companion, I require one who will make  
‘an equal demand on me with my own genius. Such a  
fone will always be rightly tolerant. It is suicide, and  
corrupts good manners to welcome any less than this.  
value and trust those who love and praise my aspira-  
tion rather than my performance. If you would not  
stop to look at me, but look whither I am looking, and  
farther, then my education could not dispense with your  
‘company.  
  
   
  
   
  
My love must be a fee  
‘Asin the eagle's wing,  
orering o'er land and von  
  
‘And everything.  
  
mut not dim my eye  
Tn thy elooo,  
  
1 mutt bot lave my sky  
‘And nightly moon.  
  
Bo not the fowler’s not  
Which stays my Sight,  
‘Aad crafty is set  
‘T allare the sight.  
  
Bat be the favoring gale  
“That boars me 00,

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‘WEDNESDAY. 297  
  
‘And sl doth 11 my eit  
‘When thoa art gone.  
  
Tannot leave my aky  
For thy eaprice,  
  
‘True love would vor as high  
‘As eaven is.  
  
“Th eagle would not brook  
Her mate thas woo,  
‘Who trained his oye to look  
‘Beoeath the wan.  
  
‘Few things are more difficult than to help a Friend  
{in matters which do not require the aid of Friendshi  
‘but only a cheap and trivial service, if your Friendshi  
wants the basis of a thorough practical acquaintance.  
Tetand in the friendliest relation, on social and spiritnal  
‘grounds, to one who does not perceive what practical skill  
Thave, but when he seeks my assistance in such matters,  
is wholly ignorant of that one with whom he deals ; does  
not use my skill, which in such matters is much greater  
than his, but only my hands. I know another, who, on  
the contrary, is remarkable for his discrimination in this  
respect; who knows how to make use of the talents of  
‘others when he does not possess the same; knows when  
not to look after or oversee, and stops short at his man,  
It is a rare pleasure to serve him, which all laborers  
know. Iam not a little pained by the other kind of  
treatment, It is as if, after the friendliest and most en-  
nobling intercourse, your Friend should use you as a  
hhammer, and drive a nail with your head, ali in good  
faith ; notwithstanding that you are a tolerable carpen-  
ter, as well as his good Friend, and would use a hammer  
cheerfully in his service. This want of perception is a  
defect which all the virtues of the heart cannot sup-  
ply:—  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Be

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298 A WEEE.  
  
‘The Good how can we trust?  
Only the Wine are jar.  
  
‘The Good we 10,  
  
‘The Wise we canoot choos  
  
‘Thea there are none above  
  
‘Tho Good they know and love,  
  
But are pot known again  
  
By thowe of ewer ket  
  
‘They donot charm us with thelr eyes,  
Bat they tranax with their advo;  
‘No partial aympathy they fel,  
  
‘With private woo or private weal,  
But wit the universe joy and sigh,  
‘Whove knowledge is their sympathy.  
  
Confucius said: To contract ties of Friendship with  
‘any one, is to contract Friendship with his virtue.  
‘There ought not to be any other motive in Friendship.”  
But men wish us to contract Friendship with their  
flso. I have a Friend who wishes me to sce that to be  
Tight which I know to be wrong. But if Friendship  
to rob me of my eyes, if it is to darken the day, I will  
hhave none of it. It should be expansive and inconceiv-  
ably liberalizing in its effects. ‘True Friendship can af-  
ford true knowledge. It does not depend on darkness  
and igoorance. A want of discernment cannot be an  
ingredient in it, If Ican see my Friend's virtues more  
distinctly than another's, his faults too are made more  
conspicuous by contrast. We have not 60 good a right  
to hate any as our Friend, Faults are not the less faults  
because they are invariably balanced by corresponding  
virtues, and for a fault there is no excuse, though it may  
appear greater than it is in many ways, I have never  
known one who could bear criticism, who could not be  
fiattered, who would not bribe his judge, or was content  
thatthe truth soald beloved aivays better han hie

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‘WEDNESDAY. 299  
  
If two travellers would go their way harmoniously to-  
‘gether, the one must take as true and just a view of  
things as the other, else their path will not be strewn  
with roses. Yet you can travel profitably and pleas-  
antly even with a blind man, if he practises common  
courtesy, and when you converse about the scenery will  
remember that he is blind bat that you can see; and  
‘you will not forget thet his sense of hearing is probably  
‘quickened by his want of sight Otherwise you will  
not long Keep company. A blind man, and a man in  
‘whose eyes there was no defect, were walking together,  
when they came to the edge of precipice. “Take  
care! my friend,” said the latter, “here is a steep pre-  
cipice ; go no farther this way.”—“I know better,”  
said the other, and stepped off.  
  
It is impossible to say all that we think, even to our  
truest Friend. We may bid him farewell forever soon-  
‘er than complain, for our complaint is too well grounded  
to be uttered. There is not 80 good an understanding  
between any two, but the exposure by the one of a s6-  
rious faut inthe other will produce a misunderstanding in  
Proportion to its heinousness. The constitutional differ-  
ences which always exist, and are obstacles to a perfect  
Friendchip, are forever a forbidden theme to the lips of  
Friends. They advise by their whole behavior. Noth-  
ing can reconcile them but love. ‘They are fatally late  
when they undertake to explain and treat with one  
‘mother like foes. Who will take an apology for a  
Friend? ‘They must apologize like dew and frost, w!  
are off again with the sun, and which all men know in  
their hearts to be beneficent. ‘The necessity itself for  
explanation, — what explanation will atone for that ?  
  
‘True love does not quarrel for slight reasons, such

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300 A weer,  
  
mistakes no mateal aoqusintances oanexplaio away, bat, |  
alas, bowever sight the apparent cause, only for ade-  
quate and fatal and everlasting reasons, which can never  
be et aside. Its quarrel, if there is any, is ever recur-  
ring, notwithstanding the beams of affection which inva-  
rinbly come to gild ita tears; aa the rainbow, however  
benutifal and unerring a sign, docs not promise fair  
weather forever, but only for s season. I have known  
two or three persons pretty well, and yet I have never  
Inown advice to be of use but in trivial and transient  
matters. One may know what another does not, but the  
‘utmost kindness cannot impart what is requisite to make  
the advice useful. We must acceptor refuse one another  
an woare. I could tame a hyena more easily than my  
Friend. He is a material which no tool of mine wil  
work. A naked savage will fll an oak with a firebrand,  
and wear a batchet out of a rock by friction, bat T can-  
not hew the smallest chip out of the character of my  
Friend, either to beautify or deform it  
  
‘The lover learns at last that there is no person quite  
transparent and trostworthy, but every one bas a devil  
in him that is capable of any crime inthe long run. Yet,  
as an Oriental philosopher has esi, “Although Friend-  
thip between good men is interrupted, their principles  
remain unaltered, ‘The stalk of the lotus may be broken, |  
and the fibres remain connected.”  
  
   
  
Tgnorance and bungling with love are better then wise  
dom and skill without. ‘There may be courtesy, there  
‘may be even temper, and wit, and talent, and sparkling  
conversation, there may be good-will even,—and yet the  
hhomanest and divinest faculties pine for exercise. Our  
Jife without love is like coke and ashes Men may be

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‘WEDMESDAr. 801  
  
pure as alabaster and Parian marble, elegant as a Tus-  
‘ean vills, eublime as Niagara, and yet if there is no milk  
‘mingled with the wine at their eotertainments, better is  
the hospitality of Goths and Vandals.  
  
My Friend is not of some other race or family of men,  
but flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone. He is my real  
brother. I see his nature groping yonder 0 like mine.  
“We do not live far apart. Have not the fates associated  
us in many ways? It says, in the Vishna Purana:  
“Seven paces together is sufficient for the friendship of  
the virtaous, but thou and I have dwelt together.” Is it  
‘of no significance that we hare 0 long partaken of the  
same loaf, rank at the same fountain, breathed the same  
air sommer and winter, felt the same heat and cold;  
that the same fruits have been pleased to refreeh us  
‘both, and we have never had a thought of different fibre  
‘the one from the other!  
  
[Nature doth havo her dawn euch day,  
‘But mio ao far bat ween  
  
‘Contant, I ery, fr sooth to say,  
‘Mine bightet are I ween.  
  
‘For when my sun doth doign torso,  
"Though ibe her nooatide,  
  
“er furor Sold in shadow i,  
‘Nor can my light abide.  
  
‘Sometimes T bask me in ber day,  
ouversing with my mate,  
  
Bat if we intarobange one ray,  
orthwith her heats abate  
  
‘Throngh bis inooure Tcl and 208,  
‘As flom some eaters hil,  
  
A brighter morrow rsa tom  
‘Than eth a hor sl.  
  
‘Ast were two sommer days ia on8,  
"Two Sundays coin together,  
  
(Our rays united make one sus,  
‘With feat summer weather

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802 A were,  
  
‘As surely as the sunset in my latest November shall  
‘translate me to the ethereal world, and remind me of the  
ruddy morning of youth; as surely as the last strain of  
music which falls on my decaying ear shall make age to  
be forgotten, or, in short, the manifold influences of ma-  
ture survive during the term of our natural life, so sur  
ly my Friend shall forever be my Friend, and reflect  
ray of God to me, and time shail foster and adorn and  
‘consecrate our Friendship, no less than the ruins of tem-  
ples. As I love nature, as I love singing birds, and  
gleaming stubble, and flowing rivers, and morning and  
evening, and summer and winter, I love thee, my  
Friend.  
  
   
  
   
  
But all that can be said of Friendship, is like botany  
to flowers. How can the understanding take account of  
it friendliness?  
  
Even the death of Friends will inspire us as much as  
their live, ‘They will leave consolation to the moarn-  
‘ers, as the rich leave money to defray the expenses of  
their funerals, and their memories will be incrusted over  
‘with sublime and pleasing thoughts, as monuments of  
other men are overgrown with moss; for our Friends  
have no place in the graveyard.  
  
‘This to our cis-Alpine and cis-Atlantic Friends,  
  
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
Also this other word of entreaty and advice to the  
large and respectable nation of Acquaintances, beyond  
the mountains ;— Greeting.  
  
‘My most serene and irresponsible neighbors, let us see  
that we have the whole advantage of each other; we  
will be usefal, at least, if not admirable, to one another.  
T know that the mountains which separate us are high,

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‘WEDNESDAY. 308  
  
‘and covered with perpetual snow, but despair not. Tm-  
pprove the serene winter weather to scale them. If need  
bbe, soften the rocks with vinegar. For here lie the ver-  
ant plains of Italy ready to receive you. Nor shall I  
bbe slow on my side to penetrate to your Provence.  
Strike then boldly at head or heart or any vital part.  
‘Depend upon it, the timber is well seasoned and tough,  
and will bear rough usage ; and if it should crack, there  
4s plenty more where it came from. I am no piece of  
‘crockery that cannot be jostled against my neighbor with-  
‘out danger of being broken by the collision, and must  
needs ring false and jarringly to the end of my days,  
when once T am cracked; but rather one of the old-fash-  
foned wooden trenchers, which one while stands at the  
head of the table, and at another is a milking-etool, and  
atanother a seat for children, and finally goes down to  
ils grave not unadorned with honorable scars, and does  
not die till it is worn out. Nothing ean shock & brave  
man but dolness. ‘Think how many rebuffs every man  
has experienced in his day; perhaps has fallen into a  
horse-pond, eaten fresh-water clams, or worn one shirt  
for a week without washing. Indeed, you cannot receive  
2 shock unless you have an electric affinity for that  
which shocks you. Use me, then, for Tam useful in my  
way, and stand as one of many petitioners, from toud-  
stool and henbane up to dablia and violet, supplicating  
to be put to my use, if by any means ye may find me  
serviceable; whether for a medicated drink or bath, as  
balm and lavender ; or for fragrance, as verbena and  
geranium ; or for sight, as efttus ; or for thoughts, as  
pansy. ‘These humbler, at least, if not those higher  
  
‘Ab, my dear Strangers and Enemies, I would not for-

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A WEEK.  
  
got you. can well afford to welcome you. Let me  
subscribe myself Yours ever and truly,— your much  
obliged servant. We have nothing to fear from our  
foes; God keeps a standing army for that service; but  
wwe have no ally against our Friends, those ruthless  
  
‘Onoe more to one and all,  
  
“mds, Bemene, rene eo, td Love"  
  
{Lat sach pare bate still undarprop  
Our love, that we may be  
Bach other's conscience,  
  
‘And have our sympathy  
Malaly fom thence.  
  
‘We'll one another treat lik» gods,  
‘And all the fath we have  
  
In virtue aod in trath, bestow  
(On ether, and suspicion lave  
‘To goda below.  
  
‘Two solitary stars, —  
oeasared systems far  
Batwoen trol,  
  
Bat by our conscious light we are  
etormlned to one pale.  
  
‘What need confound the aphere, —  
Love can afford to walt  
  
or it hoat sto inte  
  
‘That witneeoth one daty's end  
(Or to another dot beginning lend.  
  
1 wil exbaarvo 0 m6,  
‘More than the tnt of flowers,  
‘Only th independent guest  
Frequent ita bowers,  
Taher ta bequest.  
  
‘No speech thongh kind has i  
Bat inderslonce doles

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‘WEDNESDAY. 808  
  
‘Unto ts mates, s  
By night couacles,  
By day congratulates.  
  
‘What saith the tongue to tongue?  
What boarth ear of oar?  
  
By the decrees of fo  
From year to year,  
  
Doos it communicate,  
  
Pathos the gulf of fealiog yawns, —  
[No trivial bridge of words,  
  
Or arch of boldet pan,  
  
(Gan leap the moat that gids  
  
‘The sincere man.  
  
‘No show of bolts and bare  
Can keep the foeman out,  
Or'scape bs scrat mine  
‘Who entered withthe doubt  
‘That drow the line.  
  
[No warder atthe gata  
(Onn Tat the fiendly i,  
Baty like the sun o'er all  
Ho will the castle wis,  
‘And shine along the wall,  
  
‘There's nothing fn the world Tknow  
That can excape from love,  
  
For every depth it gous below,  
‘And every height above.  
  
waits an waite tho sky,  
‘ati the clouds go by,  
‘Yet shinee serenely on  
  
   
  
Iiplacabl is Love, —  
ots may be bought or tensed  
rom their hostile intent  
Bat be goes woappented  
  
Who in on kindness bent,

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806 A WEEK.  
  
Having rowed five or six miles above Amoskeag be-  
fore sunset, and reached a pleasant part of the river, one  
‘of us landed to look for a farm-house, where we might  
replenish our stores, while the other remained cruising  
‘about the stream, and exploring the opposite shores to  
find a suitable harbor for the night. In the mean while  
the canal-boats began to come round a point in our rear,  
poling their way along close to the shore, the breeze  
having quite died away. ‘This time there was no offer  
‘of assistance, but one of the boatmen only called out to  
say, as the truest revenge for baving been the losers in  
the race, thet he hed seen @ wood-duck, which we had  
scared up, sitting on a tall white-pine, half a mile down  
stream ; and he repeated the assertion several times, and  
seemed really chagrined at the apparent suspicion with  
which this information was received. But there sat: the  
summer duck still, undisturbed by us.  
  
By and by the other voyagenr returned from his inland  
expedition, bringing one of tho natives with him, « little  
flaxen-headed boy, with some tradition, or small edition,  
of Robinson Crusoe in his head, who had been charmed  
by the account of our adventures, and asked his father’s  
leave to join us. He examined, at first from the top of  
the bank, our boat and furniture, with sparkling eyes,  
‘and wished himself already his own man. He was a  
lively and interesting boy, and we should have been  
glad to ship him but Nathan was still his father’s boy,  
‘and had not come to years of discretion.  
  
‘We had got a loaf of home-made bread, and musk  
‘and water melons for dessert. For this farmer, a clever  
‘and well-disposed man, cultivated a large patch of mel-  
ons for the Hooksett and Concord markets. He hogpit-  
ably entertained us the next day, exhibiting his hop-

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‘WEDNESDAY. 907  
  
fields and kiln and melon-patch, warning us to step over  
the tight rope which surrounded the latter at a foot from  
‘he ground, while he pointed to a little bower at one  
‘corner, where it connected with the lock of a gun rang-  
ing with the line, and where, as he informed us, he  
sometimes sat in pleasant nights to defend hie premi  
‘against thieves. We stepped high over the line, and  
sympathized with our hoet’s on the whole quite human,  
if not humane, interest in the success of his experiment.  
‘That night especially thieves were to be expected, from  
amors in the atmosphere, and the priming was not wet.  
He was a Methodist man, who had his dwelling between  
the river and Uncannunuc Mountain; who there be-  
longed, and stayed at bome there, and by the encourage-  
ment of distant political organizations, and by  
tenacity, held @ property in hie melons, and continued  
to plant We suggested melon-seeds of new varieties  
and fruit of foreign flavor to be added to his stock. We  
hhad come away up here among the hills to learn the  
partial and unbribable beneficence of Nature. Straw-  
berries and melons grow as well in one man’s garden as  
another's, and the sun lodges as kindly under his ill-  
ide, —when we had imagined that she inclined rather  
‘to some few earnest and faithfal souls whom we know.  
‘We found a convenient harbor for our boat on the op-  
‘posite or east shore, till in Hooksett, at the mouth of a  
small brook which emptied into the Merrimack, where  
it would be out of the way of any passing. boat in tho  
night, — for they commonly hug the shore if bound up  
stream, either to avoid the current, or touch the bottom  
theie poles, —-and where {t would be ‘nccomible  
without stepping on the clayey shore. We set one of  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘our largest melons to cool in the still water among tho

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308 wee,  
  
alders at the moath of this ereck, but when our tent was  
pitched and ready, and we went to get it, it had floated,  
‘out into the stream, and was nowhere to be seen, So  
taking the boat in the twilight, we went in pursuit of  
this property, and at lengtb, after long straining of the  
eyes, ita green disk was discovered far down the river,  
gently floating seaward with many twigs and leaves from  
the mountains that evening, and eo perfectly balanced,  
that it had not keeled at all, and no water bad run in at  
the tap which had been taken out to hasten its cooling.  
‘As we ant on the bank eating our supper, the clear  
light of the western sky fell on the eastern trees, and  
‘was reflected in the water, and wo enjoyed so serene an  
evening as left nothing to describe. For the most part  
we think that there are few degreoe of sublimity, and  
that the highest is but little higher than that which we  
now behold; but we are always deceived. Sublimer  
visions appoar, and the former pale and fade away.  
‘Wo aro grateful when-we are reminded by interior evi-  
dence of the permanence of univereal laws; for our faith  
» is but faindy remembered, indeod, is not a remembered  
assurance, but a use and enjoyment of knowledge. It  
is when we do not have to believe, but come into actual  
contact with ‘Truth, and aré related to her in the most  
direct and intimate way. Waves of serener life pass  
over us from time to time, like flakes of sunlight over  
the fields in cloudy weather. In eome happier moment,  
‘when more sap flows in the withered stalk of our life,  
Syria and India stretch away from our present as they  
Alll the events which make the annals  
te expe-  
rienees. Suddenly and silently the eras which we call  
Bistory awake and glimmer in us, and there is room for

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‘WEDNESDAY. 809  
  
Alexander and Hannibal to march and conquer. In  
short, the history which we read is only a fainter mem-  
‘ory of events which have happened in our own experi-  
ence. ‘Tradition is a more interrupted and feebler  
memory.  
  
This world is but canvas to our imaginations. I  
see men with infinite pains endeavoring to realize to  
their bodies, what I, with at least equal pains, would  
realize to my imagination, —its capacities; for certainly  
there is a life of the mind above the wants of the body,  
‘and independent of it. Often the body is warmed, but  
‘the imagination is torpid ; the body is fat, but the imagi  
nation is lean and shrunk. But what avails all other  
‘wealth if this is wanting? Imagination is the air of  
sind,” in which it lives and breathes. All things are as  
Tam. Where is the House of Change? ‘The past is  
‘only 60 heroic as we seo it. It is the canvas on which  
‘our idea of heroism is painted, and so, in one sense, the  
prospectus of our future field. Our circumstances  
‘answer to our expectations and the demand of our na-  
tures. I have noticed that if a man thinks that he needs  
‘a thousand dollars, and cannot be convinced that he does  
not, he will commonly be found to have them; if he  
lives and thinks a thousand dollars will be fortheomi  
though it be to buy shoe-strings with. A thousand mills,  
will be just a8 slow to come to one who finds it equally  
hhard to convince himself that he needs them,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘Mon are by bith equal In thie, that given  
‘Themnalves and their condi, they are even.  
  
Tam astonished at the singular pertinacity and endur-  
‘ance of our lives. ‘The miracle is, that what is és, when  
it is 20 difficult, if not impossible, for anything else to

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310 A WEEK.  
  
be; that we walk on in our particular paths so far, be-  
fore we fall on death and fate, merely because we must  
‘walk in some path ; that every man can get a living, and.  
0 few can do anything more. So much only can I ac-  
complish ere health and strength are gone, and yet this  
suffices. The bird now sits just out of gunshot. I am  
never rich in money, and I am never meanly poor. If  
debts are incurred, why, debts are in the course of events  
cancelled, as it were by the same law by which they  
‘were incurred. I heard that an engagement was entered  
{nto between a certain youth and a maiden, and then I  
hheard that it was broken off, but I did not know the  
‘reason in either case. We are hedged about, we think,  
by accident and circumstance, now we creep as in a  
ream, and now again we run, as if there were a fate in  
it, and all things thwarted or assisted. I cannot chango  
my clothes but when I do, and yet Ido change them,  
and soil the new ones. Tt is wonderful that this gets  
done, when some admirable deeds which I could men-  
tion do not get done. Our particular lives seem of such  
fortune and confident strength and durability as piers  
of solid rock thrown forward into the tide of circum-  
stance. When every other path would fail, with singu-  
Jar and unerring confidence we advance on our particu-  
Jnr course. What risks we run! famine and fire and  
pestilence, and the thousand forms of @ cruel fate, —  
and yet every man lives till he—dies. How did be  
manage that? Is there no immediate danger? We  
wonder superfluously when we hear of a somnambulist  
walking a plank securely, — we have walked a plank all  
our lives up to this particalar string-piece where we are.  
‘My life will wait for nobody, but is being matured still  
without delay, while I go about the streets, and chaffer

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‘WEDNESDAY. 3  
  
with this man and that to secure it a living. It is as  
indifferent and easy meanwhile as a poor man’s dog, and  
‘making acquaintance with its kind, Tt will cut its own  
channel like a mountain stream, and by the longest ridge  
is not kept from the sea at last. I have found all things  
‘thus far, persons and inanimate matter, elements and  
‘seasons, strangely adapted to my resources. No matter  
what impradent haste in my career; I am permitted to  
be rash. Gulf are bridged ina twinkling, as if some  
unseen baggage-train carried pontoons for my conve  
fence, and while from the heights I scan the tempting  
but unexplored Pacific Ocean of Futurity, the ship is  
‘being carried over the mountains piecemeal on the  
backs of mules and lamas, whose keel shall plough its  
‘waves, and bear me to the Indies. Day would not dawn  
if it were not for  
  
   
  
‘THE INWARD MORNING.  
  
Packod in my mind Wo all the clothes  
‘Which outirard nature weary,  
  
‘And ints fasion's hourly ebange  
Tall tings el repairs.  
  
   
  
{a vain I ook for ob  
‘And ean no diferenco  
  
‘Till tome new ray of peace uncalled  
‘lames my famost mind.  
  
   
  
broad,  
  
   
  
   
  
What ist gilda th tres and elonds,  
‘And paint th heavens to gay,  
‘at yonder fat-blding light  
  
‘With ts unebangiog ray?  
  
, when the enn eteams through the wood,  
Upon a winter's morn,  
‘reer hi lent beam ftrade  
  
‘The murky night i gooe.

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a2 A wer,  
  
“low oocld th patient pine have known  
‘Tho morning breeze would come,  
  
(Or hamble flowers anticipate  
"The lwect’s noonday bum, —  
  
‘Till the new light with moraing cheer  
‘From far streamed through the alls,  
‘And nimbly tod th forest trees  
or many stretching miles?  
  
Ivo heard withia my inmost tool  
‘Bach cheerful morning news,  
In the horizon of my mind  
“Have seen uch orient hes,  
  
‘As in the twilight of the dawa,  
‘When the first birds awake,  
  
‘Are beard within some silent wood,  
‘Whore they the small twigs Brak,  
  
(fn the castor skies are seen,  
‘Bafore the sun appears,  
  
‘The harbingers of summer heats  
‘Which fom afar ho bear.  
  
‘Whole weeks and months of my summer life slide  
‘away in thin volumes like mist and smoke, till at length,  
‘some warm morning, perchance, I see a sheet of mi  
‘blown down the brook to the swamp, and I float as high  
‘above the fields with it. I ean recall to mind the stillest  
‘summer hours, in which the grasshopper sings over the  
‘mulleins, and there is a valor in that time the bare  
memory of which is armor that ean laugh at any blow  
of fortune. For our lifetime the strains of a harp are  
heard to swell and die alternately, and death is but the  
‘pase when the blast is recollecing itecl.”  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘We lay awake a long while, listening to the murmurs  
‘of the brook, in the angle formed by whose bank with

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WEDNESDAY. 313,  
  
the river our tent was pitched, and there was a sort of  
man interest in ite story, which ceases not in freshet or  
in drought the livelong summer, and the profounder  
Inpse of the river was quite drowned by its din. But  
the rill; whose  
“ ver ands and pebbles sig  
ternal ditea with the spring,”  
  
{is silenced by the first frosts of winter, while mightier  
streams, on whose bottom the sun never shines, clogged  
with sunken rocks and the ruins of forests from whose  
surface comes up mo murmur, are strangers to the icy  
fetters which bind fast a thousand contributary rill  
  
I dreamed this night of an event which had occurred  
Jong before. It was a difference with a Friend, which  
hhad not ceased to give mo pain, though I had no cause  
to blame myself: But in my dream ideal justice was at  
length done me for his suspicions, and I received that  
‘compensation which I had never obtained in my waking  
hours, I was unspeakably soothed and rejoiced, even  
after I awoke, because in dreams we never deceive our-  
elves, nor are deceived, and this seemed to have the  
authority of a final jadgment.  
  
‘We bless and curse ourselves. Some dreams are di-  
‘Vine, as well as some waking thoughts. Donne sings of  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
“Who dreamt devoutlier than most use to pray.”  
  
Dreams are the touchatones of our characters. We are  
  
scarcely les alicted when we remember eome unworthi-  
  
ness in our conduct in a dream, than if it bad been  
  
‘actual, and the intensity of our grief, which is our atone-  
  
‘ment, measures the degree by which this is separated  
  
from an actual unworthiness. For in dreams we but  
1

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a4 a wir,  
  
‘act a part which must have been learned and rehearsed  
in our waking hours, and no doubt could discover some  
waking consent thereto. If this meanness had not its  
foundation in us, why are we grieved at it? In dreams  
‘we see ourselves naked and acting out oar real charac-  
ters, even more clearly than we see others awake. But  
fan unwavering and commanding virtue would compel  
even its most fantastic and faintest dreams to respect its  
ever-wakeful authority; as we aro accustomed to eay  
carelessly, we should never have dreamed of such a  
thing. Our trucet life is when we aro in dreams awake.  
  
   
  
   
  
“And, mor to alla him fn his stamber sft,  
‘A trokling streame from high rock tambllag downe,  
‘And everdrzaiogralne upon the lof,  
  
AMixt with « murmuring wind, much ike the sowne  
Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swowne.  
  
‘No other noyse, nor people's troublous oryey,  
  
‘Aa ail aro wont ¢ anncy the walled towne,  
  
‘ight thre be heard; but carslus Quiet yea  
  
‘Weapt in eternal allence frre from enemyes.”

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THURSDAY.  
  
‘erode the planta fet oe, where  
‘oe allel maa forages bath nt shove,  
‘Where heds the mone, ud was the svi Dear,  
And up th all at ane he woodpecker.  
‘Wheee darkoess found hts be lay ela at mts  
‘Der the red moral touched Mn wi ts gh  
(G0 wher be wil he wie mania ers,  
“earth ce etre la hall tbe rare ome  
‘Wael cer wi ends im, teres Broad,  
  
By Gots own igh amined snd tera.”  
amsor.

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Goog

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THURSDAY.  
  
‘Wax we awoke this morning, we heard the faint,  
deliberate, and ominous sound of raindrops on our cot~  
ton roof, The rain had pattered all night, and now the  
whole country wept, the drops falling in the river, and  
con the alders, and in the pastures, and instead of any  
bow in the heavens, there was the trill of the hair-bird  
all the morning. ‘The cheery faith of this little bird  
‘toned for the silence of the whole woodland choir be-  
side, When we first stepped abrond, a flock of sheep,  
Jed by their rams, came rushing down a ravine in our  
rear, with heedless haste and unreserved frisking, as if  
‘unobserved by man, from some higher pasture where  
‘they had spent the night, to taste the herbage by the  
iver-ide; bat when their leaders caught sight of our  
‘white tent through the mist, struck with sudden astonish-  
ment, with their fore-feet braced, they sustained the  
rushing torrent in their rear, and the whole flock stood  
stock-till, endeavoring to solve the mystery in their  
sheepish brains. At length, concluding that it boded no  
mischief to them, they spread themselves out quietly  
over the field. We leamed afterward that we had  
pitched our tent on tho very spot which few summers  
before had been occupied by a party of Penobscots.  
‘We could see rising before us through the mist a dark  
‘conical eminence called Hooksett Pinnacle, a landmark

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818 avo 1  
  
to boatmen, and also Uncannunuc Mountain, broad off  
‘on the west side of the river.  
  
‘This was the limit of our voyage, for a fow hours more  
{in the rain would have taken us to the last of the locks,  
and our boat was too heavy to be dragged around the  
Jong and numerous rapids which would occur. On foot,  
however, we continued up along the bank, feeling our  
‘way with a etick through the showery and foggy day,  
and climbing over the slippery logs in our path with as  
much pleasure and buoyancy as in brightest sunshine ;  
scenting the fragrance of the pines and the wot clay  
under our feet, and cheered by the tones of invisible  
waterfalls; with visions of tosdstools, and wandering  
frogs, and festoons of moss hanging from the epruce-  
trees, and thrushes flitting silent under the leaves; our  
‘oad still holding together through that wettest of weath-  
cr, like faith, while we confidently followed its lead,  
‘We managed to keep our thoughts dry, however, and  
only our clothes were wet. It was altogether a cloudy  
and drizzling day, with occasional brightenings in the  
mist, when the trill of the tree-sparrow seemed to be  
ushering in suony hours.  
  
“Nothing that naturally happens to man can Aurt  
him, earthquakes and thunder-storms not excepted,” said  
fa man of genius, who at this time lived « few miles  
farther on our road. When compelled by a shower to  
tako shelter under a tree, we may improve that oppor-  
‘tunity for a more minute inspection of same of Nature's  
works. Ihave stood under a tree in the woods half a  
day at a time, during a heavy rain in the summer, and  
  
smployed myself happily and profitably there pryiog  
‘with microscopic eye into the crevices of the bark or  
the leaves of the fungi at my feet. “Riches re the

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se  
  
   
  
‘ravespar. 319  
  
attendants of the miser; and the heavens rain plen-  
teously upon the mountains.” I can fancy that it would  
be a luxury to stand up to one’s chin in some retired  
swamp a whole summer day, scenting the wild honey-  
suckle and bilberry blows, and lulled by the minstreley  
‘of goats and mosquitoes! A day passed in the society  
of those Greek sages, such as described in the Banquet  
‘of Xenophon, would not be comparable with the dry  
wit of decayed cranberry vines, and the fresh Attic salt  
of the moss-beds. Say twelve hours of genial and  
familiar converse with the leopard frog; the sun to rise  
behind alder and dogwood, and climb buoyantly to his  
‘meridian of two hands’ breadth, and finally sink to rest  
‘behind some bold western hummock. To hear the eve  
ing chant of the mosquito from a thousand green chapels,  
and the bittern begin to boom from some concealed fort  
Tike a sunset gun!—Surely one may as profitably be  
soaked in the jaices of a swamp for one day as pick  
his way dry-shod over sand. Cold and damp,—  
‘are they not ss rich experience as warmth and dry-  
ness?  
  
At present, the drops come trickling down the stubble  
while we lie drenched on a bed of withered wild oats,  
by the side of a bushy hill, and the gathering in of the  
clouds, with the last rush and dying breath of the wind,  
and then the regular dripping of twigs and leaves the  
country over, enhance the sense of inward comfort and  
socinbleness. The draw closer and are more  
familiar under the thick foliage, seemingly composing  
new strains upon their roosts against the sunshine.  
‘What were the amusements of the drawing-room and  
the library in comparison, if we had them here? We  
should sti 1s of old, —

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820  
  
A WEEK.  
  
‘My books T'd fan cat off, cannot read,  
"Twixt ory page my thought go stray at large  
Down inthe meadow, where is richer food,  
‘And will not mind to hit their proper targs.  
  
Patarch was good, and so was Homer to,  
(Our Shakespeare's life were rich to live again,  
‘What Platarch read that was not good nor true,  
‘Nor Shakespear's books, unis his books were men  
  
Here while Tio Beneath thie walnat bong,  
‘What eae I forthe Grocks or for Troy town,  
Ijaster battles are enacted now  
  
‘Between the ants upon this hammock’s crown?  
  
‘Bid Homer wait ll the tseue lear,  
red or black the gods wil favor most,  
  
Or yonder Ajax will the phalanx tors,  
‘Btraggling to heave some rock agaist the hoat.  
  
‘Tall Shakeopeare to attand some lasare hour,  
For now I've bosine with this drop of dew,  
‘And 400 you ont, the clouds prepare a shower, —  
Tl moet hie shortly when the sky is bine.  
  
‘hla bod of hors grasa and wild outs wan spread,  
[Last your with nicer abil than monarche use,  
Aclover tat is pillow for my head,  
  
‘And viclets quite overtop my shoes.  
  
‘And now the cordial loads have shat all,  
‘And gently swells the wind to say all's well,  
‘The scattered drops aro falling fast and tla,  
‘Some in the pool, some in the fower-bel,  
  
   
  
   
  
‘Lam well drenched upon my bod of oats;  
Butece that globe come rolling down Its stem,  
[Now lke a lonely planot there it oats,  
  
‘And now it sinks into my garment’ her.  
  
Drip drip the tees forall the comstry round,  
‘And richness rare dit from every bough,  
‘The wind alone i ls makes every sound,  
Shaking dowa crystals on the leaves below.

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‘THURSDAY. 921  
  
or shame the ean will never show blmsef,  
‘Who could aot with is beams o'r melt me 10,  
My dripping locks, — they would become an elf,  
‘Who in& beaded coat does gxply 6.  
  
‘The Pinnacle is a small wooded hill which rises very  
abruptly to the height of about two hundred feet, near  
the shore at Hooksett Falls. As Uncannunuc Moun-  
tain is perhaps the best point from which to view the  
valley of the Merrimack, so this hill affords the best  
yw of the river itself. I have sat upon its summit, a  
precipitous rock only a few rods long, in fairer weather,  
when the sun was setting and filling the river valley  
with a flood of light. You can see up and down the  
Merrimack several miles each way. ‘The broad and  
straight river, full of light and life, with its eparkling  
and foaming fall, the islet which divides the stream, the  
village of Hooksett on the shore almost directly under  
your feet, #0 near that you can converse with its inhab-  
itants or throw a stone into its yards, the woodland lake  
at its western base, and the mountains in the north and  
northeast, make a scone of rare beauty and compleie-  
ress, which the traveller should take pains to bebold.  
  
‘We were hospitably entertained in Concord, New  
Hampshire, which we persisted in ealling New Concord,  
fs we had been wont, to distinguish it from our native  
town, from which we hed been told that it was named  
‘and in part originally settled. ‘This would have been  
the proper place to conclude cur voyage, uniting Con-  
‘ord with Concord by these meandering rivers, but our  
‘boat was moored come miles below its port.  
  
‘The richness of the intervals at Penacook, now Con-  
cord, New Hampshire, had been observed by explorers,  
and, according to the historian of Haverhill, in the  
  
Me u

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828 a were.  
  
year 1726, considerable progres was made in the settle  
ment, and a road wan cut through the wiklernese from Ha-  
Yerbill to Penacook. In the fill of 1727, the fist family, that  
‘of Captain Ebenezer Eastman, moved into the place. His  
team was driven by Jacob Shate, who was by birth a French-  
man, and he is ssid to have been the fret person who drove  
‘8 team through the wilderness. Soon after, says tradition,  
one Ayer, a lad of 18, drove a team congiating of ten yoke of  
oxen to Penacook, swam the river, and ploughed a portion of  
the interval. He is supposed to have been tho first person  
‘who ploughed land in that place. After he had completed his  
work, he started on his return at sunrise, drowned a yoke of  
‘oxen while recrossing the river, and arrived at Haverhill  
about midnight. The crank of the fist saw-mill was man-  
ufuctured in Haverbill, and carried to Penacook on a  
hore”  
  
   
  
‘But we found that the frontiers were not this way any  
longer. ‘This generation has come into the world fatally  
late for some enterprises. Go where wo will on tho  
‘surface of things, men bave been there before us. We  
cannot now have the pleasure of erecting the last houses  
that was long ago set up in the suburbs of Astoria City,  
‘and our boundaries have literally been run to the South  
Sea, according to the old patents. But the lives of men,  
‘though more extended laterally in their range, are still  
‘as shallow as ever. Undoubtedly, as a Western orator  
said, “Men generally live over about the same surface ;  
some live loog and narrow, and others live broad and  
short”; but it is all superficial living, A worm is as  
good a traveller as a grasshopper or a cricket, and a  
much wiser settler. With all their activity these do not  
hop away from drought nor forward to summer. We  
do not avoid evil by fleeing before it, but by rising  
‘above or diving below its plane ; as the worm escapes

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‘raunspar. 823  
  
drought and frost by boring a few inches deeper. ‘The  
frontiers are not east or west, north or south, but wher~  
ever a man fronts a fact, though that fact be his neigh-  
bbor, there is an unsettled wilderness between him and  
Canada, between him and the setting sun, or, farther  
il, between him and i, Let him build himself a log-  
house with the bark on where he is, fronting rr, and  
wage there an Old French war for seven or seventy  
‘years, with Indians and Rangers, or whatever else may  
‘come between him and the reality, and save his scalp if  
he can.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘We now no longer sailed or floated on the river, but  
trod the unyielding land like pilgrims. Sadi tells who  
may travel; among others, “A common mechanic,  
‘who can earn a subsistence by the industry of his hand,  
and shall not have to stake his reputation for every  
morsel of bread, as philosophers have said.” He may  
travel who can subsist on the wild fruits and game of  
the most cultivated country. A man may travel fast  
‘enough and earn his living on the road. TI have at  
‘times been applied to to do work when on a journey ; to  
do tinkering and repair clocks, when I had a knapsack  
‘on my beck. A man once applied to me to go into a  
factory, stating conditions and wages, observing that I  
‘succeeded in shutting the window of a railroad car in  
‘which we were travelling, when the other passengers  
hhad failed. Hast thou not heard of a Sud, who was  
Eammering some nails into the sole of his ewndal an  
officer of cavalry took him by the sleere, saying, Come  
along and shoe my horse.” Farmers havo asked me to  
assist them in haying, when T was passing their fields,  
A man once applied to me to mend his umbrella, taking

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324 A ween,  
  
me for an umbrella-mender, because, being on a jour-  
ney, I carried an umbrella in my hand while the oun  
shone. Another wished to buy a tin cup of me, observ-  
ing that I had one strapped to my belt, and a sauce-pan  
‘on my back. ‘The cheapest way to travel, and the way  
to travel the farthest in the shortest distance, is to go  
afoot, carrying a dipper, a spoon, and a fish-line, some  
Indian meal, some salt, and some sugar. When you  
come to a brook or pond, you ean catch fish and cook  
them or you can boil a hasty-pudding ; or you can buy  
‘8 loaf of bread at a farmer's house for fourpence, moisten  
it in the next brook that crosses the road, and dip into  
it your sugar, — this alone will last you a whole day ;—  
or, if you are accustomed to heattier living, you can buy  
of milk for two cents, crumb your bread or cold.  
into it, and eat it with your own spoon out of  
your own dish, Any one of these things T mean, not  
fall together. Ihave travelled thus some hundreds of  
les without taking any meal in a’ house, sleepi  
‘he ground when convenient, and found it cheaper, and  
in many respects more profitable, than staying at home,  
So that some have inquired why it would not be best to  
travel always. But I never thought of travelling simply  
as @ means of getting a livelihood. A simple woman  
down in Tyngsborough, at whose house I once stopped to  
get a draught of water, when I said, recognizing the  
Ducket, that I had stopped there nine years before for  
the same purpose, asked if I was not a traveller, suppos-  
ing tha: I had been travelling ever since, and had now  
com round again; that travelling was one of the pro-  
fessions, more or less productive, which her husband did  
not follow. But continued travelling is far from pro-  
ductive. It begins with wearing away the soles of the

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rmuRspay, 825  
  
shoes, and making the feet sore, and erelong it will  
‘wear a man clean up, after making his heart sore into  
the bargain. I have observed that the afterlife of thoso  
who have travelled much is very pathetic. ‘True and  
sincere travelling is no pastime, but it is as serious as  
the grave, or any part of the human journey, and it re-  
uires a long probation to be broken into it. T do not  
speak of those that travel sitting, the sedentary trav-  
ellers whose legs hang dangling the while, mere idle  
symbols of the fact, any more than when we speak of  
  
itting hens we mean those that sit standing, but I mean  
those to whom travelling is life for the legs, and death  
too, at last. The traveller must be born again on the  
road, and earn a passport from the elements, the princi-  
pal powers that be for him. He shall experience at last  
that old threat of his mother fulfilled, that he shall be  
skinned alive, His sores shall gradually deepen them-  
selves that they may heal inwardly, while he gives no  
rest to the sole of his foot, and at night weariness must  
be his pillow, that so he may acquire experience against  
his rainy days, — So was it with us,  
  
Sometimes we lodged at an inn in the woods, where  
trout-fishers from distant cities had arrived before us,  
‘and where, to our astonishment, the settlers dropped in  
at nightfall to have chat and hear the news, though  
there was but one road, and no other house was visible,  
—as if they ad come out of the earth. There we  
sometimes read old newspapers, who never before read  
new ones, and in the rustle of their leaves heard the  
dashing of the surf along the Atlantic shore, instead of  
the sough of the wind among the pines. But then walk-  
ing had given us an appetite even for the least palatable  
‘and nutritious food.

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336 A wars,  
  
Some hard and dry book in a dead language, which  
you have found it impossible to read st home, but for  
‘hich you have still a lingering regard, is the best to  
carry with you on a journey. At a country inn, in tho  
barren society of ostlers and travellers, I could under-  
take tho writers of the silver or the brazen age  
confidence. Almost the Inst regular service which I  
performed in the cause of literature was to read the  
works of  
  
   
  
   
  
AULUS PEBAIUB ¥LA00U8.  
  
If you have imagined what a divine work is spread  
out for the poet, and approach this author too, in the  
hope of finding the field at length fairly entered on, you  
will hardly dissent from the words of the prologue,  
  
   
  
“Ipuo semipaganan  
‘Ad mora Vatum carmen afferonostram.”  
  
al pagna  
Brlag my verses othe shrine ofthe posts.  
  
Here is none of the interior dignity of Virgil, nor  
the elegance and vivacity of Horgcs, nor will any sibyl  
be needed to remind you, that from those older Greek  
poets there is a sad descent to Persiue You can scarce-  
ly distinguish one harmonious sound amid this unmusical  
bickering with the follies of men.  
  
One sees that music has its place in thought, but hard-  
ly as yet in language. When the Muse arrives, wo  
wait for her to remould language, and impart to it her  
‘own rhythm. Hitherto the verse groans and labors  
with its load, and goes not forward blithely, singing by  
the way. ‘The best ode may be parodied, indeed is it-  
self @ parody, and has @ poor and trivial sound, like 8

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THURSDAY. 827  
  
man stepping on the rounds of a ladder. Homer and  
Shakespeare and Milton and Marvell and Wordsworth  
are but the rustling of leaves and crackling of twigs in  
the forest, and there is not yet the sound of any bird.  
‘The Muse has never lifted up her voice to sing. Most  
of all, satire will not be sung. .A Juvenal or Persius do  
‘not marry music to their verse, but are measured fault-  
finders at best; stand but just outside the faults they  
condemn, and so are concerned rather about the mon-  
ster which they have escaped, than the fair prospect  
Defore them. Let them live on an age, and they will  
have travelled out of his shadow and reach, and found  
other objects to ponder.  
  
‘As long as there is satire, the poet i as it were, par-  
ticeps criminis. One sees not but he had best let bad  
take care of itself, and have to do only with what is be-  
yond suspicion. If you light on the least vestige of  
truth, and itis the weight of the whole body still which  
stamps the faintest trace, an eternity will not suffice to  
extol it, while no evil is so huge, but you grudge to  
bestow on it a moment of hate. ‘Truth never turns to  
rebuke falsehood; her own straightforwardness is the  
severest correction. Horace would not have written  
satire so well if he had not been inspired by it, as by a  
pansion, and fondly cherished his vein. In his odes, the  
love always exceeds the hate, so that the severest satire  
still singe itself, and the poet is satisfied, though the folly  
bbe not corrected.  
  
‘A sort of necessary order in the development of  
Genius is, first, Complaint ; second, Plaint; third, Love,  
‘Complaint, which is the condition of Persius, lies not in  
the province of poetry. Erelong the enjoyment of a  
superior good would have changed his disgust into re-

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828, A ware,  
  
grot. We can never have much sympathy with the  
complainer; for after searching nature through, we con-  
clude that he must be both plaintiff and defendant too,  
and 0 had best come to a settlement without « bearing.  
‘He who receives an injury is to some extent an accom  
plice of the wrong-doer.  
  
Perhaps it would be truer to say, that the highest  
strain of the muso is essentially plaintive. ‘The saint's  
are still ears of joy. Who has ever heard the Jmnocent  
ing?  
  
But the divinest poem, or the life of a great man, is  
the severest satire; as impersonal as Nature herself, and  
Tike the sighs of her winds in the woods, which convey  
ever a slight reproof to the hearer. The greater the  
genius, the keener the edge of the satire.  
  
Hence we have to do only with the rare and fragmen-  
tary traits, which least belong to Persius, or shall wo  
say, are the properest utterances of his muse; since that  
which be says best at any time is what he can best say  
at all times. ‘The Spectators and Ramblers have not  
failed to cull some quotable sentences from this garden  
‘oo, 60 pleasant is it to meet even the most familiar truth  
in @ new dress, when, if our neighbor had said it, we  
should have passed it by as hackneyed. Out of these  
six satires, you may perhaps select some twenty Tines,  
‘which ft 20 well as many thoughts, that they will recur  
to the scholar almost as readily as a natural image;  
though when translated into familiar language, they love  
that insular emphasis, which fitted them for quotation,  
Such ines a8 the following, translation cannot render  
commonplace. Contrasting the man of true religion  
‘with those who, with jealous privacy, would fain carry  
on a secret commerce with the gods, he says:

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suunspar. 829  
“land culvs promptum ext, marmurque humilooque susaros  
‘Toler do tamplis; ot aperto vvere voto:  
  
Its not easy for every one to take murmurs and low  
‘Whispers out of the tamples, and liv with open vow  
  
   
  
   
  
‘To the virtuous man, the universe is the only sanctum  
sanctorum, and the penetralia of the temple are the  
broad noon of his existence. Why should he betake  
himself to a subterranean crypt, as if it were the only  
hholy ground in all the world which he had left unpro-  
faned? ‘The obedient aoul would only the more discover  
and familiarize things, and escape more and more into  
light and air, as having henceforth done with secrecy, so  
‘that the universe shall not seem open enough for it. At  
length, it is negleotfal even of that silence which is con-  
sistent with true modesty, but by its independence of all  
confidence in its disclosures, makes that which it imparts  
0 private to the hearer, that it becomes the care of the  
‘whole world that modesty be not infringed,  
  
‘To the man who cherishes a secret in his breast, there  
{sa still greater secret unexplored. Our most indifferent  
‘acts may be matter for secrecy, but whatever we do with  
‘the utmost truthfulness and integrity, by virtue of its  
pureness, must be transparent as light,  
  
In the third satire, he asks:—  
  
“Bet aligld qud tons ot fn quod divgis arcu?  
‘An passim sequeriscorvo, tetra, Itove,  
Securus qub pes fra, atque ex tempore vivis?™  
  
Is there anything to which thou tendeat, and gaint which thoa  
  
direteat thy bow?  
  
(Or dost thon puns crows at random, with pottery or clay,  
  
(Carelus whither thy foot bene thee, and live ex tempore?  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘The bad sense is always a secondary one. Language  
‘oes not eppear to have justice done it, but is obviously

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ifleance, when any  
‘meanness is described. The truest construction is not  
ut upon it, What may readily be fashioned into a  
rule of wisdom, is here thrown in the teeth of the slug-  
gard, and constitutes the front of his offence. Univer-  
sally, the innocent man will come forth from the sharp-  
cst inquisition and lecturing, the combined din of reproof  
and commendation, with a faint sound of eulogy in his  
ears. Our vices always lic in the direction of our  
virtues, and in their best estate are but plausible imita-  
tins of the latter. Falsehood never attains to the  
Aigaity of entire falseness, but is only an inferior sort of  
truth; if it were more thoroughly false, it would incur  
danger of becoming true.  
  
“Securas quo pes frat, utque ex tempore eis"  
  
   
  
is then the motto of a wise man. For first, as the subtle  
discernment of the language would have taught us, with  
all his negligence he is still secure; but the sluggard,  
notwithstanding his heedlessness, is insecure.  
  
‘Tho life of a wise man is most of all extemporaneous,  
for he lives out of an eternity which includes all time.  
‘The cunning mind travels further back than Zoroaster  
each instant, and comes quite down to the present with  
its revelation. ‘The utmost thrift and industry of think-  
ing give no man any stock in lifes his eredit with. the  
inner world is no better, his capital no larger. He must,  
‘try his fortune again to-day as yesterday. All questions  
rely on the present for their solution. ‘Time measures  
‘but itself, The word that is written may be  
postponed, but not that on the lip. If this is what the  
‘ccasion says, let the occasion say it. All the world is  
forward to prompt him who gets up to live without his  
creed in his pocket.

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‘THURSDAT. 331  
In the fifth satire, which is the best, T find, —  
“Sta contr ratio, ot tertam gamit in sare,  
Ne cent cere quod quia Viabit agenda”  
  
‘Reuaon opposes and whisper in the sacet ear,  
‘That it a uot lawful todo tat whieh ono will spol by ding.  
  
Only they who do not see how anything might be better  
done are forward to try their hand on it. Even the  
‘master workman must be encouraged by the reflection,  
‘that his awkwardness will be incompetent to do that thing  
hharm, to which his skill may fail to do justice. Here is  
zo apology for neglecting to do many things from a sense  
of our incapacity, —for what deed does not fall maimed  
and imperfect from our hands ?— but only a warning to  
Dungle less.  
  
‘The satires of Persius are the furthest possible from  
inspired ; evidently a chosen, not imposed subject. Per-  
hhaps I have given him credit for more earnestness than  
is apparent; but it is certain, that that which alone we  
can call Persius, which is forever independent and oon-  
sistent, was in earnest, and eo sanctions the sober con-  
sideration of all. The artist and his work are not to be  
separated. ‘The most wilfully foolish man cannot stand  
aloof from his folly, but the deed and the doer together  
make ever one sober fact. ‘There is but one stage for  
the peasant and the actor. ‘The buffoon cannot bribe  
‘you to laugh always at his grimaces ; they shall seulpture  
‘themselves in Egyptian granite, to stand heavy as the  
pyramids on the ground of his character.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘Suns rose and eet and found us still on the dank forest  
path which meanders up the Pemigewasset, now more

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332 a were.  
  
like an otter’s or a marten's trail, or where a beaver had  
ragged his trap, than where the wheels of travel raiso  
fa dust; where towns begin to serve as gores, only to  
hold the earth together. The wild pigeon sat secure  
‘above our beads, high on the dead limbs of naval pines,  
reduced to a robin’s size. The very yards of our hostel-  
ries inclined upon the skirts of mountains, and, es we  
passed, we looked up at a steep angle at the stems of  
‘maples waving in the clouds.  
  
Far up in the country, — for we would be faithful to  
our experience, — in Thornton, perhaps, we met a soldier  
lad in the woods, going to muster in fall regimentals,  
and holding the middle of the road; deep in the forest,  
with shouldered musket and military step, and thoughts  
of war and glory all to himself. Tt was a sore trial to  
the youth, tougher than many a batile, to get by us  
creditably and with soldierlike bearing. Poor man!  
He actually shivered like a reed in his thin military  
pants, and by the time we had got up with him, all the  
sternnes that becomes the soldier had forsaken his face,  
‘and he skulked past as if ho were driving his father’s  
sheep under a sword-proof helmet. It was too much  
for him to earry any extra armor then, who could not  
easily dispose of his natural arms. And for his legs,  
they were ‘ike heavy artillery in boggy places; better  
to.cut the traces and forsake them. His greaves chafed  
nd wrestled one with another for want of other foes.  
But he did get by and get off with all his munitions,  
and lived to fight another day; and I do not record this  
on on his honor and real bravery  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
as casting any suspi  
  
in the field.  
‘Wandering on through notches which the streams had  
  
‘made, by the side and over the brows of hoar hills and

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‘THURSDAY. 838  
  
‘mountains, across the stumpy, rocky, forested, and bepas-  
tured country, we at length crossed on prostrate trees  
over the Amonoosuck, and breathed the free sir of Un-  
appropriated Land. ‘Thus, in fair days as well as foul,  
‘we had traced up the river to which our native stream  
is a tributary, until from Merrimack it became the  
‘Pemigewasset that leaped by our side, and when we had  
passed its fountain-head, the Wild Amonoosuck, whose  
puny channel was crossed at a stride, guiding us toward  
its distant source among the mountains, and at length,  
without its guidance, we were enabled to reach the sum-  
mit of Acrococuoox.  
  
"Sweet days, to ooo, so calm, so bright,  
‘The bridal ofthe earth and ak,  
Sweet dewa shall weep thy fll to-night,  
"For thon mast dia.”  
Henexar.  
  
‘When we returned to Hooksett, week afterward, the  
‘melon man, in whose corn-bara we had hung our tent  
‘and buffaloes and other things to dry, was already picking  
hhis bope, with many women and children to help him.  
‘We bought one watermelon, the largest in his patch, to  
carry with us for ballast. It was Nathan's, which he  
right sel if he wished, having been conveyed to bir in  
the green state, and owned daily by his eyes. After due  
consultation with “ Father,” the bargain was concluded,  
—we to buy it at a venture on the vine, green oF ripe,  
our risk, and pay “what the gentlemen pleased.” It  
proved to be ripe; for we had had honest experience in  
‘selecting this fruit.  
  
‘Finding our boat safe in its harbor, under Uncannunue

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884 A Wars.  
  
‘Mountain, with a fair wind and the current in our falvor,  
  
‘we couumeoced our retara voyage af noon, siting at our  
‘eaxo and conversing, or in silence watching for the last  
trace of each reach in the river as a bend concealed it  
from our view. As the season was farther advanced, the  
‘wind now blew steadily from the north, and with our sail  
set we could occasionally lie on our oars without loss of  
time. ‘The lumbermen throwing down wood from the top  
of the high bank, thirty or forty feet above the water,  
that it might be sent down stream, paused in their work  
to watch our retreating sail. By this time, indeed, we  
‘were well known to the boatmen, and were hailed as the  
Revenue Cutter of the stream. As we sailed rapidly  
down the river, shut in between two mounds of earth, the  
sounds of this timber rolled down the bank enbanced the  
tilence and vastness of the noon, and we fancied that  
only the primeval echoes were awakened. ‘The vision  
of a distant scow just heaving in sight round a headland  
also increased by contrast the solitude.  
  
‘Throogh the din and desultoriness of noon, even in  
the most Oriental city, is seen the fresh and primitive  
and savage nature, in which Scythians and Ethiopians  
and Indians dwell. What is echo, what are light and  
shade, day and night, ocean and stars, earthquake and  
eclipse, there? ‘The works of man are everywhere swal-  
lowed up in the immensity of Nature. ‘The Zgean Sea  
is but Lake Huron still to the Indian, Also there is all,  
the refinement of civilized life in the woods under a sylvan.  
garb. The wildest scenes have an air of domesticity and  
hhomeliness even to the citizen, and when the ficker’s  
cackle is heard in the clearing, he is reminded that civ-  
ilization has wrought but little change there. Science is  
welcome to the deepest recesses of the forest, for there

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sHURSDAY. 835  
  
too nature obeys the same old civil laws. ‘The little red  
bug on the stump of a pine, — for it the wind shifts and  
the sun breaks through the clouds. In the wildest na-  
ture, there is not only the material of the most cultivated  
Jife, and a sort of anticipation of the last result, but a  
greater refinement already than is ever attained by man.  
‘There is papyrus by the river-side, and rushes for light,  
‘and the goote only flies overhead, ages before the studi-  
‘ous are born or letters invented, and that literature  
‘which the former suggest, and even from the first have  
rradely served, if may beman does not yet use them to  
express, Nature is prepared to welcome into her scen-  
ery the finest work of human art, for she is hereelf an  
art so canning that the artist never appears in his work.  
  
Art is not tame, and Nature is not wild, in the ordi  
nary sense. A perfect work of man’s art would also be  
wild or natural in a good sense. Man tames Nature  
only that he may at Inst make her more free even than  
he found her, though he may never yet have succeeded.  
  
   
  
‘With this propitious breeze, and the help of our oars,  
‘we soon reached the Falls of Amoskeng, and the mouth  
of the Piscataquoag, and recognized, as we swept rapidly  
by, many a fair bank and islet on which our eyes had  
rested in the upward passage. Our boat was like that  
which Chaucer describes in his Dream, in which the  
knight took his departure from the island,  
  
“To journey for his mariage,  
‘And retara with such an boat,  
  
‘Toat wedded might bo lust and mowt  
‘Which barge was as a man’s thought,  
  
After bis pleare to him brought,  
  
‘The quoeos herself accustomed aya  
  
In the same barge to play,

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336 A WEEK.  
  
1 needed nether mast no rother,  
  
have not heard of each another,  
  
‘No master fr the governance,  
  
io sayle by thought snd pleasannce,  
thou Inbor east and west,  
  
‘All was one, calme or tempast.”  
  
So we sailed this afternoon, thinking of the saying of  
‘Pythagoras, thoogh we had no pecaliar right to remem-  
ber it, “It is beautiful when prosperity is present with  
intellect, and when sailing as it were with a prosperous  
‘wind, actions are performed looking to virtue; just as a  
pilot looks to the motions of the stars.” All the world  
‘reposes in beauty to him who preserves equipoise in his  
life, and moves serenely on his path without secret vio-  
ence; as he who sails down a stream, be has only to  
steer, keeping his bark in the middle, and carry it round  
the falls. The ripples curled away in our wake, like  
Finglets from the head of a child, while we steadily hela  
‘on our course, and under the bows we watched  
  
   
  
The ewaying sof,  
‘Mado by th delicate wave pared in front  
  
‘As through the gentle element we move  
  
Like shadows gliding throogh untroubled dreams.”  
  
‘The forms of beauty fall naturally around the path of  
hhim who is in the performance of his proper work; as  
the curled shavings drop from the plane, and borings  
cluster round the auger. Undolation is the gentlest and  
‘most ideal of motions, produced by one fluid falling on  
another. Rippling is a more graceful flight. From a  
hilltop you may detect in it the wings of birds endlesaly  
repeated. ‘The two waving lines which represent the  
fight of birds appear to have been copied from the rip-  
ple.

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snenspar. 3387  
  
‘Tho trees made an admirable fence to the land-cape,  
skirting the horizon on every side. ‘The single trees and  
‘the groves left standing on the interval appeared nat-  
ually disposed, though the farmer had consulted only his  
‘convenience, for he too falls into the scheme of Nature.  
Art can never match the luxury and superfluity of Na-  
ture. In the former all is seen; it cannot afford con-  
‘eealed wealth, and is niggardly in comparison: but Na-  
ture, even when she is scant and thin outwardly, satisfies  
us still by the assurance of a certain generosity at the  
roots. In swamps, where there is only here and there  
fan evergreen tree amid the quaking moss and cran-  
berry beds, the bareness does not suggest poverty. ‘The  
single-spruce, which I had hardly noticed in gardens,  
attracts me in such places, and now first I understand  
‘why men try to make them grow about their houses.  
But though there may be very perfect specimens in  
front-yard plots, their beauty is for the most part inef-  
fectual there, for there is no such assurance of kindred  
‘wealth beneath and around them, to make them show to  
advantage. As we have said, Nature is « greater and  
more perfect art, the art of God; though, referred to  
herself, she is genius; and there is a similarity between  
her operations and man’s art even in the details and tri-  
fies. When the overhanging pine drops into the water,  
by the sun and water, and the wind rubbing it against  
the shore, its boughs are worn into fantastic shapes, and  
white and smooth, as if turned in @ lathe. Man's art has  
wisely imitated those forms ioto which all matter is most  
inclined to run, as foliage and fruit. .A hammock swung  
ina grove assumes the exact form of a canoe, broader  
‘or narrower, and higher or lower at the ends, as more  
‘or fewer persons are in it, and it rolls in the air with  
  
15 Y

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898 A WEEK,  
  
the motion of the body, like a canoe in the water. Our  
shavings and its dust about ; her art ex-  
ings and the dust whicli we  
make. She has perfected herself by an eternity of prac  
tice, The world is well kept; no rubbish accumulates  
the morning air is clear even at this day, and no dust  
hhas settled on the grass. Behold how the evening now  
steals over the fields, the shadows of the trees creeping  
further and farther into the meadow, and erelong the  
stars will come to bathe in these retired waters. Her  
undertakings are secure and never fail. If Twere awak-  
‘ened from a deep sleep, T should know w! of the  
meridian the sun might be by the aspect of nature, and  
by the chirp of the erickets, and yet no painter ean paint  
this difference. ‘The landscape contains a thousand dials  
which indicate the natural divisions of time, the shadows  
of a thousand styles point to the hour.  
“Not only oe the dla’ tac  
‘This alent phantom day by dey,  
  
‘With slow, unson, unceasing pace  
‘Steals moment, month, and yeare away  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
It is almost the only game which the trees play at, this  
it-for-tat, now this side in the sun, now that, the drama  
of the day. In deep ravines under the eastern sides of  
cliff, Night forwardly plants her foot even at noonday,  
and as Day retreats she steps into his trenches, skul  
from tree to tree, from fence to fence, until at last she  
site in his citadel and draws out her forces into the  
plain. It may be that the forenoon is brighter than the  
‘afternoon, not only because of the greater transparency

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mcnspar. 889  
  
of its atmosphere, but because we naturally look most  
{nto the west, as forward into the day, and 0 in the  
forenoon see the sunny side of things, but in the after-  
noon the shadow of every tree.  
  
The afternoon is now far advanced, and a fresh and  
leisurely wind is blowing over the river, making long  
reaches of bright ripples. ‘The river bas done its stint,  
‘and appears not to flow, but lie at its length reflecting  
the light, and the haze over the woods is like the inau-  
dible panting, or rather the gentle perspiration of resting  
natare, rising from a myriad of pores into the attenuated  
atmosphere.  
  
On the thirty-first day of March, one hundred and  
forty-two years before this, probably about this time in  
the afternoon, there were hurriedly paddling down this  
part of the river, between the pine woods which then  
fringed these banks, two white women and a boy, who  
had left an island at the mouth of the Contoocook before  
daybreak. ‘They were slightly clad for the season, in  
the English fashion, and handled their paddles unskil-  
fully, but with nervous energy and determination, and  
at the bottom of their canoe lay the still bleeding scalps  
of ten of the aborigines. ‘They were Hannah Dustan,  
and ber nurse, Mary Neff, both of Haverhill, eighteen  
tiles from the mouth of this river, and an English boy,  
named Samuel Lennardson, escaping from captivity  
among the Indians. On the 15th of March previous,  
Hannah Dustan had been compelled to rise from child  
bed, and half dressed, with one foot bare, accompanied  
by her nurse, commence an uncertain march, in still  
inclement weather, through the snow and the wilder-  
ness, She had seen her seven elder children flee with

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340 a ween,  
  
their father, but knew not of their fate. She had seen  
her infant's brains dashed out against an apple-tree, and  
hhad left her own and her neighbors’ dwellings in ashes.  
‘When she reached the wigwam of her captor, situated  
on an island in the Merrimack, more than twenty miles  
above where we now are, she had been told that. she  
tand her nurse were soon to be taken to a distant Indian  
‘settlement, and there made to run the gauntlet naked.  
Tho family of this Indian consisted of two men, threo  
women, and seven children, beside an English boy,  
‘whom she found prisoner among them. Having do-  
termined to attempt her escape, she instructed the boy  
to inquire of one of the men, how he should despatch an  
‘enemy in the quickest manner, and take his scalp.  
“ Strike ‘em there,” said he, placing his finger on his  
temple, and he also showed him bow to take off the  
scalp. On the morning of the Slst sho arose before  
daybreak, and awoke her nurse and the boy, and taking  
‘the Indians’ tomabawks, they killed them all in their  
sleep, excepting one favorite boy, and one squaw who  
flied wounded with him to the woods. ‘The English boy  
struck the Indian who bad given him the information,  
on the temple, as he had been directed. ‘They then  
collected all the provision they could find, and took their  
master’s tomahawk and gun, and ecuttling all the canoes  
Dut one, commenced their fight to Haverhill, distant  
about sixty miles by the river. But after having pro-  
‘ecoded a short distance, fearing that her story would not  
bbe believed if she should escape to tell it, they returned  
‘to the silent wigwam, and taking off the scalps of the  
dead, put them into a bag as proofs of what they had  
one, and then retracing their steps to the shore in the  
‘wilight, recommenced their voyage.

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‘THURSDAY. 841  
  
Early this morning this deed was performed, and  
row, perchance, these tired women and this boy, their  
‘clothes stained with blood, and their minds racked with  
alternate resolution and fear, are making a hasty meal  
of parched corn and moose-meat, while their canoe glides  
under thes pine roots whose stumps are still standing  
on the bank. ‘They are thinking of the dead whom they  
have left behind on that solitary isle far up tho stream,  
‘and of the relentless living warriors who are in pursuit.  
Every withered leaf which the winter has left seems to  
know their story, and in its rustling to repeat it and be-  
tray them. An Indian lurks behind every rock and  
pine, and their nerves cannot bear the tapping of a  
woodpecker. Or they forget their own dangers and  
their deeds in conjecturing the fate of their kindred, and  
whether, if they escape the Indians, they shall find the  
former atill alive. They do not stop to cook their meals  
‘upon the bank, nor land, except to carry their canoe  
about the falls. ‘The stolen birch forgets its master and  
does them good service, and the swollen current bears  
‘them swiftly along with little need of the paddle, except  
to steer and keep them warm by exercise. For ice is  
floating in the rivers the spring is opening the musk-  
rat and the beaver are driven out of their holes by the  
flood ; deer gaze at them from the bank; a few faint-  
singing forest birds, perchance, fly across the river to  
the northernmost shore ; the fish-hawk sails and screams  
overhead, and geese fly over with a startling clangor 5  
but they do not observe these things, or they speedily  
forget them. ‘They do not smile or chat all day.  
Sometimes they pass an Indian grave surrounded by its  
poling on the bank, or the frame of a wigwam, with a  
few coals left bebind, or the withered stalks still rustling

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342 A WEEE.  
  
fn the Indian's solitary cornfield on the interval. ‘The  
birch stripped of its bark, or the charred stump where &  
tree has been burned down to be made into a canoe,  
these are the only traces of man, —a fabulous wild man  
to us. On either side, the primeval forest. stretches  
‘away uninterropted to Canada, or to the “ South Sea”;  
to the white man a drear and howling wilderness, but to  
the Indian a home, adapted to his nature, and cheerful  
‘a5 the smile of the Great Spirit.  
  
‘While we loiter here this autumn evening, looking for  
‘8 spot retired enough, where we shall quietly rest to-  
night, they thus, in that chilly March evening, one hun  
dred and forty-two years before us, with wind and cur  
rent favoring, have already glided out of sight, not to  
camp, as we shall, at night, but while two sleep one will  
‘manage the canoe, and the swift stream bear them on-  
ward to the settlements, it may be, even to old Joh  
Lovewell's house on Salmon Brook to-night.  
  
Accarding to the historian, they escaped as by a mir-  
cle all roving bands of Indians, and reached thi  
hhomes in safety, with their trophies, for which the Gen-  
eral Court paid them fifty pounds. The family of Han-  
nah Dustan all assembled alive once more, except the  
{infant whose brains were dashed out against the apple  
‘ree, and there have been many who in later times have  
lived to say that they had eaten of the fruit of that apple-  
‘tree.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
This seems a long while ago, and yet it happened  
since Milton wrote his Paradise Lost. But its antiquity  
fs not the less great for that, for we do not regulate our  
historical time by the English standard, nor did the  
English by the Roman, nor the Roman by the Greek.

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‘THURSDAY. 348  
  
“We must look « long way back,” says Raleigh, “to  
find the Romans giving laws to nations, and their con-  
suls bringing kings and princes bound in chains to Rome  
jn triumph ; to see men go to Greece for wisdom, or  
Ophir for gold when now nothing remains but a poor  
paper remembrance of their former condition.” And  
yet, in one sense, not 20 far back as to find the Pena-  
‘cooks and Pawtuckets using bows and arrows and  
haatchets of stone, on the banks of the Merrimack, From  
this September afternoon, and from between these now  
cultivated shores, those times seemed more remote than  
‘the dark ages. On bebolding an old picture of Concord,  
‘as it appeared but seventy-five years ago, with a fair  
‘open prospect and a light on trees and river, as if it  
‘were broad noon, I find that I had not thought the eun  
shone in those days, or that men lived in broad daylight  
then. Still less do we imagine the sun shining on hill  
‘and valley during Philip's war, on the war-path of  
Church oF Philip, or later of Lovewell or Paugus, with  
serene summer weather, but they must have lived and  
fought in a dim twilight or night.  
  
‘The age of the world is great enough for our imagi-  
nations, even according to the Mosaic account, without  
borrowing any years from the geologist. From Adam  
and Eve at one leap sheer down to the deluge, and then  
through the ancient monarchies, through Babylon and  
Thebes, Brahma and Abraham, to Greece and the Ar-  
gonauis; whence we might start again with Orpheus  
and the Trojan war, the Pyramids and the Olympic  
game. and Homer and Athens, for our stages; and af-  
ter a breathing space at the building of Rome, continue  
our journey down through Odin and Christ to— Amer  
ica. It is a wearisome while. And yet the lives of but

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ait A WEEK.  
  
sixty old women, such as live under the hill, say of a  
century each, strung together, are sufficient to reach  
over the whole ground. Taking hold of hands they  
‘would span the interval from Eve to my own mother.  
A respectable tea-party merely,— whose gossip would  
be Universal History. The fourth old woman from  
myself suckled Columbus, — the ninth was nurse to the  
‘Norman Conqueror,— the nineteenth was the Virgin  
‘Mary,— the twenty-fourth the Cumean Sibyl, — the  
thirtieth was at.the ‘Trojan war and Helen her name, —  
the thirty-eighth was Queen Semiramis, — the sixtieth  
was Eve the mother of mankind. So much for the  
  
   
  
   
  
“01d women that lives under the il,  
‘And if sos not gone she lives there sil.  
  
It will not take a very great-granddaughter of hers to  
be in at the death of Time.  
  
«We can never safely exceed the actual facts in our  
‘narratives. Of pure invention, such as some suppose,  
there is no instance. To write true work of fiction  
‘even, is only to take leisure and liberty to describe some  
things more exactly as they are. A true account of tho  
actual is the rarest poetry, for common sense always  
takes a hasty and superficial view. ‘Though I am not  
much acquainted with the works of Goethe, I should say  
that it was one of his chief excellences as a writer, that  
he was satisfied with giving an exact description of  
things as they appeared to him, and their effect upon  
him. Most travellers have not self-respect enough to do  
this simply, and make objects and events stand around  
them ax the contre, but still imagine more favorable  
positions and relations than the actual ones, and so we  
‘get no valuable report from them at all. Tn his Italian

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‘7HURSDAT. 35  
  
‘Travels Goethe jogs slong at a snail's pace, but always  
mindful that the earth is beneath and the heavens aro  
above him. His Italy is not merely the fatherland of  
lazzaroni and virtuosi, and scene of splendid ruins, but a  
solid turf-clad soil, daily shined on by the sun, and  
nightly by the mooo. Even the few showers are faith-  
fally recorded. He speaks as an unconcerned spectator,  
‘whose object is faithfully to describe what he sees, and  
that, for the most part, in the order in which he sees it.  
Even his reflections do not interfere with his deserip-  
tions. In one place he speaks of himself as giving £0  
glowing and truthful a description of an old tower to the  
peasants who had gathered around him, that they who  
hhad been born and brought up in the neighborhood must  
needs look over their shoulder, “ that,” to use his own  
‘words, “ they might behold with their eyes, what I had  
praised to their ears,”—“and I added nothing, not  
even tho ivy which for centuries had decorated the  
walls” It would thus be possible for inferior minds to  
produce invaluable books, if this very moderation were  
not the evidence of superiority ; for the wise are not so  
much wiser than others as respecters of their own wis-  
dom. Some, poor in spirit, record plaintively only what  
hhas happened to them; but others how they have hap-  
pened to the universe, and the judgment which they  
hhave awarded to circumstances. Above all, he possessed  
a hearty good-will to all men, and never wrote a cross  
cor even careless word. On one occasion the post-boy  
smivelling, “ Signor perdonate, quésta ® la mia patra,”  
hho confesses that “to me poor northerner came some-  
thing tear-like into the eyes.”  
  
Goethe's whole education and life were those of the  
  
artis. He lacks the unconsciousness of the poet. In  
we

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36 A weEx.  
  
his antobiography he describes accurately the life of the  
  
author of Wilhelm Meister. For as there is in that  
  
book, mingled with a rare and serene wisdom, a certain  
  
pettiness or exaggeration of trifes, wisdom applied to  
  
produce a constrained and partial and merely well-bred  
  
man,—a magnifying of the theatre till life itself is  
  
‘turned into a stage, for which it is our duty to study our  
  
parts well, and conduct with propriety and precision, —  
  
‘0 in the autobiography, the fault of his education is, #0  
  
‘to speak, its merely artistic completeness. Nature is  
hindered, though she prevails at last in making an un-  
‘usually catholic impression on the boy. It is the life of a  
city boy, whose toys are pictures and works of art, whose  
wonders are the theatre and kingly processions and  
erownings. As the youth studied minutely the order  
and the degrees in the imperial procession, and suffered  
none of its effect to be lost on him, so the man aimed  
to secare a rank in society which would satisfy his no-  
tion of fitness aad respectability. He was defrauded of  
much which the savage boy enjoys. Indeed, he himself  
bas occasion to say in this very autobiography, when at  
Jast he escapes into the woods without the gates:  
“Thus much is certain, tht only the undefinable, wide-  
expanding feelings of youth and of uncultivated nations  
are adapted to the sublime, which, whenever it may be  
excited in us through external objects, since it is either  
formless, or else moulded into forms which are’ incom-  
prehensible, must surround us with a grandeur which  
‘we find above our reach.” He farther says of himself:  
“T bad lived among painters from my childhood, and  
had accustomed myself to look at objects, as they did,  
‘with reference to art.” And this was his practice to the  
last, He was even too well-bred to be thoroughly brod.

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‘THURSDAY: 347  
  
He says that he had had no intercourse with the lowest  
‘lass of his towns-boys. ‘The child should have the ad~  
vantage of ignorance as well as of knowledge, and is for-  
tunate ifhe gets his share of neglest and exposure.  
  
“The laws of Natare brek the rules of Art”  
  
‘The Man of Genius may at the same time be, indeed  
is commonly, an Artist, but the two are not to be con-  
founded. ‘The Man of Genius, referred to mankind, is  
‘an originator, an inspired or demonic man, who pro-  
duces a perfect work in obedience to laws yet unex-  
plored. ‘The Artist is he who detects and applies the  
law from observation of the works of Genius, whether  
‘of man or nature. The Artisan is he who merely ap-  
plies the rules which others have detected. ‘There has  
been no man of pure Genius; as there has been none  
wholly destitute of Genius.  
  
Poetry is the mysticiam of mankind.  
  
‘The expressions of the poet eannot be analyzed ; his  
fentence is one word, whose syllables are words.  
‘There are indeed no words quite worthy to be eet to his  
music. But what matter if we do not hear the words  
always, if we hear the music?  
  
‘Much verse fails of being poetry because it was not  
written exactly at the right crisis, though it may have  
bbeen inconosivably near to it, Tt is only by a miracle  
that poetry is written at all. It is not recoverable  
thought, but a hue caught from a vaster receding  
thought.  
  
‘A poem is one undivided unimpeded expression fallen  
Fipe into literature, and it is undividedly and unim-  
pedeily received by those for whom it was matured,  
  
If you can speak what you will never hear, if you

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348, a wees.  
  
can write what you will never read, you have done rate  
things.  
‘The work we choos shouldbe our om,  
‘God lots sone.  
  
‘The unconsciousness of man is the conscioumess of  
God.  
  
Deep are the foundations of sincerity. Even stone  
‘walls havo their foundation below the frost.  
  
‘What is produced by a freo stroke charms us, like the  
forms of lichens and leaves. ‘There is a certain perfec-  
tion in accident which we never consciously attain,  
Draw a blunt quill filled with ink over a sheet of paper,  
‘and fold the paper before the ink is dry, transversely to  
this line, and a delicately shaded and regular figure will  
bbe produced, in some respects more pleasing than an  
elaborate drawing.  
  
‘Tho talent of composition is very dangerons,— the  
striking out the heart of life at a blow, as the Indian  
takes off a scalp. I feel as if my lify had grown more  
‘outward when I can express it.  
  
   
  
On his journey from Brenner to Verona, Goethe  
‘writes: “The Tees flows now more gently, and makes in  
‘many places broad sands. On the land, near to the  
water, upon the hillsides, everything is 90 closely  
planted one to another, that you think they must choke  
‘one another, — vineyards, maize, mulberry-trees, apples,  
pears, quinces, and nuts. ‘The dwarf elder throws itself  
‘vigorously over the walls. Ivy grows with strong stems  
up the rocks, and spreads itself wide over them, the  
lizard glides through the intervals, and everything that  
‘wanders to and fro reminds one of the loveliest pictures  
of art, ‘The women's tufts of hair bound up, the men’s

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}  
4 ‘THURSDAT, 349  
‘bare breasts and light jackets, the excellent oxen which  
they drive home from market, the little asses with their  
loads, — everything forms a living, animated Heinrich  
Roos. And now that it is evening, in the mild air a  
few clouds rest upon the mountains, in the heavens more  
stand still than move, and immediately ater sunset tho  
chirping of crickets begins to grow more loud ; then one  
feels for once at home in the world, and not as concealed  
‘or in exile. Tam contented as though I bed been born  
‘and brought up here, and were now returning from a  
Greenland or whaling voyage. Even the dust of my  
Fatherland, which is often whirled sboat the wagon,  
‘and which for 00 long a time I had not seen, is greeted.  
‘The clock-and-bell jingling of the crickets is altogether  
lovely, penetrating, and agreeable. It sounds bravely  
‘when roguish boys whistle in emulation of » field ‘of  
‘such songstresses. One fancies that they really enhance  
‘one another. Also the evening is perfectly mild as the  
day.”  
  
“If one who dwelt in the south, and came hither from  
the south, should hear of my rapture hereupon, he would  
deem me very childish, Alas! what I here express I  
hhave long known while I suffered under an unpropitious  
heaven, and now may T joyful feel this joy as an excep-  
tion, which we should enjoy everforth as an eternal ne-  
cessity of our nature.”  
  
   
  
‘Thus we “sayled by thought and pleasaunce,” as  
Chaucer says, and all things seemed with us to flows  
the shore itself, and the distant lif, were dissolved by  
the undiluted air. The hardest material seemed to obey  
the same Inw with the most fluid, and #0 indeed in the  
Jong run it does. ‘Trees were but rivers of sap and

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350 A Weer,  
  
‘woody fibre, flowing from the atmosphere, and  
tying into the earth by their trunks, as their spoots  
flowed upward to the surface. And in the heafrens  
there were rivers of stars, and milky-ways, alreadyy be-  
ginning to gleam and ripple over our heads. ‘Tjhere  
‘were rivers of rock on the surface of the earth, and riv-  
‘ere of ore in its bowels, and our thoughts flowed ind  
cirenlated, and this portion of time was but the current  
hour. Let us wander where we will, the universe is  
Duilt round about us, and we are central stil. If we  
Jook into the heavens they are concave, and if we were to  
look into a gulf a8 bottomless it would be concave also.  
The sky is curved downward to the earth in the hiori-  
zon, because we stand on the plain. Idraw down its  
skirts, ‘The stars 60 low there seem loath to depart, but  
by a circuitous path to be remembering me, and returo-  
ing on their steps.  
  
‘Wo had already passed by broad daylight the scene  
of our encampment at Coos Falls, and at length we  
pitched our camp on the west bank, in the northern part  
of Merrimack, nearly opposite to the Iarge island on  
which we had spent the noon in our way up the river.  
  
‘There we went to bed that summer evening, on a  
sloping sbelf in the bank, a couple of rods from our boat,  
which was drawn up on the eand, and just behind a  
fringe of oaks which bordered the river ; without having  
disturbed any inhabitants but the epiders in the grass,  
which came out by the light of our lamp, and crawled  
over our buffaloes. When we looked out from under  
the tent, the trees were seen dimly through the mist,  
and a cool dew hung upon the grass, which seemed-to  
rejoice in the night, and with the damp air we inhaled a  
solid fragrance. Having eaten our supper of hot coooa

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‘rauRspar. 851  
  
and bread and watermelon, we soon grew weary of con-  
vversing, and writing in our journals, and, putting out the  
lantern which hung from the tent-pole, fell asleep.  
Unfortunately, many things have been omitted which  
should have been recorded in our journal; for though we  
made it a rule to set down all our experiences therein,  
yet such a resolution is very hard to keep, for the im-  
Portant experience rarely allows us to remember such  
obligations, and so indifferent things get recorded, while  
that is frequently neglected. It is not easy to write in  
‘a journal what interests us at any time, because to write  
{is not what interests us.  
‘Whenever we awoke in the night, still eking out our  
reams with halfawakened thoughts it was not tll after  
an interval, when the wind breathed harder than usual,  
ipping the curtains of the tent, ana causing its cords to  
vibrate, that we remembered that we lay on the bank of  
the Merrimack, and not in our chamber at home. Wi  
our heads so low in the grass, we heard the river whirl-  
ing and sucking, and lapsing downward, kissing the  
bore as it went, sometimes rippling louder than usual,  
fand again its mighty current making only a slight lim-  
pid, trickling sound, as if our water-pail had sprung a  
leak, and the water wore flowing into tho grass by our  
side. ‘The wind, rustling the oaks and hazels, impressed  
us Tike a wakeful and inconsiderate person up at mid-  
night, moving about, and putting ‘things to rights, occa-  
sionally stirring up whole drawers full of leaves at a  
puff. There seemed to be a great haste and preparation  
throughout Nature, as for a distinguished visitor; all her  
aisles had to be swept in the night, by a thousand hand~  
maidens, and a thousand pots to be boiled for the next  
day's feasting ;—such » whispering bustle, as if ten

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352 a were,  
  
‘thousand fairies made their fingers fly, silently sewing  
at the new carpet with which the earth was to be clothed,  
and the new drapery which was to adorn the trees  
And thea the wind would lull and dio away, and we  
like it fell saleep again.

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FRIDAY.  
  
‘he Beeman tage  
  
‘on hi corse with atayod wettatos,  
  
‘err shonin, on ever waght io bagt  
  
‘Bi ged arma for tle weartonme  
  
‘Bot wth hs ore id wreope the wiry widernome:"  
‘mm.

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ed  
‘Dusty, and ihe an ety pxrmen showe”

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FRIDAY.  
  
‘As we lay awake long before daybreak, listening to  
the rippling of the river, and the rustling of the leaves,  
in suspense whether the wind blew up or down the  
stream, was favorable or unfavorable to our voyage, we  
already suspected that there was a change in the  
‘weather, from a freshness as of autumn in these sounds.  
‘The wind in the woods sounded like an incessant water-  
fall dashing and roaring amid rocks, and we even felt  
encouraged by the unusual sctivity of the elements. Ho  
‘who hears the rippling of rivers in these degenerate  
days will not utterly despair. ‘That night was the turn-  
4ng-point in the season. We had gone to bed in eum  
‘mer, and we awoke in auturon ; for summer passes into  
autumn in some unimaginable point of time, like the  
turning of a leaf.  
  
‘We found our boat in the dawn just as we had left it,  
and a2 if waiting for us, there on the shore, in autumn,  
all cool and dripping with dew, and our tracks still fresh  
in the wet sand around it, the fairies all gone or oon-  
cealed. Before five o'clock we pushed it into the fog,  
and, leaping in, at one shove were out of sight of the:  
shores, and began to sweep downward with the rushing  
iver, keeping charp lookout for rocks. We could  
see only the yellow gurgling water, and a solid bank of  
fog on every side, forming a small yard around us. We

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856 a ware.  
  
‘000 passed the month of the Souhegan, and the village  
of Merrimack, and as the mist gradually rolled away,  
‘and wo were relieved from the trouble of watching for  
rocks, we saw by tho fitting clouds, by the first russet  
‘tinge on the bills, by the rushing river, the cottages'‘on  
shore, and the shore itself, so coolly fresh and shining  
with dew, and later in the day, by the hue of the grape-  
ving, the goladfinch on the willow, the flickers flying in  
flocks, and when we passed near enough to the shore, as  
‘we fancied, by the faces of men, that the Fall had com-  
menced. The cottages looked more snug and comfort-  
able, and their inhabitants were seen only for a moment,  
‘and then went quietly in and shut the door, retreating  
inward to the haunts of summer.  
  
“And now the oold autumnal dews are ten  
‘Tovcobwed ev'ry greeny  
  
And by the low-ahora rowers doth appear  
‘The fus-declining year.”  
  
   
  
‘We heard the sigh of the first autumnal wind, and  
even the water had acquired a grayer hue. Tho #1  
mach, grape, and maple wore already changed, and the  
milkweed had turned to a deep rich yellow. In all  
woods the Jeaves were fast ripening for their fall; for  
their fall veins and lively gloss mark the ripe leaf, and  
not the sered one of the poets; and we knew that the  
maples stripped of their leaves among the earliest, would  
soon stand like a wreath of smoke along the edge of the  
meadow. Already the cattle were heard to low wildly  
in the pastures and along the highways, restlessly run-  
zing to and fro, as if in apprehension of the withering of  
the grass and of the approach of winter. Our thoughts,  
too, began to rustle,

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Ripa. 957  
  
As T pass along the streets of our village of Concord  
‘on the day of our annual Cattle-Show, when it usually  
happens that the leaves of the elms and buttonwoods  
‘begin fit to strew the ground under the breath of the  
October wind, the lively spirits in their sap seem to  
‘mount as high as any plough-boy’s let loose that day ;  
‘and they lead my thoughts away to the rustling woods,  
‘where the trees are preparing for their winter campaign,  
‘This autumnal festival, when men are gathered in  
crowds in the streets as regularly and by as natural a  
Jaw as the leaves cluster and rustle by the wayside, is  
naturally associated in my mind with the fall of the year.  
‘The low of cattle in the streets sounds like » hoarse  
symphony or running bass to the rustling of the leaves.  
‘The wiod goes hurrying down the country, gleaning  
‘every loose straw that is left in the flelds, while every  
farmer lad too appears to scud before it,— having  
donned his best pea-jacket and pepper-and-anlt waist-  
coat, his unbent trousers, outstanding rigging of duck or  
erseymere or corduroy, and his furry bat withal, — to  
‘country fairs and cattleshows, to that Rome among the  
villages where the treasures of the year are gathered.  
All the land over they go leaping the fences with their  
tough, idle palms, which bave never learned to hang by  
their sides, amid the low of calves and the bleating of  
sheep, — Amos, Abner, Elnathan, Elbridge, —  
  
“From staap pioe-bearing monntalss to the pla."  
  
I love these sons of earth every mother’s son of them,  
with their grest hearty hearts rushing tumaltuously i  
herds from spectacle to spectacle, as if fearful lest there  
should not be time between sun and sun to see them  
all, and the sun does not wait more than in haying.time,

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358 A WEEE.  
  
Whee Natare's dating, they live in the world  
‘Perplaxing not themselves ow iti hari."  
  
Running hither and thither with appetite for the coarse  
pastimes of the day, now with boisterous speed at the  
hheels of the inspired negro from whose larynx the melo-  
dies of all Congo and Guinea Coast have broke loose  
into our streets ; now to see the procession of « hundred  
yoke of oxen, all as august and grave as Osiris, or the  
Groves of neat cattle and milch cows as unspotted as  
Isis or Jo, Such as bad no love for Nature  
  
“etal,  
(Came lovers home fom thin great festival.”  
  
‘They may bring their fattest cattle and richest fruits to  
the fair, but they are all eclipsed by the show of men.  
‘These are stirring autumn days, when men sweep by in  
crowds, amid the rustle of leaves, like migrating finches 5  
this isthe trae harvest of the year, when the air is but  
the breath of men, and the rustling of leaves is as the  
trampling of the crowd. We read now-a-days of the  
ancient festivals, games, and processions of the Greeks  
and Etruscans, with a little ineredality, or at least with  
little sympathy but how natural-and irrepressible in  
every people is some hearty and palpable greeting of  
Nature. The Corybantes, the Bacchantes, the rude  
primitive tragedians with their procession and goat-song,  
fand the whole paraphernalia of the Panathenes, which  
appear s0 antiquated and peculiar, have their parallel  
now. ‘The husbandman is always better Greek than  
the scholar is prepared to appreciate,.and the old eus-  
tom still survives, while antiquarians and scholars grow  
gray in commemorating it. The farmers crowd to tho  
fair to-day in obedience to the same ancient law, which

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Faia 859  
  
   
  
Solon or Lycurgus did not enact, as naturally as bees  
swarm and follow their queen.  
  
It is worth the while to see the country’s people, how  
‘they pour into the town, the sober farmer folk, now all  
og, their very shirt and coat-collars pointing forward,  
—collars #0 broad as if they had put their shirts on  
‘wrong end upward, for the fashions always tend to su-  
perfluity,—and with an unusual springiness in their  
fait, jabbering earnestly to one another. ‘The more  
‘supple vagabond, too, is sure to appear on the least ru-  
mor of such a gathering, and the next day to disappear,  
‘and go into his hole like the seventeen-year locust, in an  
ever-shabby coat, though finer than the farmer’s best,  
yet never dressed ; come to see the sport, and have a  
‘hand in what is going, — to know “ what’s the row,” if  
there is any; to be where some men are drunk, some  
horses race, some cockerels fight; anxious to be shaking  
props under a table, and above all to see the «striped  
pig” He especially is the creature of the occasion.  
‘He empties both his pockets and his character into the  
stream, and swims in such a day. He dearly loves the  
social slush. ‘There is no reserve of soberness in him.  
  
T love to see the herd of men feeding heartily on  
coarse and succulent pleasures, as cattle on the busks  
and stalks of vegetables. ‘Though there are many  
crooked and crabbled specimens of humanity among  
them, run all to thorn and rind, and erowded out of  
shape by adverse circumstances, like the third chestnut  
in the burr, ¢0 that you wonder to see some heads wear  
fa whole hat, yet fear not that the race will fal or waver  
in them ; like the erabs which grow in hedges, they fur-  
nih the stocks of sweet and thrifty froits still, ‘Thus is  
nature recruited from age to age, while the fair and pal-

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860 A WEEE.  
  
stable varieties die out, and have their period. This  
is that mankind. How cheap must be the material of  
which so many men are made.  
  
‘The wind blew steadily down the stream, so that we  
kept our sails set, and lost not a moment of the forenoon  
by delays, but from early morning until noon were con-  
tinually dropping downward. With our hands on the  
steering-paddle, which was thrust deep into the river, or  
‘bending to the oar, which indeed we rarely relinquished,  
‘we felt each palpitation in the veins of our steed, and  
‘each impulse of the wings which drew us above. The  
‘carrent of our thoughts made as sudden bends as the  
river, which was continually opening new prospects to  
the east or south, but we are aware that rivers flow most  
rapidly and shallowest at these points. ‘The steadfast  
shores never once turned aside for us, but still trended  
‘as they were made; why then should we always turn  
aside for them?  
  
A man cannot wheedle nor overawe his Genius. Tt  
‘requires to be conciliated by nobler conduct than the  
‘world demands or can appreciate. ‘These winged  
‘thoughts are like birds, and will not be handled; even  
hhens will not let you touch them like quadrupeds.  
Nothing was ever 80 unfamiliar and startling to man  
as bis own thonghts  
  
‘To the rarest genius it is the most expensive to suc-  
ccumb and conform to the ways of the world. Genius  
is the worst of lumber, if the poet would float upon the  
breeze of popularity. ‘The bird of paradise is obliged  
constantly to fly against the wind, let its gay trappings,  
Pressing close to its body, impede its free movements.  
  
‘He is the best sailor who can steer within the fewest

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rnupar. 361  
  
points of the wind, and extract a motive power out of the  
greatest obstacles. Most begin to veer and tack as soon  
‘a5 the wind changes from aft, and as within the tropics  
it does not blow from all points of the compass, there  
fare some harbors which they can never reach.  
  
‘The poet is no tender slip of fairy stock, who requires  
peculiar institutions and edicts for his defence, but the  
toughest son of earth and of Heaven, and by his greater  
strength and endurance his fainting companions will ree-  
ognize the God in him. It is the worshippers of beau-  
ty, afterall, who have done the real pioneer work of the  
world.  
  
‘The poet will prevail to be popular in spite of his  
faults, and in epite of his beauties too. He will hit the  
nail on the head, and we sball not know the shape of his  
hammer. He makes us free of his hearth and heart,  
which is greater than to offer one the freedom of a city.  
  
Great men, unknown to their generation, have their  
fame among the great who have precoded them, and all  
true worldly fame subsides from their high estimate be-  
yond the stars.  
  
Orpheus does not hear the strains which issue from bis  
lyre, but only those which are breathed into it; for the  
original strain precedes the sound, by as much as the  
echo follows after. ‘The rest is the perquisite of th  
rocks and trees and beasts.  
  
‘When I stand in a library where is all the recorded  
‘wit of the world, but none of the recording, a mere accu-  
‘molated, and not truly cumulative treasure where im-  
‘mortal works stand side by side with anthologies which  
id not survive their month, and cobweb and mildew  
have already spread from these to the binding of those  
and happily I am rominded of what poetry is,— TI per-  
  
6

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362 A WEEK,  
  
ceive that Shakespeare and Milton did not foresee into  
what company they were to fall. Alas! that t0 soon  
the work of a true poet should be swept into such a dust-  
hole!  
  
The poet will write for his peers slone. Ho will re-  
‘member only that be saw truth and beauty from his posi-  
tion, and expect the time when a vision as broad shall  
overlook the same field as frecly.  
  
‘We are often prompted to speak our thoughts to our  
neigabors, or the single travellers whom we meet on the  
road, but poetry is a communication from our home and  
solitude addressed to all Intelligence. Tt never whis-  
pers in a private ear. Knowing this, we may under-  
‘stand those sonnets said to be addressed to particular  
persons, or “To a Mistress's Eyebrow.” Let none feel  
finttered by them. For poetry write love, and it will be  
equally true.  
  
‘No doubt it is an important difference between men  
of genius or poets, and men not of genius, that the latter  
are unable to grasp and confront the thought which  
them. But it is because it is too faint for expression, oF  
‘even conscious impression. What merely quickens oF  
retards the blood in their veins and fills their afternoons  
with pleasure they know not whence, conveys a distinet  
assurance to the finer organization of the poet.  
  
‘We talk of genius as if it were a mere knack, and the  
poet could only express what other men conceived. But  
in comparison with his task, the poet is the least talent  
ed of any; the writer of prose has more skill. See what  
talent the smith has. His material is pliant in his hands.  
‘When the poet is most inspired, is stimulated by an aura  
which never even colors the afternoons of common men,  
then his talent is all gone, and he is no longer poet.

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raipay. 368  
  
‘The gods do not grant him any skill more than another.  
They never put their gifts into his hands, but they en  
compass and sustain him with their breath.  
  
‘To eay that God bas given a man many and great  
talents, frequently means that he has brought his hea  
ens down within reach of his bands,  
  
‘When the poetic frenzy seizes us, we run and scratch  
with our pen, intent only on worms, calling our mates  
around the cock, and delighting in the dust we  
make, but do not detect where the jewel lies, which, per-  
haps, we have in the mean time cast to a distance, or  
quite covered up again,  
  
‘The poet’s body even is not fed like other men’s, but,  
‘he sometimes tastes the genuine nectar and ambrosia of  
the gods, and lives a divine life. By the healthfal and  
invigorating thrills of inspiration his life is preserved to  
a serene old age.  
  
Some poems are for holidays only. ‘They are polished  
and sweet, but itis the sweetness of sugar, and not such  
as toil gives to sour bread. ‘The breath with which the  
Poet utters his verse must bo that by which he lives.  
  
Great prose, of equal elevation, commands our respect  
more than great verse, since it implies a more perma-  
nent and level height, a life more pervaded with the  
grandeur of the thought. The poet often only makes an  
irruption, like a Parthian, and is off again, shooting while  
he retreats; but the prose writer has conquered like «  
Roman, and settled colonies.  
  
The true poem is not that which the public read.  
‘There is always a poem not printed on paper, coincident  
with the production of this, stereotyped in the poet's life.  
It is what he has become through his work. Not ho  
the idea expressed in stone, or on canvas or paper, is

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864 a worn,  
  
‘the question, but how far it has obtained form and ex-  
pression in the life of the artist. His true work will not  
stand in any prince's gallery.  
  
My Ife has been the poom T would have writ,  
‘But I could not both live and ntta It,  
  
‘THE POET'S DELAY.  
  
Ia van I s00 tho morning rise,  
‘Tn val observe the western lass,  
Wholly look to other sktes,  
  
‘Expecting lf by other ways,  
Amidst such boundloa wealth withoat,  
  
only still am poor within,  
‘The birds have sung their summer ont  
  
‘Batol my spring does not beg.  
‘hal [theo walt the antama wind,  
CCompelid to seek a milder day,  
‘And leave no curious neat bend,  
‘No woods stil echoing to my lay?  
  
‘This raw and gusty day, and the creaking of the oaks  
and pines on shore, reminded us of more northern climes  
than Greece, and more wintry seas than the Agean.  
‘The genuine remains of Ossian, or those ancient  
Poems which bear his name, though of less fame and  
extent, are, in many respects, of the same stamp with  
the Iliad itself He asserts the dignity of the bard no  
lesa than Homer, and in his era we hear of no other  
priest than he. It will not avail to call him » heathen,  
Decause he personifies the sun and addresses it; and  
what if his heroes did “worship the ghosts of their fa-  
thers,” their thin, airy, and unsubstantial forms? we  
‘worship bat the ghosts of our fathers in more substantial  
forme. Wo cannot bat respect the vigorous faith of

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rear. 365  
  
those heathen, who sternly believed somewhat, and are  
{inclined to say to the critics, who are offended by their  
superstitions rites, — Don't interrupt these men’s prayers.  
As if we knew more about human life and a God, than  
the heathen and ancients. Does English theology con-  
tain the recent discoveries!  
  
Ossian reminds us of the most refined and radest eras,  
of Homer, Pindar, Isaiah, and the American Indian, In  
his poetry,as in Homer's, only the simplest and most en-  
during features of humanity are seen, such essential parts  
of a man as Stonehenge exhibits of a temple; wo see  
the circles of stone, and the upright shaft alone. ‘The  
phenomena of life acquire almost an unreal and gigantic  
  
seen through his mists. Like all older and grander  
poetry, it is distinguished by the few elements in the  
lives of its heroes. ‘They stand on the heath, between  
‘the stars and the earth, shrunk to the bones and sinews,  
‘The earth is a boundless plain for their deeds. They  
lead such a simple, dry, and everlasting life, as hardly  
needs depart with the flesh, but is transmitted entire from  
age to age. There are but few objects to distract their  
sight, and their life is as unencumbered as the course of  
the stars they gaze at,  
“The wrathfl logs, on cai a  
‘Lok forward from behind thelr sida,  
  
‘And mark the wandering tars,  
‘That brillant westward move.”  
  
Tt does not cost much for these heroes to live; they do  
not want much furniture. ‘They are such forms of men  
only as can be seen afar through the mist, and have no  
costume nor dialect, but for language there is the tongue  
itself, and for costume there are always the skins of  
beasts and the bark of trees to be had. ‘They live out

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368 a were,  
  
their years by the vigor of their constitutions. They  
srvive storms and the spears of their foes, and perform.  
a fow heroic deeds, and then  
“Mounds wil anewer questions of thera,  
For many fata years.”  
  
‘Blind and infirm, they spend the remnant of their days  
listening to the lays of the bards, and feeling the weap-  
‘ons which laid their enemies low, and when at length  
they die, by convulsion of nature, the bard allows us  
‘8 short and misty glance into faturity, yet as clear, per-  
chance, as their lives had been. When Mac-Roine was  
slain,  
  
   
  
“His soul dopartd to his warlike aro,  
‘To llow misty forms of boar,  
‘In tompestoous islands bleak”  
  
‘The hero's cairn is erected, and the bard sings a brief  
‘igoificant strain, which will suffice for epitaph and biog-  
  
raphy.  
“The weak will Sod his bow in the dweling,  
‘The foable will attempt to bend i”  
  
Compared with this simple, fbrous life, our civilized  
history appears the chronicle of debility, of fashion, and  
the arts of luxury. But the civilized man misses no real  
refinement in the poetry of the radest era. It reminds  
hhim that civilization does bat dress men. Tt makes shoes,  
Dt it does not toughen the soles of the feet. It makes  
cloth of finer texture, but it does not touch the skin.  
side the civilized man stand the savage still in the  
place of honor. We are those blue-eyed, yellow-haired  
‘Saxons, those slender, dark-haired Normans.  
  
‘The profession of the bard attracted more respect in  
those days from the importance attached to fame. It

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FRIDAT. 367  
  
swas his province to recond the deeds of heroes. When  
Ossian hears the traditions of inferior bards, bo ex-  
claims, —  
  
“Tamnghtway vias th unt tales,  
  
‘And send Uhm down la fatal vers”  
  
His philosophy of life is expressed in the opening of the  
third Dusn of Ca-Lodin.  
  
“Whence have sprang th things tht are?  
‘And whither rll the passing years?  
‘Where does Time conceal its two beads,  
In dense impovetrable gloom,  
  
Is surface marked with heros’ dods alone?  
1 view the generations gone}  
  
‘The past appears but dim  
  
‘As objects by the moon's faint beams,  
‘Refeted from a distant Inks.  
  
se, indeed, the thunderboltaof war,  
  
But there the unmightyjoylea dwell,  
  
‘All howe who send not down their eds  
  
‘To far, enoceding times.”  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘The ignoble warriors die and are forgotten;  
  
\* Strangers come to balld a tower,  
‘And throw thels sabes overhend  
Some rasted swords appear In das  
One, bonding forward, says,  
  
"The arma belonged to heroes gone  
‘We nover heard their praise in ong."  
  
   
  
‘The grandeur of the similes is another feature which  
characterizes great poetry. Ossian seems to apenk a  
gigantic and universal language. ‘The images and pic-  
fares sceupy even much space in the landscape, as if  
they could be seen only from the sides of mountains, and  
“plains with a wide horizon, or across arms of the sea,  
‘The machinery is #0 massive that it cannot be less than

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868, a were.  
  
natural. Oivana says to the spirit of her father, “ Gray-  
Ihaired Torkil of Torne,” seen in the skies,  
  
Thom glidst away like receding sh  
  
   
  
So when the hosts of Fingal and Starme approach to  
  
battle,  
“With murmurs load, lke river fir,  
‘The race of Torne hither moved.”  
  
‘And when compelled to retire,  
  
“dragging hi spear bebind,  
‘Ondalin sak fa the distant wood,  
  
‘Like a fie upblasing ore it den’  
‘Nor did Fingal want a proper audience when he spoke;  
  
“A thoaaand orators Inlined  
‘To ear the lay of Fingal”  
  
   
  
   
  
‘The threats too would have deterred a man. Vengeance  
and terror were real. ‘Trenmore threatens the young  
‘warrior whom he meets on a foreign strand,  
  
“Toy mother shall find theo pal onthe shore,  
While lesening onthe waves she apion  
  
   
  
If Ossian’s heroes weep, itis from excess of strength,  
‘and not from weakness, « sacrifice or libation of fertile  
natures, like the perspiration of stone in summer's heat.  
‘We hardly know that tears have been shed, and it seems  
as if weeping were proper only for babes and heroes.  
‘Their joy and their sorrow are made of one stuf, like  
rain and snow, the rainbow and the mist. When Fillan  
‘was worsted in fight, and ashamed in the presence of  
  
Fingal,

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Ho strode away forthwith,  
‘And beat ia grief above a stream,  
His chooks bedewod with tar.  
‘From time to time th thistle gray  
“He lopped with hs inverted lane.”  
  
Crodar, blind and old, receives Ousian, son of Fingal,  
‘who comes to aid him in war;—  
  
“«Bfy eee have failed,’ anys be,‘ Crodar i blind,  
1a thy strength like that of thy fathors?  
‘Btretch, Oman, thine arm tothe hoary baled?  
  
T gave my arm to the king.  
‘The aged horo seized my hand  
Hl heaved a heavy sighs  
‘Tears owed Incessant down his chesk.  
‘Strong at thou, son of the mighty,  
‘Thongh not vo rendfal as Morve’s prison,  
  
‘Lat roy fest Bo spec in th hall  
Lat overy ewoet-volced minstrel sing  
‘Great in be whois within my walls,  
Sons of wave-eoholng Croma.’”  
  
‘Even Ossian himself, the hero-bard, pays tribute to the  
superior strength of his father Fingal.  
  
‘“Hlow beeuteout, mighty man, was thy mind,  
‘Why succosded Ossian without ite strength?”  
  
   
  
   
  
‘While we sailed fleetly before the wind, with the river  
‘gurgling under our stern, the thoughts of autumn coursed  
‘assteadily through our minds, and we observed less what  
was passing on the shore, than the dateless associations  
‘and impressions which the season awakened, anticipati  
jn some measure the progress of the year.  
  
Tearing get, who had but ears,  
  
‘Aod sight, who had but eye btore,  
‘Tmoment ive, who lived Dut years  
  
‘And trath ditern, who knew but learning’ lore.  
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370 A Ween.  
  
Sitting with our faces now up stream, we studied the  
landscape by degrees, as one unrolls a map, rock, tree,  
house, bil, and meadow, assuming new and varying posi-  
tions as wind and water shifted the scene, and there was  
variety enough for our entertainment in the metamor-  
phoees of the simplest objects. Viewed from this eide  
the scenery appeared new to us.  
  
‘The most familiar sheet of water viewed from a new  
hilltop, yields a novel and unexpected pleasure. When  
wwe have travelled a few miles, we do not reco  
profiles even of the hills which overlook our ni  
lage, and perhaps no man is quite familiar with the  
horizon as seen from the hill nearest to his house, and  
‘can recall its outline distinctly when in the valley. We  
do not commonly know, beyond a short distance, which  
‘way the hills range which take in our houses and farms  
in their sweep. As if our birth had at first sundered  
things, and we had been thrast up through into nature  
like a wedge, and not till the wound heals and the scar  
disappears, do we begin to discover where we are, and  
that nature is one and continuous everywhere. It ia  
‘an important epoch when a man who has always lived  
on the east side of mountain, and seen it in the west,  
travels round and sees it in the east. Yet the universe  
isa sphere whose centre is wherever there is intelligence.  
‘The sun is not so central as a man. Upon an isolated  
hilltop, in an open country, we seem to oureelves to be  
standing on the boss of an immense shield, the immediate  
Inndscape being apparently depressed below the more  
remote, and rising gradually to the horizon, which is the  
rim of the shield, villas, steeples, forests, mountains, one  
above another, tll they are swallowed up in the heavens.  
‘The most distant mountains in the horizon appear to

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rRipay. 871  
  
rise directly from the shore of that lake in the woods by  
which we chance to be standing, while from the moan  
tain-top, not only this, but a thousand nearer and larger  
Takes, are equally unobserved.  
  
‘Seen through this clear atmosphere, the works of the  
farmor, bie ploughing and reaping, had a beauty to our  
‘eyes which he never saw. How fortunate were we who  
did not own an acre of these shores, who had not re-  
nounced our title to the whole. One who knew how to  
appropriate the true value of this world would be the  
poorest man in it. ‘The poor rich man! all he has is  
what be has bought. What Isee is mine, I am a large  
owner in’the Merrimack intervals.  
  
Men dig and dive bat cannot my wealth spend,  
“Who yet no partial store appropriats,  
‘Who a0 armed ship into the Indies send,  
‘To rob me of my orient esata,  
‘He is tho rich man, and enjoys the fruits of riches, who  
summer and winter forever can find delight in his own  
thoughts. Bay afarm! What have I to pay for a farm  
which a farmer will take?  
  
‘When I visit again some haunt of my youth, I am  
glad to find that nature wears so well. ‘The landscape  
is indeed something real, and solid, and sincere, and I  
hhave not put my foot through it yet. ‘There is a pleas-  
fant tract on the bank of the Concord, called Conanturn,  
which I have in my mind;—the old deserted farm-  
hhouse, the desolate pasture with its bleak cliff, the open  
‘wood, the river-reach, the green meadow in the midst,  
and the moss-grown wild-apple orchard, —places where  
‘one may have many thoughts and not decide anything.  
It is a scene which I can not only remember, as I might  
‘vision, but when I will can bodily revisit, and find it

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3873 A were.  
  
‘even 20, unaccountable, yet unpretending in its pleasant  
Areariness. When my thoughts are sensible of change,  
Tove to see and sit on rocks which I have known, and  
pry into their moss, and see unchangeablenese #0 estab-  
lished. I not yet gray on rocks forever gray, I no  
longer green under the evergreens. There is something  
joven in the lapse of time by which time recovers itself.  
  
As we have ssid, it proved a cool as well as breezy  
day, and by the time we reached Penichook Brook we  
‘wero obliged to sit mufiled in oar cloaks, while the wind  
‘and current carried us along. We bounded swiflly over  
the rippling surface, far by many caltivated lands and  
the ends of fences which divided innumerable farms,  
‘with hardly a thought for the various lives which they  
separated; now by long rows of alders or groves of  
pines or oaks, and now by some homestead where the  
‘women and children stood outside to gaze at us, till we  
hhad swept out of their sight, and beyond the limit of  
their longest Saturday ramble. We glided past the  
mouth of the Nashua, and not long afer, of Salmon  
‘Brook, without more pause than the wind.  
  
Satmon Brook,  
  
Peniebook,  
sect water of my bata,  
  
‘When sl ook,  
  
(Or cast the hook,  
{In your waves again?  
  
Siver ess,  
Wooden cress,  
‘Thao the balis that st ltae,  
‘And dragon-ty  
‘That font by,  
May they stil endare?  
  
‘The shadows chased one another swiftly over wood

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rear, 878  
  
and meadow, and their alternation harmonized with our  
‘mood. We could distinguish the clouds which cast each  
‘one, though never 60 high io the heavens. When a  
shadow fits across the landscape of the soul, where is  
the substance? Probably, if we were wise enough, we  
should see to what virtue we are indebted for any  
happier moment we enjoy. No doubt we have eared  
it at some time; for the gifts of Heaven are never quite  
gratuitous. The constant abrasion and decay of our  
lives makes the soil of our fature growth. ‘The wood  
which we now mature, when it becomes virgin mould,  
Aetermines the character of our second growth, whether  
that be oaks or pines. Every man casts a shadow ; not  
his body only, but hie imperfectly mingled spirit. ‘This  
is his grief. Let him turn which way he will it falls  
‘opposite to the sun; short at noon, long at eve. Did  
‘you never see it? — But, referred to the sun, it is widest  
‘at its base, which is no greater than his own opacity.  
‘The divine light is diffused almost entirely around us,  
‘and by means of the refraction of light, or else by  
‘8 certain selfluminousness, or, as some will have it,  
transparency, if we preserve ourselves untarnished, we  
fare able to enlighten our shaded side. At any rate, our  
darkest grief has that bronze color of the moon eclipsed.  
‘There is no ill which may not be dissipated, like the  
dark, if you let in a stronger light upon it, Shadows,  
referred to the souree of light, are pyramids whose  
bases are never greater than those of the substances  
which cast them, but light is a spherical congeries of  
pyramids, whose very apexes are the sun itself, and  
hhence the aystem shines with uninterrupted light. But  
if the light we use is but a paltry and narrow taper,  
most objects will cast shadow wider than them-  
selves.

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- 874 A were.  
  
‘The places where we had stopped or spent the night  
in our way up the river, had already acquired a slight  
historical interest for us; for many upward day's voyag-  
ing were unravelled in this rapid downward passage.  
‘When one landed to stretch his limbs by walking, he  
toon found himself falling behind his companion, and  
‘was obliged to take advantage of the curves, and ford  
the brooks and ravines in haste, to recover his ground.  
“Already the banks and the distant meadows wore =  
‘sober and deepened tinge, for the September air had  
shorn them of their summer's pride.  
  
   
  
   
  
“And what's aife? The fourshing array  
OF the proud summer mendow, which today  
‘Wears her green plush, and is tomorrow hay.  
  
   
  
‘The air was really the “fine element” which the poets  
deseribe. Tt had a finer and sharper grain, seen against  
the russet pastures and meadows, than before, as if  
cleansed of the summer’s impurities.  
  
Having passed the New Hampshire line and reached  
the Horseshoe Interval in Tyngsborough, where there is  
‘high and regular second bank, we climbed up this in  
haste to get a nearer sight of the autumnal flowers,  
asters, golden-rod, and yarrow, and blue-curls (Triehos-  
tema dichotoma), humble roadside blossoms, and, linger-  
ing still, the harebell and the Rhezia Virginiea. ‘The  
laat, growing in patches of lively pink flowers on the  
‘edge of the meadows, had almost tco gay an appearance  
for the rest of the landscape, like a pink ribbon on the  
Donnet of a Puritan woman. Asters and golden-rods  
were the livery which nature wore at present. The  
latter slone expressed all the ripeness of the season, and  
shed their mellow lustre over the fields, as if the now

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declining summer’s sun had bequeathed its hues to them.  
It is the floral solstice a little after midsummer, when  
the particles of golden light, the sun-dust, have, as it  
‘were, fallen like seeds on the earth, and produced theso  
blossoms. On every hillside, and in every valley, stood  
countless asters, coreopses, tansies, golden-rods, and the  
whole race of yellow flowers, like Brahminical devotees,  
turning steadily with their luminary from morning till  
night,  
  
   
  
100 tho goldn-rod shine bright  
‘As sun-ahowers at the birth of day,  
‘A golden plame of yellow light,  
‘That robe the Day-goi' eplendid ray.  
  
“The antes volt raye divide  
‘The baak with many stare for me,  
‘And yarrow in blanch tits is dyed,  
‘As moooight Goats across the sem.  
  
“1 oe the emerld woods prepare  
  
"To abed ther veatiture once more,  
‘And distant elmtres spot th  
  
"With yew plete soy oe.  
  
“No more the water-iy's pride  
  
‘Tn mill-hite circles swims contant  
  
‘No more the blue-weod’s clusters ride  
“And mock the earen lent  
  
hy wreath and mine are blent  
sume colors, for to me  
  
ky than all sot,  
  
‘While fadoe my dream-like company.  
  
“ Our akies glow parple, bat the wind  
Sobs chill through grn tees and bright gras,  
‘To-day shines fir, and lurk behind  
"The times that fto wiatar pass.  
  
“80 fair we seem, wo cold wo are,  
‘So fat we hasten to decay,

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876 A WEEE,  
  
‘Yet throwgh our night glows many  
‘That tl sball claim lta sunny day.  
  
‘Bo sang a Concord poet once.  
  
   
  
‘There is a peealiar interest belonging to the still lator  
flowers, which abide with us the spproach of winter.  
‘There is something witchlike in the appearance of the  
Witch-bazel, which blossoms late in October and in No-  
vember, with its irregular and angular spray and petals  
like faries’ hair, or small ribbon streamers, Its blos-  
soming, too, at this irregular period, when other shrubs  
have lost their leaves, as well as blossoms, looks like  
witches? era. Certainly it blooms in no garden of  
man's, There is a whole fairy-and on the hillside  
here it grows.  
  
Some have thonght that the gales do not at present  
‘waft to tho voyager the natural and original fragrance  
of the Iand, such as the early navigators described, and  
that tho loss of many odoriferous native plants, sweet-  
scented grasses and medicinal herbs, which formerly  
sweetened the atmosphere, and rendered it salubrious,  
—by the grazing of cattle and the rooting of swine, is  
the source of many diseases which now prevail; the  
earth, say they, having been loog subjected to extremely  
artifcial and luxurious modes of cultivation, to gratify  
‘the appetite, converted into a stye and hot-bed, where  
men for profit increase the ordinary decay of nature.  
  
   
  
According to the record of an old inhabitant of  
‘Tyngsborough, now dead, whose farm we were now  
gliding past, one of the greatest freshets on this river  
took place in October, 1785, and its height was marked.  
by a nail driven into an apple-tree behind his house,

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FRIDAY. 877  
  
One of his descendants ‘has shown this to me, and I  
judged it to be at least seventeen or eighteen feet above  
the level of the river at the time. According to Barber,  
the river rose twenty-one fect above the common high-  
‘water mark, at Bradford in the year 1818. Before the  
Lowell and Nashua railroad was built, the engineer  
‘made inquiries of the inhabitants along the banks as to  
how high they had known the river to rise. When he  
‘came to this house he was conducted to the apple-tree,  
and as the nail was not then visible, the lady of the  
house placed her hand on the trank where she said that  
she remembered the nail to have been from her ehild-  
hhood. In the mean while the old man put his arm inside  
‘the tree, which was hollow, and felt the point of the nail  
sticking through, and it was exaclly opposite to her  
hand. ‘The spot is now plainly marked by a notch in  
the bark. But as no one else remembered the river to  
have risen so high as this, the engineer disregarded this  
‘statement, and I learn that there has since been a freshet  
which rose within nine inches of the rails at Biscuit  
Brook, and such a freshet as that of 1785 would have  
‘covered the railroad two feet deep.  
  
‘The revolutions of nature tell as fine tales, and make  
‘as interesting revelations, on this river's banks, as on  
the Euphrates or the Nile, ‘This apple-treo, which  
stands within a few rods of the river, is called \* Elisha’s  
apple-tree,” from a friendly Indian, who was anciently  
in the service of Jonathan Tyng, and, with one other  
‘man, was killed here by his own race in one of :ho In-  
dian wars,— the particulars of which affair were told  
tus on the spot. He was buried close by, no one knew  
exactly where, but in the flood of 1785, so great a  
‘weight of water’ standing over the grave, caused tho

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878 a were,  
  
earth to settle where it had once been disturbed, and  
‘when the flood went down, a suaken spot, exactly of the  
form and size of the grave, revealed its locality; bat  
this was now lost again, and no future flood can detect  
its yet, no doubt, Nature will know how to point it out  
in due time, if it be necessary, by methods yet more  
searching and unexpected. Thus there is not only the  
crisis when the spirit ceases to inspire and expand the  
body, marked by a fresh mound in the churchyard, but  
there is also a crisis when the body ceases to take up  
oom as such in nature, marked by a fainter depression  
in the earth,  
  
‘We sat awhile to rest us here upon the brink of the  
western bank, surrounded by the glossy leaves of the  
red variety of the mountain laurel, just above the head  
of Wicasuck Island, where we could observe some sows  
which were loading with clay from the opposite shore,  
and also overlook the grounds of the farmer, of whom I  
have spoken, who once hospitably entertained us for a  
night. He had on his pleasant farm, besides an abun-  
dance of the beach-plum, or Prunus litoralis, which,  
grew wild, thé Canada plum under caltivation, fine  
Porter apples, some peaches, and large patches of musk  
‘and water melons, which he cultivated for the Lowell  
market, Elisha's apple-tree, too, bore a native fruit,  
‘which was prized by the family. He raised the blood  
peach, which, as he showed us with satisfaction, was  
more like the oak in the color of its bark and in the set-  
ting of its branches, and was less liable to break down  
under the weight of the fruit, or the snow, than other  
Vatieties. It was of slower growth, and its branches  
strong and tough, ‘There, also, was his nursery of na~  
tive apple-trees, thickly sot upon the bank, which cost

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FEmar. 379  
  
but little care, and which he sold to the neighboring far  
mers when they were five or six years old. ‘To sce  
single peach upon its stem makes an impression of para-  
isaical fertility and loxury. ‘This reminded us even of  
an old Roman farm, as described by Varro:— Cesar  
Vopiseus Hdilicius, when be pleaded before the Cen-  
sors, said that the grounds of Rosea were the garden  
(gumen the tid-bit) of Italy, in which a pole being left  
‘would not be visible the day after, on account of the  
growth of the herbage.” ‘This soil may not have been  
remarkably fertile, yet at this distance wo thought that  
‘this anecdote might be told of the Tyngsborough farm.  
  
‘When we passed Wicasuck Island, there was a pleas-  
‘ure-boat containing @ youth and a maiden on the island  
brook, which we were pleased to sce, since it proved  
that there were some hereabouts to whom our excursion  
‘would not be wholly strange. Before this, a canal-boat-  
‘man, of whom we made some inquiries respecting Wica-  
tuck Island, and who told us that it was disputed prop-  
erty, suspected that we had a claim upon it, and though  
wo assured him that all this was news to us, and ex-  
plained, as well as we could, why we had come to see it,  
hhe believed not a word of it, and seriously offered us  
‘one hundred dollars for our title. The only other mall,  
bboala which we met with were used to pick up drift  
‘wood. Some of the poorer class along the stream col-  
lect, in this way, all the fuel which they require. While  
‘one of us landed not far from this island to forage for  
provisions among the farm-houses whose roofs we savr,  
for our supply was now exhausted, the other, sitting in  
‘the boat, which was moored to the shore, was left alone  
to his reflections.  
  
If there is nothing new on the earth, still the traveller

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380 A wore,  
  
‘always has a resource in the skies. ‘They are constantly  
taming a new page to view. The wind sets the types  
‘on this blue ground, and the inquiring may always read.  
‘anew truth there. There are things there written with  
such fine and subtile tinctures, paler than the juice of  
limes, that to the diarnal eye they leave no trace, and  
‘only the chemistry of night reveals them. Every man’s  
daylight firmament answers in his mind to the brightness  
‘of the vision in his starriost hour.  
  
‘These continents and hemispheres are soon run over,  
‘but an always unexplored and inflate region makes off  
‘on every side from the mind, further than to sunsot, and  
‘we can make no highway or beaten track into it, but the  
{grass immodiately springs up in the path, for we travel  
there chiefly with our wings.  
  
Sometimes we seo objects as through a thin hazo, in  
their eternal relations, and they stand like Palenque  
nd the Pyramids, and we wonder who set them up,  
and for what pnrpore. If we see the reality in things,  
of what moment is the superficial and spparent longer ?  
‘What are the earth and all ite interests beside the deep  
surmise which pierces and scatters them? While I sit  
here listening to the waves which ripple and break on  
this shore, I am absolved from all obligation to the past,  
and the council of nations may reconsider its votes.  
‘The grating of a pebble annuls them. Still occasionally  
in my dreams I remember that rippling water.  
  
Of, aa 1 tara me on my plow oer,  
Thear the lapse of waves upon the shore,  
  
Distinct a iit were at broad noonday,  
“And I were drifting down from Nashua,  
  
‘With a bending sail we glided rapidly by Tyngsboroagh  
and Chelmsford, each holding in one hand half of a tart

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our return, and in the other a fragment of the newspaper  
in which it was wrapped, devouring these with divided  
relish, and learning the news which had transpired since  
wwe sailed. The river here opened into a broad and  
straight reach of great length, which we bounded merrily  
  
over before a smacking breeze, with a devil-may-care  
look in our faces, and our boat a white bone in ite mouth,  
and a speed which greatly astonished some scow boat-  
‘men whom we met. ‘The wind in the horizon rolled like  
8 flood over valley and plain, and every tree bent to the  
blast, and the mountains like school-boys tamed their  
chooks to it. They were great and current motions, the  
flowing sail, th running stream, the waving tree, the  
\* roving wind. ‘The north-wind stepped readily into the  
harness which we had provided, and pulled us along wi  
‘good will. Sometimes we sailed as gently and steadi  
‘as the clouds overhead, watching the receding shores and  
‘the motions of our sail; the play of its pulse so like our  
‘own lives, 60 thin and yet so full of life, so noiseless when  
it Inbored harde ‘and impatient when least ef  
fective; now bending to some generous impalse of the  
breeze, and then fluttering and flapping with a kind of  
human suspense. Tt was the seale on which the varying  
temperature of distant atmospheres was graduated, and  
it was some attraction for us that the breeze it played  
‘with had been out of doors so long. ‘Thus we sailed, not  
being able to fy, but as next best, making a long furrow  
in the fields of the Merrimack toward our home, with our  
wings spread, but never lifting our heel from the watery  
trench; gracefully ploughing homeward with our brisk  
and willing team, wind and stream, pulling together, the  
former yet a wild steer, yoked to his more sedate fellow.

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382 A wren,  
  
‘Te was very near flying, as when the duck rushes through  
the water with an impulse of her wings, throwing the  
‘spray about her, before she can tise. How we had stuck  
fast if drawn up but a few feet on the shore!  
  
‘When we reached the great bend just above Middle-  
sex, where the river rans east thirty-five miles to the  
sea, we at length lost the aid of this propitious wind,  
‘though we contrived to make one Jong and judicious tack  
  
   
  
carry us nearly to the locks of the canal. We were here  
ocked through at noon by our old friend, the lover of  
the higher mathematics, who seemed glad to see us safe  
back again through so many locks; but we did not stop  
to consider any of his problems, though we could cheer-  
  
   
  
fally have spent a whole autumn in this way another  
time, and never have asked what his religion was. It is  
0 rare to meet with a man outdoors who cherishes 8  
worthy thought in his mind, which is independent of the  
Inbor of his bands. Behind every man's busy-ness there  
should be a level of undisturbed serenity and industry,  
a within the reef encircling a coral isle there is always  
an expanse of still water, where the depositions are going  
on which will finally raise it above the surface,  
  
   
  
   
  
‘The eye which can appreciate the naked and absolute  
Deanty of a scientific truth is fur more rare than that  
which is attracted by a moral one. Few detect the mo-  
rrality in the former, or the science in the latter. Aris-  
totle defined art to be Adyor rod fpyou dowu Skye, The prine  
ciple of the work without the wood ; but most men pre~  
fer to have some of the wood along with the prineiple  
‘they demand that the trath be clothed in flesh and blood  
and the warm colore of life. ‘They prefer the partial  
‘statement because it fits and measures them and tt

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rRIpar. 383  
  
commodities best. But science still exists everywhere  
as the sealer of weights and measures at least.  
  
‘We have heard much about the poetry of mathemat-  
ies, but very little of it has yet been sung. ‘The ancients  
hhad a juster notion of their poetic value than we. ‘The  
most distinct and beautiful statement of any truth must  
take at last the mathematical form. We might so sim-  
plify the rules of moral philosophy, as well as of arith-  
met, that one formula would express them both. All  
the moral laws are readily translated into natural phi-  
Tosophy, for often we have only to restore the primitive  
‘meaning of the words by which they are expressed, or  
to attend to their literal instead of their metaphorical  
sense. They are already supernatural philosophy. The,  
whole body of what is now called moral or ethical truth  
existed in the golden age as abstract science. Or, if  
wwe prefer, we may say that the laws of Nature are the  
purest morality. ‘The Tree of Knowledge is a Tree of  
‘Knowledge of good and evil. He ia not a true man of  
science who does not bring some sympathy to his studies,  
‘and expect to learn something by behavior as well as  
by application. It is childish to rest in the discovery of  
mere coincidences, or of partial and extraneous laws.  
‘The study of geometry is a petty and idle exercise of the  
sind, if it is applied to no larger system than the starry  
one. Mathematics should be mixed not only with phys-  
ca but with ethics, hat is mized mathematics. ‘The fact  
which interes  
purest science is still biographical. Nothing will dignify  
and elevate science while it is sundered so wholly from  
the moral life of its devotee, and he professes another  
religion than it teaches, and worships at a foreign shrine.  
Anciently the faith of a philosopher was identical with

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384 a Weer.  
  
his system, or, in other words, his view of the uni-  
verse.  
  
‘My friends mistake when they communicate facts to  
‘me with #0 much pains. ‘Their presence, even their ex~  
faggerations and loose statements, are equally good facts  
for me. I have no respect for facts even except when  
I would use them, and for the most part I am indepen  
ent of those which I hear, and can afford to be inaccu-  
rato, of, in other words, to substitute more present and  
pressing facts in their place.  
  
‘The poet uses the results of science and philosophy,  
and generalizes their widest deductions.  
  
‘The process of discovery is very simple, An unwea-  
ried and ystematic application of known laws to nature,  
  
“causes the unknown to reveal themselves. Almost any  
mode of observation will be succeseful at last, for what  
in moat wanted is method. Only let something be deter-  
mined and fixed around which observation may rally.  
How many new relations a foot-rule alone will reveal,  
‘and to how many things still this has not been applied !  
‘What wonderful discoveries have been, and may still be,  
made, with plamb-line, a level, a surveyor’s compass,  
‘a thermometer, or a barometer! Where there is an ob-  
servatory and a telescope, we expect that any eyes will  
seenew worldsatonce. I should say that the most promi-  
nent scientific men of our country, and perhaps of this  
‘age, are either serving the arts and not pare science, or  
are performing faithful but quite subordinate labors  
particular departments. ‘They make no steady and sys-  
tematic approaches to the central fact. A discovery is  
made, and at once the attention of all observers is dis-  
‘tracted to that, and it draws many analogous discoveries  
in its train; as if their work wore not already laid out

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for them, but they had been Tying on their oars. There  
is wanting constant and accurate observation with enough  
of theory to direct and diseipline it,  
  
Bt, above all, there is wanting genius. Our books  
of science, as they improve in accuracy, are in danger  
of losing the freshness and vigor and readiness to appre-  
ciate the real laws of Nature, which is @ marked merit  
in the ofttimes false theories of the ancients. Tam at-  
tracted by the slight pride and satisfaction, the emphatic  
and even exaggerated style io which some of the older  
naturalists speak of the operations of Nature, though  
‘they are better qualified to appreciate than to diserimi-  
nate the facts, ‘Their assertions are not without value  
‘when disproved. If they are not facts, they are sugges-  
tions for Nature herself to act upon. “The Greeks,”  
rays Gesner, “had a common proverb (Aayor eadeodor)  
a sleeping hare, for a dissembler or counterfeit ; because  
the hare sees when she sleeps; for this is an admirable  
and rare work of Nature, that all the residue of her  
bodily parts take their rest, but the eye standeth contin-  
ually sentinel.”  
  
Observation is so wide awake, and facts are being co  
rapidly added to the sum of human experience, that it  
‘appears as if the theorizer would always be in arrears,  
and were doomed forever to arrive at imperfect conclu  
sions; but the power to perceive a law is equally rare  
in all ages of the world, and depends but little on the  
number of facts observed. The senses of the savage will  
furnish him with facts enough to set him up as a philoso-  
her. ‘The ancients can still speak to us with author-  
ity,even on the themes of geology and chemistry, though  
these studies are thought to have had their birth in  
‘modern times. Much is exid about the progress of science  
  
7 Y

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386 A WEE.  
  
in these centuries. T should say that the useful results  
of science had accumulated, but that there had been no  
accumulation of knowledge, strictly speaking, for poster-  
ity; for knowledge is to be acquired only by a corre-  
sponding experience. How can we know what we are  
fold merely? Each man can interpret. another's expe-  
rience only by his own. We read that Newton discov-  
cred the law of gravitation, but how many who have  
heard of his famous discovery have recognized the same  
truth that be did? It may be not one. The revelation  
which was then made to him has not been superseded  
by the revelation made to any successor.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘Wo sce the planet fll,  
‘Ad that i all  
  
In a review of Sir James Clark Ross's Antarctic Voy-  
age of Discovery, there is a passage which shows how  
far a body of men are commonly impressed by an object  
of sublimity, and which is also a good instance of the  
  
fep from the sublime to the ridiculous. After describ-  
ing the discovery of the Antarctic Continent, at first seen  
a bundred miles  
ranges of mountains from seven and eight to twelve and  
fourteen thousand feet high, covered with eternal snow  
‘and ice, in solitary and inaccessible grandeur, at ono  
time the weather being beautifully clear, and the sun  
shining on the icy landscape; a continent whose islands  
only are accessible, and these exhibited “not the small-  
2” only in a few places the rocks  
  
icy covering, to convince the  
‘beholder that Iand formed the nucleus, and that it was  
not an iceberg;—the practical British reviewer pro-  
‘ceods thus, sticking to his last, “On the 22d of January,

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FRIDAY. 387  
  
afternoon, the Expedition made the latitude of 74° 20°  
and by 7 P, M., having ground (ground! where did  
‘they get ground?) to believe that they were then in a  
higher southern latitude than had boen attained by that  
enterprising seaman, the late Captain James Weddel,  
and therefore higher than all their predecessors, an ex-  
tra allowance of grog was issued to the crews a8 a  
reward for their perseverance.”  
  
Let not us sailors of late centuries take upon our-  
selves any airs on account of our Newtons and our Cu-  
ers; we deserve an extra allowance of grog only.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘Wo endeavored in vain to persuade the wind to blow  
through the long corridor of the canal, which is here  
ct straight through the woods, and were obliged to re-  
sort to our old expedient of drawing by a cord. When  
‘we reached the Concord, we were forced to row once  
more in good earnest, with neither wind nor current in  
our favor, but by this time the rawness of the day had  
disappeared, and we experienced the warmth of a sum-  
mer afternoon. ‘This change in the weather was favor-  
able to our contemplative mood, and disposed us to  
dream yet deeper at our oars, while we floated in imag-  
ination farther down the stream of time, as we had  
floated down the stream of the Merrimack, to poets of  
fa milder period than had engaged us in the morning.  
Chelmsford and Billerica speared like old English  
towns, compared with Merrimack and Nashua, and  
many generations of civil poets might have lived and  
sung here.  
  
   
  
‘What a contrast between the stern and desolate poetry  
of Ossian, and that of Chaucer, and even of Shakespeare

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398 A WEEK.  
  
‘and Milton, much more of Dryden, and Pope, and Gray.  
Our summer of English poetry like the Greek and  
Latin before it, seems well advanced toward its fall,  
  
   
  
bright autumnal tints, but soon the winter will ccatter its  
myriad clustering and shading leaves, and leave only  
1a few desolate and fibrous boughs to sustain the snow  
and rime, and creak in the blasts of ages. We cannot  
  
escape the impression that the Muse has stooped a little  
in her fight, when we come to the literature of civilized  
eras. Now first we hear of various ages and styles of  
  
and di-  
‘monuments is of ono  
style, and for every age. The bard has in a great  
measure lost the dignity and sacredness of bis office.  
Formerly he was called seer, but now it is thought  
that one man sees as much as another. He has no lon-  
ger the berdic rage, and only conceives the deed, which  
he formerly stood ready to perform. Hosts of warriors  
earnest for battle could not mistake nor dispense with  
the ancient bard. His lays were heard in the pauses of  
the fight. There was no danger of his being overlooked  
by his contemporaries. But now the hero and the bard  
fare of diferent professions. When we come to the  
pleasant English verse, the storms have all cleared away  
and it will never thunder and lighten more. ‘The poet  
Jhas come within doors, and exchanged tho forest and  
crag for the fireside, the hut of the Gael, and Stone-  
henge with its circles of stones, for the house of the  
Englishman. No hero stands at the door prepared to  
break forth into song or heroic action, but a homely  
Englishman, who cultivates the art of poetry. We sce  
‘the comfortable fireside, and hear the erackling fagots in  
all the verse,  
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
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vmpar. 389  
  
‘Notwithstanding the broad humanity of Chaucer, and  
‘the many social and domestic comforts which we meet  
‘with in his verse, we have to narrow our vision some-  
what to consider him, as if he occupied less space in the  
Iandscape, and did not stretch over hill «nd valley as  
Ossian does. Yet, soen from the side of posterity, as  
the father of English poetry, preceded by a long silence  
or confusion in history, unealivened by any strain of  
pare melody, we easily come to reverence him. Pass-  
ing over the earlier continental poets, since wo are  
ound to the pleasant archipelago of English poetry,  
Chaucer’ is the first name aftor that misty weather in  
‘which Ossian lived, which can detain us long. Indeed,  
though he represents so different a culture and society,  
‘he may be regarded as in many respects the Homer of  
‘the English poets. Perhaps he is the youthfallest of  
them all. We return to him as to the purest well, the  
fountain farthest removed from the highway of desaltory  
life. Ho is 90 natural and cheerful, compared with later  
poets that we might almost regard him as a pervonifi-  
cation of spring. To the faithful reader his muse has  
en given an aspect to his times, and when ‘he is fresh  
from perusing him, they seem related to the golden age.  
It is still the poetry of youth and life, rather than of  
thought; and though the moral vein is obvious and con-  
stant, it has not yet banished the sun and daylight from  
verse. The loftiest strains of the muse are, for the  
‘most part, sublimely plaintive, and not a carol as free  
as nature's. ‘The content which the sun shines to ocle~  
Drato from morning to evening, is unsung. ‘The muse  
solaces herself, and is not ravished but consoled. ‘There  
is a catastrophe implied, and a tragic element in all our  
‘verse, and less of the lark and morning dews, than of

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tingale and evening shades. But in Homer  
and Chaucer there ie more of the innocence and serenity  
of youth than in the more modern and moral poets.  
‘The Tiad is not Sabbeth but morning reading, and men  
cling to this old song, because they still have moments  
of unbaptized and uncommitted life, which give them  
tun appetite for more. ‘To the innocent there are neither  
cchorubim nor angela. At rare intervals we rise above  
the necessity of virtue into an unchangeable morning  
light, in which we have only to live right on and breathe  
‘the ambrosial air. The Iliad represents no ereed nor  
opinion, and wo read it with a rare sense of freedom  
and irresponsibility, as if we trod on native ground, and  
‘were antochthones of the soil.  
  
Chaucer had eminently the habits of a literary man  
and acholar. There were never any times ao stirring  
that there were not to be found some sedentary still  
‘He was surrounded by the din of arms. The battles of  
Hoallidon Hill and Neville’s Cross, and the still more  
memorable battles of Cressy and Poictiers, were fought  
in his youth but these did not concern our poet much,  
‘Wickliffe and his reform much more. He regarded him-  
self always as one privileged to sit and converse with  
Dooks. He helped to establish the literary class. His  
character aa one of the fathers of the English language  
‘would alone make his works important, even those which  
hhave little postical merit, He was as simple as Words-  
worth in preferring hia homely but vigorous Saxon  
tongue, when it was neglected by the court, and had not  
yetattained to the dignity of a literature, and rendered a  
fimilar service to his country to that which Dante ren-  
dered to Italy. If Greek sufficeth for Greek, and Ara-  
bie for Arabian, and Hebrew for Jew, and Latin for

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FRIDAY. 391  
  
Latin, then English shall suffice for him, for any of these  
will serve to teach truth “right as divers pathes leaden  
divers folke the right waye to Rome.” In the Testa-  
ment of Love he writes, “Let then clerkes enditen in  
Latin, for they have the propertie of science, and the  
knowinge in that facultie, and lette Frenchmen in their  
Frenche also enditen their queinte termes, for it is  
kyndely to their mouthes, and let us shewe our fantas  
in soche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge.”  
  
He will know how to appreciate Chaucer best, who  
hhas come down to him the natural way, through the  
  
‘meagre pastures of Saxon and ante-Chaucerian poet  
‘and yet, so human and wise he appears after such  
  
that we are liable to misjudge him still. In the Saxon  
  
in the earliest English, and the conter-  
porary Scottish poetry, there is less to remind the reader  
of the rudeness and vigor of youth, than of the feeble-  
ness of a declining age. It is for the most part transla-  
tion of imitation merely, with only an occasional and  
slight tinge of poetry, oftentimes the falsehood and ex-  
aggeration of fable, without ite imagination to redeem  
it, and we look in vain to find antiquity restored, hu~  
manized, and made blithe again by some natural sym-  
  
‘pathy between it and the present. But Chaucer is fresh  
  
‘and modern still, and no dust settles on his true pas-  
sages, It lightens along the line, and we are reminded  
that flowers have bloomed, and birds sung, and hearts  
Deaten in England. Before the earnest gaze of the  
reader, the rust and moss of time gradually drop off,  
fand tis original green life is revealed. He was a home-  
  
ly and domestic man, and did breathe quite as modern  
men do.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘There is no wisdom that can take place of humanity,

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392 A ween.  
  
tand we find that in Chaucer. We can expand at last in  
his breadth, and we think that we could have been that  
man's acquaintance. He was worthy to be a citizen of  
England, while Petrarch and Boccacio lived in Ttaly,  
and Tell and Tamerlane in Switzerland and in Asia,  
fand Bruce in Scotland, and Wickliffe, and Gower, and  
‘Edward the Third, and John of Gaunt, and the Black  
Prince, were his own countrymen as well as contempo-  
aries; all stout and stirring names. ‘The fame of Roger  
Bacon came down from the preceding century, and the  
name of Dante still posseseod the influence of a living  
presence. On the whole, Chaucer impresses us as great-  
‘er than bis reputation, and not a little like Homer and  
Shakespeare, for he would have held up his head in t  
company. Among early English poets he is the land-  
Tord and host, and has the authority of such. ‘The af  
fectionate mention which succeeding early poets make  
of him, coupling him with Homer and Virgil, is to bo  
taken into the account in estimating his character and  
nfluence. King James and Dunbar of Scotland speak  
of him with more love and reverence than any modern  
author of his predecessors of the last century. ‘The  
same childlike relation is without a parallel now. For  
the most part we read him without eriticsm, for he does  
not plead his own cause, bat speaks for his readers, and  
has that greatness of trust and reliance which compels  
popularity. He confides in the reader, and speaks  
privily with him, keeping nothing back. And in return  
the reader has great confidence in him, that he tells no  
lies, and reads his story with indulgence, as if it were  
the circumlocution of a child, but often discovers after-  
wards that he has spoken with more direciness and  
economy of words than a sage. He is never heartless,

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vray, 398,  
  
“For Sint th thing thong within the hart,  
-Erany word out from the mouth avtar."  
  
And s0 new was all his theme in those days, that he did  
  
not bave to invent, but only to tell.  
  
We admire Chaucer for his sturdy English wit. The  
‘easy height he speaks from in his Prologue to the Can-  
terbury Tales, as if he were equal to any of the com-  
pany there assembled, is as good as any particular ex-  
cellence in it, But though it is fall of good sense and  
hhumanity, it is not transcendent poetry. For pictu-  
esque description of persons it is, perhaps, without  
parallel in English poetry; yet it is essentially humor-  
ous, a8 the loftiest genius never is. Humor, however  
broad and genial, takes a narrower view than enthusi  
‘asm. To his own finer vein he added all the common  
‘wit and wisdom of his time, and everywhere in his works  
his remarkable knowledge of the world, and nice per-  
ception of character, his rare common sense and prover-  
bial wisdom, are apparent. Hlis genius does not soar  
like Milton's, but is genial and familiar. It shows great  
tenderness and delicacy, but not the heroic sentiment.  
Tt is only a greater portion of humanity with all its  
weakness, He is not heroic, as Raleigh, nor pious, as  
Herbert, nor philosophical, as Shakespeare, but he is the  
child of the English muse, that child which is the father  
of the man. ‘The charm of his poetry consists often  
‘only in an exceeding naturalness, perfect sincerity, with  
the behavior of a child rather than of a.man.  
  
Gentleness and delicacy of character are everywhere  
apparent in his verse, ‘The simplest and humblest  
words come readily to his lips. No one can read the  
‘Prioress’s tale, understanding the spirit in which it was  
written, and in which the child sings O alma redemptorie  
  
ae

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394 A Weer.  
  
sater, or the account of the departare of Constance with,  
ber child upon the sea, in the Man of Lawe's tale, with=  
‘out feeling the native innocence and refinement of the  
author. Nor ean we be mistaken respecting the essen-  
tial purity of his character, disregarding the apology of  
the manners of the age. A simple pathos and feminine  
gentleness, which Wordsworth only occasionally ap-  
proaches, but does not equal, are peculiar to him. We  
fare tempted to say that his genius was feminine, not  
‘mascaline. It was such a feminineness, however, as is  
rarest to find in woman, though not the appreciation of  
its perhaps itis not to be found at all in woman, but is  
only the feminine in man.  
  
Such pare and genuine and childlike love of Nature  
is hardly to be found in any poet.  
  
Chaucer’s remarkably trustful and affectionate charnc-  
ter appears in his familiar, yet innocent and reverent,  
manner of speaking of his God. He comes into his  
‘thought without any false reverence, and with no more  
parade than the zephyr to his ear. If Nature is our  
‘mother, then God is our father. There is less love  
and simple, practical trust in Shakespeare and Milton.  
How rarely in our English tongue do we find expressed  
any affection for God. Certainly, there is no sentiment  
so rare as the love of God. Herbert almost alone ex-  
presses it, “Ab, my dear God!” Our poet uses si  
‘words with propriety ; and whenever he sees a beautiful  
pereon, or other object, prides himself on the “maistry”  
of his God. He even recommends Dido to te his  
bride, —  
  
   
  
   
  
“if that God that heaven and yearth made,  
‘Would have a love for beaaty and goodnaus,  
‘And womankede,troth, and semeliness.”

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ee ae rere ee  
  
SS  
  
FRIDAY. 395  
  
But in justification of our praise, we must refer to his  
works themselves; to the Prologue to the Canterbury  
‘Tales, the account of Gentilesse, the Flower and the  
Leaf, the stories of Griselda, Virginia, Ariadne, and  
Blanche the Dutchesse, and mach more of less distin-  
guished merit. ‘There are many poets of more taste,  
and better manners, who knew how to leave out their  
dulness; but such negative genius cannot detain us  
Jong; we shall return to Chaucer.still with love. Some  
natures, which are really rude and ill-ieveloped, have  
yet a higher standard of perfection’ than others which  
are refined and well balanced. Even the clown has  
taste, whose dictates, though he disregards them, are  
higher and purer than those which the artist obeys. If  
we have to wander through many dull and prosaic  
passages in Chaucer, wo have at least the satisfaction of  
Knowing that it is not an artificial dulness, but too easily\*  
matched by many passages in life. We confess that we  
feel a disposition commonly to concentrate sweets, and  
accumulate pleasures; but.the poet may be presumed  
always to speak asa traveller, who leads us through @  
varied scenery, from one eminence to another, and  
it is, perbaps, more pleasing, after all, to meet with @  
fine thought in its natural setting. Surely fate has en-  
shrined it in these circumstances for some end. Nature  
strews her nuts and flowers broadcast, and never col-  
lects them into heaps. ‘This was the soil it grew io, and  
this the hour it bloomed in; if sun, wind, and rain came  
here to cherish and expand the flower, shall not we  
come here to pluck it?  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
A true poem is distinguished not so much by a felicie  
tous expression, or any thought it suggests, as by the at-

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396 A Were,  
  
mosphere which surrounds it, Most have beauty of  
coatline merely, and are striking as the form and besring  
of stranger; but true verses come toward us indis-  
tinetly, as the very breath of all friendliness, and envel-  
‘op us in their spirit and fragrance. Much of our postry  
has the very bost manners, but no character. It is only  
fan unusual precision and elasticity of speech, as if its  
‘author bad taken, not an intoxicating dranght, but an  
electuary. It has the distinct outline of sealpture, and  
chronicles an early hour. Under the influence of pas-  
sion all men speak thus distinctly, but wrath is not al-  
ways divine,  
  
There are two classes of men called poets. The one  
cultivates life, the other art, —one seeks food for natri-  
ment, the other for flavor; one satisfies hunger, the  
other gratifes the palate. ‘There are two kinds of writ-  
ing, both great and rare; one that of genius, or the in-  
spired, the other of intellect and taste, in the intervals  
of inspiration. The former is above criticiam, always  
correct, giving the law to criticism. It vibrates and  
pulaates with life forever. It is sncred, and to be read  
with reverence, as the works of nature are studied.  
There are fow instances vf a sustained style of this  
kind; perhaps every man has spoken words, but the  
speaker is then careless of the record. Such a style re-  
moves us out of personal relations with its author ; we  
do not take his words on our lips, but his sense into  
‘our hearts. It is the stream of inspiration, which bub-  
bles out, now here, now there, now in this man, now in  
that, It matters not through what ice-crystals it is seen,  
now a fountain, now the ocean stream running under  
ground. It is in Shakespeare, Alpheus, in Burns, Are-  
thuse; but ever the same. ‘The other is self-poseeased

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rRrar. 397  
  
and wise. It is reverent of genius, and greedy of inspi-  
ration. It is conscious in the highest and the least de-  
gree. It consists with the most perfect command of  
the faculties, It dwells in'a repose as of the desert, and  
objects are as distinct in it as oases or palms in the ho-  
rizon of sand. Tho train of thought moves with sub-  
ued and measured step, like a caravan. But the pen  
is only an instrument in its hand, and not instinet with  
life, like a longer arm. Tt leaves a thin varnish or glaze  
over all its work. ‘The works of Goethe furnish re-  
markable instances of the latter.  
  
   
  
   
  
ing is considered simply as it lies in the lap of eternal  
beauty, but our thoughts, as well as our bodies, must be  
Gressed after the Intest fashions. Our taste is too deli-  
cate and particular. It says nay to the poet's work, but  
never yea to his hope. It invites him to adorn his de-  
formities, and not to cast them off by expansion, as the  
tree its bark We are a people who live in a bright  
Tight, in houses of pearl and porcelain, and drink only  
light wines, whose teeth are easily set on edge by the  
least natural sour. If we had been consulted, the back-  
bone of the earth would have been made, not of granite,  
Dut of Bristol spar. A modern author would have died  
in infancy ina roder age. But the poet is something  
more than a scald, “‘ smoother and polisher of lan-  
guage”; he is a Cincinnatus in literature, and sceupi  
no west end of the world. Like the sun, he will indif-  
ferently select his rhymes, and with a liberal taste  
weave into his verse the planet and the stubble.  
  
In these ola books the stucco has long since crumbled  
away, and we read what was sculptured in the granite.  
‘They are rude and massive in their proportions, rather

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898 a were,  
  
than smooth and delicate in their finish. - The workers  
in stone polish only their chimney ornaments, but their  
pyramids are roughly done. There is a soberness in a  
ough aspect, as of unhewn granite, which addresses a  
depth in us, but a polished surface hits only the ball of  
the eye. Tho true finish is the work of time, and the  
‘use to which a thing is put, The elements are still pol-  
ishing the pyramids. Art may varnish and gild, but it  
‘ean do no more. A work of genius is rough-hewn from  
the first, because it anticipates the lapse of time, and has  
fan ingrained polish, which still appears when fragments  
are broken off, an easential quality of its substance. Its  
Deauty is at the same time its strength, and it breaks  
with @ lustre,  
  
‘The great poem must have the stamp of greatness as  
well as its essence. ‘The reader ea  
shallowest contemporary poetry, and informs it with all  
the life and promise of the day, as the pilgrim goos  
within the temple, and hears the faintest strains of the  
‘worshippers; but it will have to speak to posterity, trav-  
ersing these deserts, through the ruins of its outmost  
walls, by the grandeur and beauty of its proportions.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
But here on the stream of the Concord, where we  
have all the while been bodily, Nature, who is superior  
to all styles and ages, is now, with pensive face, com-  
posing her poem Autumn, with which no work of man  
will bear to be compared.  
  
In summer we live out of doors, and have only im-  
pulses and feelings, which are all for action, and must  
wait commonly for the stillness and longer nights of

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FRIDAY. 399  
  
‘antomn and winter before any thought will subside; we  
are sensible that behind the rustling leaves, and the  
stacks of grain, and tho bare clusters of the grape, there  
is the field of a wholly new life, which no man has  
lived; that even this earth was mede for more mysto-  
rious and nobler inhabitants than men and women. In  
the hues of October sunsets, we see the portals to other  
‘mansions than those which we occupy, not far off geo-  
graphically, —  
Ther is «pace beyond that faring Mt,  
‘From whence the stars their thin appearance shed,  
  
‘A place beyond all place, where nover il,  
‘Nor impare though was ever harbored”  
  
   
  
   
  
‘Sometimes a mortal feels in himself Nature, not his Fa-  
ther but his Mother stirs within him, and he becomes  
immortal with her immortality. From time to time she  
claims kindredship with us, and some globule from her  
veins steals up into our own.  
  
Tam the antamoal sun,  
‘With antomn gules my race is ran 5  
‘When will the hazel put fort its dower,  
Or the grape ripan ander my bowers?  
When will the harvest or the hosters mooo,  
‘Turn my midoight into mid-econ ?  
  
Ta all sere and yello  
  
And to my core snellow.  
‘The mast i dropping within my woods,  
‘The winter i Torking withia my moods,  
‘And the rastlig ofthe withered lea  
Te the constant muse of my gre  
  
   
  
   
  
‘To an unskilful rhymer the Muse thus spoke in prose:  
  
‘The moon no longer reflects the day, but rises to her  
absolute rule, and the husbandman and hunter acknowl

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400 A were.  
  
   
  
edge her for their mistress. Asters and golden-rods:  
long the way, and the life-everlasting withers not. The  
ficlds are reaped and shorn of their pride, but an inward  
‘erdure still erowns them. ‘The thistle scatters its down,  
‘on the pool, and yellow leaves clothe the vine, and nanght  
disturbs the serious life of men. But behind the sheaves,  
‘and ander the sod, there lurks a ripe frait, which the  
reapers have not gathered, the true harvest of the year,  
which it bears forever, annually watering and maturing  
it, and man never severs the stalk which bears this pal-  
atable frait,  
  
   
  
‘Men nowhere, east or west, live yet a natural life,  
round which the vine clings, and which the elm willingly  
shadows. Man would desecrate it by his touch, and so  
the beauty of the world remains veiled tohim. He needs  
not only to be spiritualized, but naturalized, on the soil  
of earth. Who shall conceive what kind of roof the  
heavens might extend over him, what seasons minister to  
him, and what employment dignify his life! Only the  
convalescent raise the veil of nature. An immortality  
in his life would confer immortality on his abode. ‘The  
‘winds should be his breath, the seasons his moods, and  
he should impart of his serenity to Nature herself. But  
such as we know him he is ephemeral like the scenery  
surrounds him, and does not aspire to an enduring  
\_ existence. When we come down into the distant village,  
  
visible from the mountain-top, the nobler inhabitants  
‘with whom we peopled it have departed, and left only  
vermin in its desolate streets. It is the imagination of  
poets which puts those brave speeches into the mouths  
of their heroes. ‘They may feign that Cato’s last words  
were

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FRIDAY. 401  
  
‘Tho earth, the alr, and sees T kom, aod al  
‘The joys and horrors of thelr peace and wars ;  
‘Aad bow wil viow the Gods’ atte and the stare,”  
  
‘bat such are not the thoughts nor the destiny of common  
men. What is this heaven which they expect, if it is no  
Detter than they expect? Are they prepared for a better  
than they can now imagine? Whereis the heaven of him  
‘who dies on a stage, ina theatre? Here or nowhere is  
‘our heaven.  
  
“ Althongh we se celaatial bodies move  
‘Above the earth the earth we till and love.”  
  
‘We can conceive of nothing more fair than something  
which we have experienced. “The remembrance of  
youth isa sigh.” We linger in manhood to tell the dreams  
‘of our childhood, and they are half forgotten ere we have  
learned the language. We have need to be earth-born  
‘as well as heaven-born, ynyenis, a8 was said of the Titans  
of old, or in a better sense than they. ‘There have been  
heroes for whom this world seemed expressly prepared,  
as if creation had at last succeeded ; whove daily life was  
the stuff of which our dreams are made, and whoee pres  
ence enhanced the beauty and ampleness of Nature her~  
self, Where they walked,  
  
   
  
«Hore a more copious air invests the fields, and clothes  
with purple light ; and they know their own sun and :heir  
own stars.” We love to hear some men speak, though  
‘we hear not what they say; the very air they breathe is  
rich and perfumed, and the sound of their voices falls on  
  
the ear like the rustling of leaves or the crackling of the

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402 A werx.  
  
fire. They stand many deep. They have the heavens  
for their abettors, as those who have never stood from  
under them, and they look at the stars with an answering.  
ray. Their eyes are like glow-worms, and their motions  
‘graceful and flowing, as if'a place were already found for  
them, like rivers flowing through valleys. ‘The distine-  
tions of morality, of right and wrong, sense and nonsense,  
are petty, and have lost their significance, beside these  
pure primeval natures. When I consider the clouds  
stretched in stupendous masses across the sky, frowning,  
with darkness or glowing with downy light, or gilded with  
the rays of the setting sun, like the battlements of a city  
in the heavens, their grandeur appears thrown away on  
the meanness of my employment; the drapery is alto-  
gether too rich for such poor acting. I am hardly worthy  
to be a suburban dweller outside those walls.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
“Unies above bimelt he ota  
‘Erect himself ow poora thing fs maz 1”  
  
With our music we would fain challenge transiently:  
‘another and fiver sort of intercourse than our daily toil  
permits. The strains come back to us amended in the  
echo, as when a friend reads our verse. Why have they  
so painted the fruits, and freighted them with such fra-  
sgrance as to eatify more than animal appetite?  
  
1 aed the schoolman, his advice was free,  
But scored me out 100 Intricate a way.”  
  
‘These things imply, perchance, that we live on the verge  
of another and purer realm, from which these odors and  
‘sounds are wafted over tous. ‘The borders of our plot  
‘are set with flowers, whose seeds were blown from more  
Elysian fields adjacent. ‘They are the pot-herbs of the

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patpay. 403  
  
gods. Some fairer fruits and sweeter fragrances watled  
over to us, betray another realm's vicinity. ‘There, too,  
does Echo dwel, and there isthe abutment of the rain-  
bows arch.  
  
‘Aner race and Soe fe  
  
east aod roel o'r oar head,  
  
‘Aod wo itmen are oly bl  
  
‘To catch tho fragment rom thelr table,  
  
‘him I the fragrance of the fat,  
  
While we coosume the pulp wad rot  
  
‘What ae the moments that we stand  
  
‘Astoutshed on te Olympia land  
  
   
  
‘Wo need pray for no higher heaven than the pure  
tenses can furnish, a purely sensuous life. Our present  
senses are but the rudiments of what they are destined  
to become. We are comparatively deaf and dumb and  
blind, and without smell or taste or feeling. Every gen  
‘eration makes the discovery, that ite divine vigor has  
‘been dissipated, and each sense and faculty misapplied  
and debauched, ‘The ears were made, not for such tri  
Sal uses as men are wont to suppose, but to hear celestial  
sounds, ‘The eyes were not made for such grovelling  
uses as they are now put to and worn oat by, bat to be-  
hold beauty now invisible, May we not see God? Are  
wo to bo put off and amused in this life, as it were  
with a mere allegory? Is not Nature, rightly read, that  
of which she is commonly taken to be the symbol mere-  
ly? When the common man looks into the sky, which  
he has not so much profaned, he thinks it less gross than  
the earth, and with reverence speaks of “the Heavens,”  
Dut the seer will in the same sense speak of the Earths’  
and his Father who is in them. “Did not he that made  
that which is within, make that which is without also ?”  
‘What is it, then, to educato but to develop these divis

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404 a work,  
  
germs called the senses? for individuals and states to  
deal magnanimonsly with the rising generation, leading  
it not into temptation, —not teach the eye to squint, nor  
attune the ear to profanity. But where is the instructed  
teacher? Where are the normal schools?  
  
‘A Hindoo sage said, “As a dancer, having exhibited  
herself to the epectator, desiats from the dance, s0 does  
‘Nature desist, having manifested herself to soul—.  
Nothing, in my opinion, is more gentle than Nature;  
fonce aware of having been seen, she does not again ex-  
pose herself to the gaze of soul.”  
  
It is oasier to discover another such a new world as  
Colambus id, than to go within one fold of this which  
‘we appear to know #0 well ; the land is lost sight of, the  
‘compass varies, and mavkind mutiny’; and still history  
accumulates like rubbish before the portals of nature.  
But there is only necessary a moment’s senity and sound  
senses, to toach us that there is a nature behind the ordi-  
nary, ia which we have only some vague pre-emption  
right and western reserve as yet. We live on the out-  
skirts of that region. Carved wood, and floating boughs,  
‘and sunset skies, are all that we know of it. We are not  
to be imposed on by the longest spell of weather. Let  
tus not, my friends, be wheodled and cheated into good  
behavior to earn the salt of our eternal porridge, who-  
ever they are that attempt it, Let us wait a litle, and  
not purchase any clearing here, trusting that richer bot-  
toms will soon be put up. It is but thin soil where we  
stand ; I have felt my roots in a richer ere this. I bave  
seen & bunch of violets in a glass vase, tied loosely with  
a siraw, which reminded me of myself.

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¥RIDAY.  
  
‘Tam « paroal of van striving tad  
By a chance bond together,  
Dangling this way and that, thet inks  
‘Were made vo lose and wide,  
‘Methinks,  
For milder weather.  
  
‘A.buneh of violets without their rot,  
"And sorrel iterixed  
circled by « wiep of raw  
‘Once coiled about their shoots,  
‘The law  
By which I'm Sized.  
  
   
  
‘A novagay which Time clatahod from out  
“Thove fui Elysian lds,  
‘With weeds and broken stom, fa hast,  
Doth make the rabble rout  
"That waste  
The day be yields.  
  
‘And here I bloom for «short boar unseeo,  
Drinking my jules up,  
‘With no roo a the and  
‘To keep my branches green,  
‘Bat atand  
Tne bare cap.  
  
Some tender bads were la upon my stem  
In mimicry of ie,  
Bat ah! the children wil not know,  
‘Til te has withered them,  
The woo  
‘With which they "re rif.  
  
But now Isce I was not plucked for naught,  
‘And after in life's vase  
OF pan set while T might eurviva,  
But by a kind hand brought  
“Alive  
  
‘To. trange place.  
  
‘That stock thus thinned will goa redeem its boar,  
“And by another year,

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406 A ween.  
  
‘och as God koows, with freer ar,  
More frata and fairer Bowers  
Will bear,  
While droop here.  
  
‘This world has many rings, like Saturn, and we live  
‘now on the outmost of them all. None can say deliber-  
ately that he iohabits the same sphere, or is contempora-  
1y with, the flower which his hands have plucked, and  
thoogh his feet may seem to crush it, inconceivable  
spaces and ages separate them, and perchance there is  
‘no danger that he will hurt it, What do the bot  
know? Ourslives should go between the lichen and the  
‘bark, The eye may see for the hand, but not for the  
mind. We are atill being bora, and have as yet but a  
dim vision of ea and land, sun, moon and stars, and  
shall not see clearly till after nine days at least. That  
  
‘ pathetic inquiry among travellers and geographers  
after the site of ancient Troy. It isnot near where they  
think it is, When a thing is decayed and gone, how in-  
istinet must be the place it occupied!  
  
‘The anecdotes of modern astronomy affect me in the  
same way as do those faint revelations of the Real  
which are vouchsafed to men from time to time, or  
rather from eternity to eternity. When I remember the  
history of that faint light in our firmament, which we call  
‘Venus, which ancient men regarded, and which most  
‘modern men still regard, as a bright spark attached to a  
hollow sphere revolving about oar earth, but which we  
hhave discovered to be another world, in itself, — how  
Copernicus, reasoning long and patiently about the mat-  
tor, predicted confidently concerning it, before yet the  
telescope had been invented, that if ever men came to  
see it more clearly than they did then, they would dis

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wrupar. 407  
  
cover that it had phases like our moon, and that within  
a century after his death the telescope was invented, and  
that prediction verified, by Galileo,—T am not without  
hope that we may, even here and now obtain some accu  
rate information concerning that ormeR wort which the  
instinct of mankind has so long predicted. Tndeed, all  
that we call science, as well as all that we call poetry, is  
‘particle of such information, accurate as far as it goes,  
though it be but to the confines of the truth. If we can  
reason so accurately, and with euch wonderful confirma-  
tion of our reasoning, respecting so-called material ob-  
Jects and events infinitely removed beyond the range of  
‘our natural vision, so that the mind hesitates to trust its  
calculations even when they are confirmed by observa-  
n, why may not our speculations penetrate as far into  
the immaterial starry system, of which the former is but  
the outward and visible type? Surely, we are. provided  
with senses as well fitted to penetrate the spaces of the  
real, the substantial, the eternal, as these outward are to  
penetrate the material universe. Veias, Meno, Zoroas-  
ter, Socrates, Christ, Shakespeare, Swedenborg, — these  
are some of our astronomers.  
  
‘There are perturbations in our orbits produced by the  
influence of outlying spheres, and no astronomer has  
ever yet calculated the elements of that undiscovered  
‘world which produces them. I pereeive in the common  
train of my thoughts a natural and uninterrupted se-  
quence, each implying the next, or, if interruption oc-  
curs itis occasioned by a new object being presented to  
my senses. But a steep, and sudden, and by these means  
‘unaccountable transition, is that from a comparatively  
narrow and partial, what is called common sense view  
‘of things, to an infinitely expanded and liberating one,

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408 A were,  
  
from seeing things as men describe them, to seeing them  
‘as men cannot describe them. ‘This implies a senso  
which is not common, but rare in the wisest man's expe-  
rience; which is sensible or sentient of more than com-  
‘mon.  
  
In what enclosures does the astronomer loiter! His  
‘kien are shoal, and imagination, like a thirsty traveller,  
pants to be through their desert. ‘The roving mind  
imopatiently bursts the fetters of astronomical orbits, like  
cobwebs in a corner of its universe, and launches itself  
to where distance fails to follow, and law, such as science  
hhas discovered, grows weak and weary. ‘The mind  
knows a distance and a space of which all those sums  
combined do not make a unit of measure, — the interval  
‘between that which appears, and that which is. I know  
that there are many stars, I know that they are far  
‘enough off, bright enough, steady enough in their orbits,  
—but what are they sll worth? They are more waste  
land in the Weet,— star territory, —to be made slave  
States, perchance, if we colonize them. I have interest.  
Dut for six feet of star, and that interest is transient.  
‘Then farewell to all ye bodies, such as I have known  
ye  
  
   
  
   
  
Every man, if he is wise, will stand on such bottom  
fs will sustain him, and if one gravitates downwan  
‘more strongly than another, he will not venture on  
those meads where the latter walks securely, but  
rather leave the cranberries which grow there un-  
raked by himself, Perchance, some spring a higher  
freshet will float them his reach, though they  
may be watery and frostbitten by that time. Such  
srivelled berries I havo socn in many ® poor man's

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FRIDAY, 409  
  
gurret, ay, in many a chorch-bin and state-coffer, and  
with a little water and heat they swell again to th  
original size and fairness, and added sugar enough, stead  
mankind for sauce to this world’s dish.  
  
‘What is called common sense is excellent in its de-  
artment, and as invaluable as the virtue of conformity  
jn the army and navy,—for there must be subordina-  
tioo,— but uncommon sense, that sense which is com-  
‘mon only to the wisest, is as mach more excellent as it  
is more rare. Some aspire to excellence in the subordi-  
nate department, and may God speed them. What  
Faller says of masters of colleges is universally applica-  
ble, that “a litle alloy of dulness in a master of a col-  
lege makes him fitter to manage secalar affairs.”  
  
“He that wants falth, and spprobends a grat  
Because ho want it hath a trae belief;  
‘And he tht groves because his grief "sso small,  
“Has a true geet, and the beat Faith ofall.”  
  
   
  
   
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
(Or be encouraged by this other poet's strain, —  
  
‘By thom went Fido marshal of the eld:  
“Weak was his mother when she gavo him days  
‘And be at fret a sick and weukly cil,  
‘As oer with tears weleomed the wanny ray;  
‘Yet when more years afford more growth and might,  
‘A champion stat he was, and polamant knight,  
‘As orar came in feld, or shone in armor bright.  
  
   
  
“ Mountains be ings in sens with mighty baud;  
Stops and taras back the sua's impetuous cour;  
‘Natare breaks Nature's laws at hie commands  
1No fore of Hell or Honven withstands hla fore  
‘Beats to come yet many ages beac  
‘eo present makes, by wondrous prescienc  
roving the senses blid by being bled to sense.”  
  
   
  
   
  
“Yesterday, at dawn,” says Haz,“ God delivered me  
1"

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410 a were.  
  
from all worldly affiction; and amidst the gloom of  
night presented me with the wnter of immortality.”  
  
Tn the Iife of Sedi by Dowlat Shah occars this ven-  
tence: “The eagle of the immaterial soul of Shaikh  
Sadi shook from his plumage the dust of his bod;  
  
   
  
‘Thos thoughtfully we were rowing homeward to find  
some autumnal work to do, and help on the revolution  
of the seasons. Perhaps Nature would condescend to  
make use of us even without our knowledge, as when  
‘wo help to scatter her seeds in our walks, and carry  
‘barre and cockles on our clothes from field to field.  
  
   
  
All things are cureat found  
‘On earthly ground,  
  
Spirta and elements  
  
lave their deoents,  
  
[ight and day, yoar on your,  
Ligh and low, far and near,  
‘Thoae are our own axpects,  
‘Thea are our own regrets,  
  
‘Ye gods ofthe shore,  
‘Who abide evermore,  
eee your far headland,  
Stretching on either handy  
  
ear the ewoot evening sounds  
From yoar undecaying grounds;  
‘Cheat me no mare wit time,  
‘Take me to your elim.  
  
As it grew Inter in the afternoon, and we rowed.leis-  
urely up the gentle stream, shut in between fragrant  
and blooming banks, where we bad first pitched our  
‘tent, and drew nearer to the fields whero our lives had

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vaupar. aL  
  
assed, we seemed to detect the hues of our native sky  
in the southwest horizon, ‘The sun was just setting  
behind the edge of a wooded hill, #0 rich @ sunset as  
‘would never haye ended but for some reason unknown  
‘to men, and to be marked with brighter colors than or-  
inary in the scroll of time. ‘Though the shadows of  
the hills were beginning to steal over the stream, the  
whole river valley undulated with mild light, purer and  
‘more memorable than the noon. For so day bids fare-  
well even to solitary vales uninhabited by man. Two  
herons, Ardea Rerodias, with their long and slender  
limbs relieved against the sky, were seen travelling high  
over our heads, — their lofty and silent fight, as they  
‘were wending their way at evening, surely not to alight  
in any marsh on the earth's surface, but, perchance, on  
the other side of our atmosphere, a symbol for the ages  
to study, whether impressed upon the sky, or sculptured  
amid the bieroglyphics of Egypt, Bound to some north-  
‘ern meadow, they held on their stately, stationary fight,  
like the storks in the picture, and disappeared at length  
behind the clouds. Dense flocks of blackbirds were  
winging their way along the river’s course, as if on a  
short evening pilgrimage to some shrine of theirs, or to  
celebrate so fair 8 sunset,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
“Therefore, ax doth the plgrim, whom the night  
“lastes darkly to imprison on bis way,  
‘Think on thy home, my soul, and think aright  
(OF what's yot loft thes of i's wasting day:  
"Thy sun posta westward, paused is thy morn,  
‘And twice it snot given the tobe born.”  
  
   
  
‘The sun-setting presumed all men at leisure, and in a  
contemplative mood ; but the farmer’s boy only whistled  
the more thoughtfully as he drove his cows home from

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ae a ween.  
  
pasture, and the teamster refrained from cracking. hi  
whip, and guided his team with a subdued voice. ‘Tho  
last vestiges of daylight at length disappeared, and as  
we rowed silently slong with our backs toward home  
through the darkness, only a few stars being visible, we  
hhad litle to say, but eat absorbed in thought, or in silence  
Jiatened to the monotonous sound of our oars, a sort of  
radimental masic, suitable for the ear of Night and the  
acoustics of her dimly lighted halle;  
  
“ Polam referunt a sidera valle"  
  
   
  
‘and the valleys echoed the sound to the stars.  
  
‘As we looked up in silence to those distant lights, we  
‘were reminded that it was a rare imagination which first  
‘aught that the stars are worlds, and had conferred a  
great benefit on mankind. It is recorded in the Chroni-  
ele of Bernaldez, that in Columbus's first voyage the  
natives “ pointed towards the heavens, making signs that,  
they believed that there was all power and holiness.”  
‘We have reason to be gratefal for celestial phenomena,  
for they chiefly answer to the ideal in man. ‘The stars  
are distant and unobtrusive, but bright and endaring as  
our fairest and most memorable experiences.“ Let the  
immortal depth of your soul lead you, but earnestly ex-  
tend your eyes upwards.”  
  
   
  
   
  
As the truest society approaches always nearer to  
solitude, 00 the most excellent speech finally falls into  
Silence. Silence is audible to all men, at all times, and  
in all places, She is when we hear  
when we hear outwardly. Creation hi  
her, but is her visible framework and foil. All sounds  
fare her servants, and purveyors, proclaiming not only

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rear. 413,  
  
‘that their mistress is, but is a rare mistress, and earnest-  
ly to be sought after. ‘They are #0 far akin to Silence,  
that they are but bubbles on her surface, which straight-  
‘way burst, an evidence of the strength and prolificness  
of the under-current; faint utterance of Silence, and  
then only agreeable to our auditory nerves when they  
contrast themselves with and relieve the former. In  
proportion as they do this, and are heighteners and in-  
tensifers of the Silence, they are harmony and purest  
melody.  
  
Silence is the universal refuge, the sequel to all dull  
Aiscourses and all foolish acts, a balm to our every cha-  
‘grin, as welcome after satiety as after disappointment;  
that background which the painter may not daub, be he  
master or angler, and which, however awkward « fig-  
ure we may have made in the foreground, remains ever  
our inviolable asylum, where no indignity can assail, no  
personality disturb us.  
  
‘The orator puts off his individuality, and is then most  
eloquent when most silent. He listens while he speaks,  
‘and is « hearer along with his audience. Who has not  
hearkened to Her infinite din? She is Trath’s speaking  
trampet, the sole oracle, the true Delphi and Dodona,  
which kings and courtiers would do well to consult, nor  
will they be balked by an ambiguous answer. For  
through Her all revelations have been made, and just  
in proportion as men have consulted her oracle within,  
they have obtained a clear insight, and their age bas  
been marked as an enlightened one. But as often as  
they bave gove guiding abroad toa strange Delphi end  
her mad priestess, their age has been dark and leaden.  
Such were garrulous and noisy eras, which no longer  
yield any sound, but the Grecian or silent and melodious

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au a war.  
era is ever sounding and resounding in the ears of  
  
men.  
  
‘A good book is the plectrum with which our else si-  
lent lyrea are struck. We not unfrequently refer the  
interest which belongs to our own unwritten sequel, to  
the written and comparatively lifeless body of the work.  
(OF all books this sequel is the most indicpensable part.  
It should be the author's aim to say once and emphati-  
cally, “He said,” ign, % ‘This is the most the book-  
maker can attain to. If he make his volume a mole  
whereon the waves of Silence may break, it is well.  
  
It were vain for me to endeavor to interrupt the Si-  
lence. She cannot be done into English. For six  
thousand yeare men have translated her with what fidel-  
ity belonged to each, and still she is litle better than  
sealed book. A man may run on confidently for a  
time, thinking he has her under his thumb, and shall  
one day exhaust her, but he too must at last be silent,  
and men remark only how brave a beginning he made;  
for when he at length dives into her, so vast is the dis-  
proportion of the told to the untold, that the former will  
seem but the bubble on the surface where he disap-  
peared. Nevertheless, wo will go on, like those Chinese  
iff swallows, feathering our nests with the froth, which  
may one day be bread of lifé to such as dwell by the  
sea-shore.  
  
‘We had made about fifty miles this day with eail and  
‘oar, and now, far in the evening, our boat was grating  
against the balrashes of its native port, and its keel rec-  
ognized the Concord mud, where some semblance of its  
outline was still preserved in the flattened flags which  
hhad scarce yet erected themselves sinco our departure ;

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vRIpar. 415  
  
‘and we leaped gladly on shore, drawing it up, and fas-  
tening it to the wild apple-tree, whose stem still bore  
‘the mark which its chain bad worn in the chafing of the  
spring fresbets.  
  
THE EXD.  
  
   
  
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WALDEN  
  
BY  
  
HENRY D. (THOREAU  
Tae  
  
   
  
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INTRODUCTION  
  
ONCORD, Thoreau’s birthplace, and his  
life-long place of residence, except for a  
few short periods, is an inland town  
  
about twenty miles from Boston. The town is  
in the center of a large tract which first drew  
settlers to it because of its great meadows on the  
Musketequid River. Back from the stream are  
sandy or rocky uplands, covered for the most  
part, as they always have been, with woods of  
oak, pine, chestnut and maple. The people  
are chiefly farmers, but a considerable number  
of mechanics, merchants and professional men  
dwell in the village. As a whole the region is  
one of quiet serenity, favorable to leisurely  
thought and rambling, and also to that persist-  
ent industry by which New England thrives.  
In Thoreau’s time Concord was a somewhat  
smaller place than now, and naturally was  
rather more rustic. The population was about  
two thousand, the mode of life plain and un-  
ostentatious, and the people generally thrifty,  
few having wealth, but, on the other hand, few  
being pinched by poverty. The farm houses  
were usually of the ample and substantial type  
that bespoke antiquity and hospitality. ‘These  
  
100

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vi INTRODUCTION  
  
ancient homesteads always appealed to Thoreau,  
and when a dwelling was abandoned and went  
to ruin, his interest continued in the neglected  
orchard and dooryard and other features of the  
former homestead that attested human contact  
and care. This interest in mankind’s relation  
to the soil, the waters and the woodlands is  
constantly manifest in his books, and he deals  
as much with human nature as with that of  
forest and field.  
  
It was in March, 1845, that he borrowed an  
axe of his friend, Mr. Alcott, and went to the  
woods to begin preparations for building the  
‘hut in which he afterward lived more than two  
years beside Walden Pond, about a mile south  
of Concord village. He had long meditated  
making such an experiment. The laborious  
routine and the conventionalities of ordinary  
civilized life were a burden to him. He rebelled  
against the necessity of expending so much time  
and energy in the mere struggle for food and  
shelter — it left him too little leisure to be wise,  
and too little impulse to carry on his mental  
and spiritual growth. At Walden he proposed  
to learn how small were the actual needs of the  
body, and what the essential cost of living. He  
would test the pleasures and possible draw-  
backs of the plainest fare and a primitively  
simple dwelling. He coveted, too, the oppor  
tunity that would be afforded to study Nature

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INTRODUCTION vil  
  
while living in closer contact with the out-of-  
door world than he could in the village, and he  
wanted to have solitude for undisturbed medi-  
tation and authorship.  
  
He was of course visited at his woodland  
retreat by his old acquaintances, and among  
these was Mr. Alcott, who, after returning from  
spending an evening at the hermitage, made  
this entry in his diary: “If I were to proffer my  
earnest prayer to the gods for the greatest of all  
human privileges it should be for the gift of a  
severely candid friend. Most are lovers of pres-  
ent reputation, and not of that exaltation of soul  
which friends and discourse were given to awaken  
and cherish in us. Intercourse of this kind I  
have found possible with my friends Emerson  
and Thoreau; and the evenings passed in their  
society realize my conception of what friend-  
ship owes to and takes from its objects.”  
  
‘Thoreau was a squatter at Walden on the  
property of Mr. Emerson, who, for the sake of  
his walks and his winter fire, had bought land  
on both sides of Walden Pond. Emerson was  
evidently interested and attracted to a marked  
degree by his friend’s woodland life; for we  
find Thoreau, at the end of his first year’s  
pondside residence, designing a lodge which  
Emerson proposed should occupy a ledge on  
the opposite shore where it would command a  
wide prospect westerly over the level country

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viii INTRODUCTION  
  
toward Monadnock and Wachusett. It was to  
be a retreat for study and writing, but it was  
never built. Instead, a rustic summer house  
was erected in Mr. Emerson’s garden. The  
three friends, Alcott, Emerson and Thoreau,  
were intending to join in this task, and they  
went to the woods together to cut the trees  
needed for the purpose. Mr. Emerson, how-  
ever, wielded the axe only one day. He found  
his strength and skill unequal to that of his  
companions, and withdrew. When the work of  
actually building the summer house was begun  
Thoreau also withdrew, he was so averse to the  
way in which Mr. Alcott went ahead putting  
up and tearing down with no settled design on  
paper.  
  
It is by his two years’ encampment in the  
Walden woods that Thoreau is best known to  
the world; for so unusual a proceeding on the  
part of a man of his education and cultured  
tastes could not help attracting much curious  
interest. The book which relates how he lived  
and what he saw during this period has been  
the most popular of his writings, and will prob-  
ably continue to be. In none of his books is  
his genius displayed so characteristically and  
completely. It was, however, not published un-  
til seven years after his experiment as a hermit  
ended. Like all his books, it contains much  
that is not in the least concerned with what is

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INTRODUCTION ix  
  
primarily the subject of the volume. But it  
does charmingly describe the scenes and events  
of his sylvan days and nights with nature, and  
it has made Walden the most romantically  
attractive region of Concord. Anciently, how-  
ever, that neighborhood was a district of dark  
repute, the dwelling-place of ne’er-do-well and  
lawless characters such as used to fringe many  
a sober New England village. A large propor-  
tion of the humble houses were those of negroes.  
  
Why Thoreau should establish himself in  
so forlorn a vicinity was a puzzle to most of his  
fellow-townsmen. Indeed, not a few of his  
readers in the years that have passed since,  
contemplating the long period he lived in thet  
lonely woodland shanty, have been led to de-  
clare that he was a barbarian or a misanthrope.  
But the environment suited his mood at the  
time and gave him the chance to write and  
meditate free from many of the distractions of  
ordinary life. He was not, however, by any  
means cut off from his accustomed world; for,  
though often in his hut for days together, he  
also was frequently at the family home in the  
village. Such intimacy as he had with friends  
and acquaintances was likewise continued, and  
he was as social as he ever had been. He lived  
a life of labor and study in his forest retreat, and  
as soon as he exhausted the advantages of that  
solitude he abandoned it.

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x INTRODUCTION  
  
‘The experience was never  
seems to have found his Walden life in many  
respects ideal; yet he was not inclined to insist  
that others should adopt a similar life because,  
as he explains, unless a person has “a pretty  
good supply of internal sunshine he would have,  
I judge, to spend too much of his time in fight-  
ing with his dark humors.”  
  
“"Thoreau’s hut became the property of a  
Scotch gardener, who removed it a short dis-  
tance to the author’s beanfield, and made it  
his cottage for a few years. Then a farmer  
bought it, put it on wheels, and carried it  
to his farm, three miles north, where it stood  
for many years, a shelter for corn and beans,  
and a favorite haunt of squirrels and blue  
jays.  
  
On the spot where the cabin stood in the  
woods is now a cairn of stones, yearly visited  
by hundreds, and gradually growing; for each  
visitor is supposed to honor the poet-naturalist’s  
memory by bringing # stone from the borders  
of the near lake and adding it to the pile. The  
land roundabout still continues in the Emerson  
family, and its pine-clad slopes are freely open  
to the public. I fancy the aspect of the vicinity  
has not changed essentially. The woodland  
seclusion is almost as complete as it was in  
Thoreau’s time. Even the railroad which  
skirts one end of the pond was there when he

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INTRODUCTION xi  
  
had his hut beside the little cove that indents  
the shore a quarter mile away. Few spots are  
more satisfying to the literary pilgrim, and it  
is no wonder that the stream of visitors should  
be so constant and numerous year after year.  
  
CLIFTON JOHNSON.  
Hanuxr, Mass.

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WALDEN  
  
   
  
I  
ECONOMY  
  
IN I wrote the following pages, or  
rather the bulk of them, I lived alone,  
in the woods, a mile from any neighbor,  
  
in a house which I had built myself, on the shore  
  
of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts,  
and earned my living by the labor of my hands  
only. I lived there two years and two months.  
  
At present I am a sojourner in civilized life  
  
again.  
  
T should not obtrude my affairs so much on  
the notice of my readers if very particular in-  
quiries had not been made by my townsmen  
concerning my mode of life, which some would  
call impertinent, though they do not appear to  
me at all impertinent, but, considering the cir-  
cumstances, very natural and pertinent. Some  
have asked what I got to eat; if I did not feel  
lonesome; if I was not afraid; and the like.  
Others have been curious to learn what portion  
of my income I devoted to charitable purposes;  
and some, who have large families, how many  
poor children I maintained. I will therefore  
ask those of my readers who feel no particular  
  
1

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2 WALDEN  
  
interest in me to pardon me if I undertake to  
answer some of these questions in this book.  
In most books, the J, or first person, is omitted ;  
in this it will be retained; that, in respect to  
egotism, is the main difference. We com-  
monly do not remember that it is, after all,  
always the first person that is speaking. I  
should not talk so much about myself if there  
were anybody else whom I knew as well. Un-  
fortunately, I am confined to this theme by the  
narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I,  
on my side, require of every writer, first or last,  
a simple and sincere account of his own life,  
and not merely what he has heard of other  
men’s lives; some such account as he would  
send to his kindred from a distant land; for if  
he has lived sincerely, it must have been in a  
distant land to me. Perhaps these pages are  
more particularly addressed to poor students.  
‘As for the rest of my readers, they will accept  
such portions as apply to them. I trust that  
none will stretch the seams in putting on the  
coat, for it may do good service to him whom it  
fits.  
  
T would fain say something, not so much con-  
cerning the Chinese and Sandwich Islanders,  
as you who read these pages, who are said to  
live in New England; something, about your  
condition, especially your outward condition or  
circumstances in this world, in this town, what

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Thoreau’s Cave, just below bis divelling

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ECONOMY 8  
  
it is, whether it is necessary that it be as bad as  
it is, whether it cannot be improved as well as  
not. I have travelled a good deal in Concord;  
and everywhere, in shops, and offices, and fields,  
the inhabitants have appeared to me to be  
doing penance in a thousand remarkable ways.  
What I have heard of Brahmins sitting exposed  
to four fires and looking in the face of the sun;  
or hanging suspended, with their heads down-  
ward, over flames; or looking at the heavens  
over their shoulders “‘until it becomes impos-  
sible for them to resume their natural position,  
while from the twist of the neck nothing but  
liquids can pass into the stomach;” or dwell-  
ing, chained for life, at the foot of @ tree; or  
measuring with their bodies, like caterpillars,  
the breadth of vast empires; or standing on one  
leg on the tops of pillars, —even these forms  
of conscious penance are hardly more incredible  
and astonishing than the scenes which I daily  
witness. The twelve labors of Hercules were  
trifling in comparison with those which my  
neighbors have undertaken; for they were  
only twelve, and had an end; but I could never  
sce that these men slew or captured any monster  
or finished any labor. They have no friend  
Tolas to burn with @ hot iron the root of the  
hydra’s head, but as soon as one head is crushed,  
two spring up.  
  
I see young men, my townsmen, whose mis-

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4 WALDEN  
  
fortune it is to have inherited farms, houses,  
barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are  
more easily acquired than got rid of. Better if  
they had been bom in the open pasture and  
suckled by a wolf, that they might have seen  
with clearer eyes what field they were called to  
labor in. Who made them serfs of the soil ?.  
Why should they eat their sixty acres, when man  
is condemned to eat only his peck of dirt? Why  
should they begin digging their graves as soon  
as they are born? They have got to live a man’s  
life, pushing all these things before them, and  
get on as well as they can. How many a poor  
immortal soul have I met well-nigh crushed and  
smothered under its load, creeping down the  
road of life, pushing before it a barn seventy-  
five feet by forty, its Augean stables never  
cleansed, and one hundred acres of land, tillage;  
mowing, pasture, and wood-lot! The portion-  
less, who struggle with no such unnecessary  
inherited encumbrances, find it labor enough  
to subdue and cultivate a few cubic feet of flesh:  
  
But men labor under a mistake. The better  
part of the man is soon ploughed into the soil  
for compost. By a seeming fate, commonly  
called necessity, they are employed, as it says in  
an old book, laying up treasures which moth  
and rust will corrupt and thieves break through  
and steal. It is a fool’s life, as they will find when  
they get to the end of it, if not before. It is

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ECONOMY 5  
  
said that Deucalion and Pyrrha created men by  
throwing stones over their heads behind them: —  
  
Inde genus durum sumus, experiensque Iaborum,  
Et documenta, damus qué simus origine nati.  
  
Or, as Raleigh rhymes it in his sonorous way, —  
  
“From thence our kind-hearted is, enduring pain and care,  
Approving that our bodies of a stony nature are.”  
  
So much for a blind obedience to a blundering  
oracle, throwing the stones over their heads  
behind them, not seeing where they fell.  
  
‘Most men, even in this comparatively free  
country, through mere ignorance and mistake,  
are so occupied with the factitious cares and  
superfluously coarse labors of life, that its finer  
fruits cannot be plucked by them. Their fingers,  
from excessive toil, are too clumsy and tremble  
too much for that. Actually, the laboring man  
has not leisure for a true integrity day by day;  
he cannot afford to sustain the manliest rela-  
tions to men; his labor would be depreciated  
in the market. He has no time to be anything  
but a machine. How can he remember well  
his ignorance — which his growth requires —  
who has so often to use his knowledge? We  
should feed and clothe him gratuitously some-  
times, and recruit him with our cordials, before  
we judge of him. The finest qualities of our  
nature, like the bloom on fruits, can be pre-

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6 WALDEN  
  
served only by the most delicate handling. Yet  
we do not treat ourselves nor one another thus  
tenderly.  
  
Some of you, we all know, are poor, find it  
hard to live, are sometimes, as it were, gasping  
for breath. I have no doubt that some of you  
who read this book are unable to pay for all the  
dinners which you have actually eaten, or for  
the coats and shoes which are fast wearing or are  
already worn out, and have come to this page to  
spend borrowed or stolen time, robbing your  
creditors of an hour. It is very evident what  
mean and sneaking lives many of you live, for  
my sight has been whetted by experience; al-  
ways on the limits, trying to get into business  
and trying to get out of debt, a very ancient  
slough, called by the Latins es alienum, an-  
other's brass, for some of their coins were made  
of brass; still living, and dying, and buried by  
this other’s brass; always promising to pay,  
promising to pay, to-morrow, and dying to-day,  
insolvent; seeking to curry favor, to get custom,  
by how many modes, only not state-prison of-  
fences; lying, flattering, voting, contracting  
yourselves into a nutshell of civility, or dilating  
into an atmosphere of thin and vaporous gen-  
erosity, that you may persuade your neighbor  
to let you make his shoes, or his hat, or his  
coat, or his carriage, or import his grocer-  
ies for him; making yourselves sick, that you

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ECONOMY 7  
  
may lay up something against a sick day, some-  
thing to be tucked away in an old chest, or in a  
stocking behind the plastering, or, more safely,  
in a brick bank; no matter where, no matter  
how much or how little.  
  
I sometimes wonder that we can be so frivo-  
lous, I may almost say, as to attend to the gross  
but somewhat foreign form of servitude called  
Negro Slavery, there are so many keen and  
subtle masters that enslave both north and  
south. It is hard to have a southern overseer  
it is worse to have a northern one; but worst  
of all when you are the slave-driver of yourself.  
Talk of a divinity in man! Look at the teamster  
on the highway, wending to market by day or  
night; does any divinity stir within him? His  
highest duty to fodder and water his horses!  
What is his destiny to him compared with the  
shipping interests? Does not he drive for Squire  
Make-a-stir? How godlike, how immortal, is  
he? See how he cowers and sneaks, how vaguely  
all the day he fears, not being immortal nor  
divine, but the slave and prisoner of his own  
opinion of himself, a fame won by his own deeds.  
Public opinion is a weak tyrant compared with  
our own private opinion. What a man thinks  
of himself, that it is which determines, or rather  
indicates, his fate. Self-emancipation even in  
the West Indian provinces of the fancy and  
imagination, — what Wilberforce is there to

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8 WALDEN  
  
bring that about? Think, also, of the ladies of  
the land weaving toilet cushions against the last  
day, not to betray too green an interest in their  
fates! As if you could kill time without injur-  
ing eternity.  
  
‘The mass of men lead lives of quiet desper-  
ation. What is called resignation is confirmed  
desperation. From the desperate city you go  
into the desperate country, and have to console  
yourself with the bravery of minks and musk-  
rats. A stereotyped but unconscious despair is  
concealed even under what are called the games  
and amusements of mankind. There is no play  
in them, for this comes after work. But it is  
a characteristic of wisdom not to do desperate  
things.  
  
When we consider what, to use the words of  
the catechism, is the chief end of man, and what  
are the true necessaries and means of life, it  
appears as if men had deliberately chosen the  
common mode of living because they preferred  
it to any other. Yet they honestly think there is  
no choice left. But alert and healthy natures  
remember that the sup rose clear. It is never  
too late to give up our prejudices. No way of  
thinking or doing, however ancient, can be  
trusted without proof. What everybody echoes  
or in silence passes by as true to-day may turn  
out to be falsehood to-morrow, mere smoke of  
opinion, which some had trusted for a cloud that

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ECONOMY 9  
  
would sprinkle fertilizing rain on their fields.  
‘What old people say you cannot do you try and  
find that you can. Old deeds for old people,  
and new deeds for new. Old people did not  
know enough once, perchance, to fetch fresh  
fuel to keep the fire a-going; new people put a  
little dry wood under a pot, and are whirled  
round the globe with the speed of birds, in a  
way to kill old people, as the phrase is. Age is  
no better, hardly so well, qualified for an in-  
structor as youth, for it has not profited so much  
as it has lost. One may almost doubt if the  
wisest man has learned anything of absolute  
value by living. Practically, the old have no  
very important advice to give the young, their  
own experience has been so partial, and their  
lives have been such miserable failures, for  
private reasons, as they must believe; and it  
may be that they have some faith left which  
belies that experience, and they are only less  
young than they were. I have lived some thirty  
years on this planet, and I have yet to hear the  
first syllable of valuable or even earnest advice  
from my seniors. They have told me nothing,  
and probably cannot tell me anything, to the  
purpose. Here is life, an experiment to a great  
extent untried by me; but it does not avail me  
that they have tried it. If I have any experience  
which I think valuable, I am sure to reflect that  
this my Mentors said nothing about.

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10 WALDEN  
  
One farmer says to me, “You cannot live on  
vegetable food solely, for it furnishes nothing  
to make bones with;” and so he religiously  
devotes a part.of his day to supplying his sys-  
tem with the raw material of bones, walking  
all the while he talks behind his oxen, which,  
with vegetable-made bones, jerk him and his  
lumbering plough along in spite of every ob-  
stacle. Some things are really necessaries of  
life in some circles, the most helpless and dis-  
eased, which in others are luxuries merely, and  
in others still are entirely unknown.  
  
‘The whole ground of human life seems to  
some to have been gone over by their predeces-  
sors, both the heights and the valleys, and all  
things to have been cared for. According to  
Evelyn, “‘the wise Solomon prescribed ordi-  
nances for the very distances of trees; and the  
Roman pretors have decided how often you  
may go into your neighbor's land to gather the  
acorns which fall on it without trespass, and  
what share belongs to that neighbor.” Hippoc-  
rates has even left directions how we should  
cut our nails; that is, even with the ends of the  
fingers, neither shorter nor longer. Undoubt-  
edly the very tedium and ennui which presume  
to have exhausted the variety and the joys of  
life are as old as Adam. But man’s capacities  
have never been measured; nor are we to judge  
of what he can do by any precedents, so little

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ECONOMY ll  
  
has been tried. Whatever have been thy fail-  
ures hitherto, “‘be not afflicted, my child, for  
who shall assign to thee what thou hast left  
undone?”  
  
‘We might try our lives by a thousand simple  
tests; as, for instance, that the same sun which  
ripens my beans illumines at once a system of  
earths like ours. If I had remembered this it  
would have prevented some mistakes. This  
was not the light in which I hoed them. ‘The  
stars are the apexes of what wonderful triangles !  
‘What distant and different beings in the various  
mansions of the universe are contemplating the  
same one at the same moment! Nature and  
human life are as various as our several consti-  
tutions. Who shall say what prospect life offers  
to another? Could a greater miracle take place  
than for us to look through each other's eyes  
for an instant? We should live in all the ages  
of the world in an hour; ay, in all the worlds  
of the ages. History, Poetry, Mythology !—I  
know of no reading of another's experience so  
startling and informing as this would be.  
  
‘The greater part of what my neighbors call  
good I believe in my soul to be bad, and if I  
repent of anything, it is very likely to be my  
good behavior. What demon possessed me that  
I behaved so well? You may say the wisest  
thing you can, old man, — you who have lived  
seventy years, not without honor of a kind, —

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12 WALDEN  
  
I hear an irresistible voice which invites me  
away from all that. One generation abandons  
the enterprises of another like stranded vessels.  
I think that we may safely trust a good deal  
more than we do. We may waive just so much  
care of ourselves as we honestly bestow else-  
where. Nature is as well adapted to our weak-  
ness as to our strength. The incessant anxiety  
and strain of some is a well-nigh incurable form  
of disease. We are made to exaggerate the im-  
portance of what work we do; and yet how  
much is not done by us! or, what if we had  
been taken sick? How vigilant we are! deter-  
mined not to live by faith if we can avoid it; all  
the day long on the alert, at night we unwillingly  
say our prayers and commit ourselves to un-  
certainties. So thoroughly and sincerely are we  
compelled to live, reverencing our life, and deny-  
ing the possibility of change. This is the only  
way, we say; but there are as many ways as  
there can be drawn radii from one centre. All  
change is a miracle to contemplate; but it is a  
miracle which is taking place every instant.  
Confucius said, “To know that we know what  
we know, and that we do not know what we do  
not know, that is true knowledge.” When one  
man has reduced a fact of the imagination to be  
a fact to his understanding, I foresee that all men  
will at length establish their lives on that basis.

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ECONOMY 13°  
  
Let us consider for a moment what most of  
the trouble and anxiety which I have referred to  
is about, and how much it is necessary that we  
be troubled, or, at least, careful. It would be  
some advantage to live a primitive and frontier  
life, though in the midst of an outward civiliza-  
tion, if only to learn what are the gross neces-  
saries of life and what methods have been taken  
to obtain them; or even to look over the old  
day-books of the merchants, to see what it was  
that men most commonly bought at the stores,  
what they stored, that is, what are the grossest  
groceries. For the improvements of ages have  
had but little influence on the essential laws of  
man’s existence; as our skeletons, probably,  
are not to be distinguished from those of our  
ancestors.  
  
By the words, necessary of life, I mean what-  
ever, of all that man obtains by his own exer-  
tions, has been from the first, or from long use  
has become, so important to human life that  
few, if any, whether from savageness, or pov-  
erty, or philosophy, ever attempt to do without  
it.’ To many creatures there is in this sense but  
one necessary of life, Food. To the bison of  
the prairie it is a few inches of palatable grass,  
with water to drink; unless he seeks the Shelter  
of the forest or the mountain’s shadow. None  
of the brute creation requires more than Food  
and Shelter. The necessaries of life for man in

Page-7943

14 WALDEN  
  
this climate may, accurately enough, be dis-  
tributed under the several heads of Food, Shel-  
ter, Clothing, and Fuel; for not till we have  
secured these are we prepared to entertain the  
true problems of life with freedom and a pros-  
pect of success. Man has invented, not only  
houses, but clothes and cooked food; and  
possibly from the accidental discovery of the  
warmth of fire, and the consequent use of it, at  
first a luxury, arose the present necessity to sit  
by it. We observe cats and dogs acquiring the  
same second nature. By proper Shelter and  
Clothing we legitimately retain our own inter-  
nal heat; but with an excess of these, or of Fuel,  
that is, with an external heat greater than our  
own internal, may not cookery properly be said  
to begin? Darwin, the naturalist, says of the  
inhabitants of Terra del Fuego that, while his  
own party, who were well clothed and sitting  
close to a fire, were far from too warm, these  
naked savages, who were farther off, were ob-  
served, to his great surprise, “to be streaming  
with perspiration at undergoing such a roast-  
ing.” So, we are told, the New Hollander goes  
naked with impunity, while the European shiv-  
ers in his clothes. Is it impossible to combine  
the hardiness of these savages with the intel-  
lectualness of the civilized man? According to  
Liebig, man’s body is a stove, and food the fuel  
which keeps up the internal combustion in the

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ECONOMY 15  
  
lungs. In cold weather we eat more, in warm  
less. The animal heat is the result of a slow  
combustion, and disease and death take place  
when this is too rapid; or for want of fuel, or  
from some defect in the draught, the fire goes  
out. Of course the vital heat is not to be con-  
founded with fire; but so much for analogy. It  
appears, therefore, from the above list, that the  
expression, animal life, is nearly synonymous  
with the expression, animal heat; for while  
Food may be regarded as the Fuel which keeps  
up the fire within us, — and Fuel serves only to  
prepare that Food or to increase the warmth of  
our bodies by addition from without, — Shelter  
and Clothing also serve only to retain the heat  
thus generated and absorbed.  
  
‘The grand necessity, then, for our bodies is to  
keep warm, to keep the vital heat in us. What  
pains we accordingly take, not only with our  
Food, and Clothing, and Shelter, but with our  
beds, which are our night-clothes, robbing the  
nests and breasts of birds to prepare this shelter  
within a shelter, as the mole has its bed of grass  
and leaves at the end of its burrow! The  
man is wont to complain that this is a cold world;  
and to cold, no less physical than social, we re-  
fer directly a great part of our ails. The sum-  
mer, in some climates, makes possible to man a  
sort of Elysian life. Fuel, except to cook his  
Food, is then unnecessary; the sun is his fire,

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16 WALDEN  
  
and many of the fruits are sufficiently cooked by  
its rays; while Food generally is more various,  
and more easily obtained, and Clothing and  
Shelter are wholly or half unnecessary. At the  
present day, and in this country, as I find my  
‘own experience, a few implements, a knife, an  
axe, a spade, a wheelbarrow, &., and for the  
studious, lamplight, stationery, and access to a  
few books, rank next to necessaries, and can all  
be obtained at a trifling cost. Yet some, not  
wise, go to the other side of the globe, to bar  
barous and unhealthy regions, and devote them-  
selves to trade for ten or twenty years, in order  
that they may live, — that is, keep comfortably  
warm, — and die in New England at last. The  
luxuriously rich are not simply kept comfort-  
ably warm, but unnaturally hot; as I implied  
before, they are cooked, of course & la mode.  
Most of the luxuries, and many of the so-  
called comforts, of life are not only not indis-  
pensable, but positive hindrances to the eleva-  
tion of mankind. With respect to luxuries and  
comforts, the wisest have ever lived a more  
simple and meagre life than the poor. The  
ancient philosophers, Chinese, Hindoo, Persian,  
and Greek, were a class than which none has  
been poorer in outward riches, none so rich in  
inward. We know not much about them. It is  
remarkable that we know so much of them as  
we do. The same is true of the more modern

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ECONOMY 7  
  
reformers and benefactors of their race. None  
can be an impartial or wise observer of human  
life but from the vantage ground of what we  
should call voluntary poverty. Of a life of lux-  
ury the fruit is luxury, whether in agriculture,  
or commerce, or literature, or art. There are  
nowadays professors of philosophy, but not  
philosophers. Yet it is admirable to profess be-  
cause it was once admirable to live. To be a  
philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts,  
nor even to found a school, but so to love wis-  
dom as to live, according to its dictates, a life of  
simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and  
trust. It is to solve some of the problems of  
life, not only theoretically, but practically. ‘The  
success of great scholars and thinkers is com-  
monly a courtier-like success, not kingly, not  
manly. They make shift to live merely by con-  
formity, practically as their fathers did, and are  
in no sense the progenitors of a nobler race of  
men. But why do men degenerate ever? What  
makes families run out? What is the nature of  
the luxury which enervates and destroys na-  
tions? Are we sure that there is none of it in  
our own lives? ‘The philosopher is in advance  
of his age even in the outward form of his life.  
He is not fed, sheltered, clothed, warmed, like  
his contemporaries. How can a man be a phil-  
osopher and not maintain his vital heat by Het  
ter methods than other men?

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18 WALDEN  
  
‘When a man is warmed by the several modes  
which I have described, what does he want  
next? Surely not more warmth of the same  
kind, as more and richer food, larger and more  
splendid houses, finer and more abundant cloth-  
ing, more numerous, incessant, and hotter fires,  
and the like. When he has obtained those  
things which are necessary to life, there is an-  
other alternative than to obtain the superfu-  
ities; and that is, to adventure on life now, his  
vacation from humbler toil having commenced.  
‘The soil, it appears, is suited to the seed, for it  
has sent its radicle downward, and it may now  
send its shoot upward also with confidence. Why  
has man rooted himself thus firmly in the earth,  
but that he may rise in the same proportion into  
the heavens above? — for the nobler plants are  
valued for the fruit they bear at last in the air  
and light, far from the ground, and are not  
treated like the humbler esculents, which, though  
they may be biennials, are cultivated only till  
they have perfected their root, and often cut  
down at top for this purpose, so that most would  
not know them in their flowering season.  
  
I do not mean to prescribe rules to strong and  
valiant natures, who will mind their own affairs  
whether in heaven or hell, and perchance build  
more magnificently and spend more lavishly  
than the richest, without ever impoverishing  
themselves, not knowing how they live, —if,

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ECONOMY 19  
  
indeed, there are any such, as has been dreamed;  
nor to those who find their encouragement and  
inspiration in precisely the present condition of  
things, and cherish it with the fondness and  
enthusiasm of lovers, — and, to some extent, I  
reckon myself in this number; I do not speak  
to those who are well employed, in whatever  
circumstances, and they know whether they are  
well employed or not; — but mainly to the mass  
of men who are discontented, and idly com-  
plaining of the hardness of their lot or of the  
times, when they might improve them. There  
are some who complain most energetically and  
inconsolably of any, because they are, as they  
say, doing their duty. I also have in my mind  
that seemingly wealthy but most terribly im-  
poverished class of all, who have accumulated  
dross, but know not how to use it, or get rid of  
it, and thus have forged their own golden or  
silver fetters.  
  
If I should attempt to tell how I have desired  
to spend my life in years past, it would prob-  
ably surprise those of my readers who are some-  
what acquainted with its actual history; it would  
certainly astonish those who know nothing about  
it. I will only hint at some of the enterprises  
which I have cherished.  
  
In any weather, at any hour of the day or  
night, I have been anxious to improve the nick

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20 WALDEN  
  
of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand  
on the meeting of two eternities, the past and  
future, which is precisely the present moment;  
to toe that line. You will pardon some ob-  
scurities, for there are more secrets in my trade  
than in most men’s, and yet not voluntarily kept,  
but inseparable from its very nature. I would  
gladly tell all that I know about it, and never  
paint “No Admittance” on my gate.  
  
I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a  
turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many  
are the travellers I have spoken concerning  
them, describing their tracks and what calls they  
answered to. I have met one or two who had  
heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse,  
and even seen the dove disappear behind a  
cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover  
them as if they had lost them themselves.  
  
To anticipate, not the sunrise and the dawn  
merely, but, if possible, Nature herself! How  
many mornings, summer and winter, before yet  
any neighbor was stirring about his business,  
have I been about mine! No doubt, many of  
my townsmen have met me returning from this  
enterprise, farmers starting for Boston in the  
twilight, or woodchoppers going to their work.  
It is true, I never assisted the sun materially in  
his rising, but, doubt not, it was of the last im-  
portance only to be present at it.  
  
So many autumn, ay, and winter days, spent

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ECONOMY a  
  
outside the town, trying to hear what was in the  
wind, to hear and carry it express! I well-nigh  
sunk all my capital in it, and lost my own breath  
into the bargain, running in the face of it. If it  
had concerned either of the political parties,  
depend upon it, it would have appeared in the  
Gazette with the earliest intelligence. At other  
times watching from the observatory of some  
cliff or tree, to telegraph any new arrival; or  
waiting at evening on the hill-tops for the sky  
to fall, that I might catch something, though I  
never caught much, and that, manna-wise,  
would dissolve again in the sun.  
  
For a long time I was reporter to a journal,  
of no very wide circulation, whose editor has  
never yet seen fit to print the bulk of my contri-  
butions, and, as is too common with writers,  
I got only my labor for my pains. However, in  
this case my pains were their own reward.  
  
For many years I was self-appointed inspector  
of snow storms and rain storms, and did my  
duty faithfully; surveyor, if not of highways,  
then of forest paths and all across-lot routes,  
keeping them open, and ravines bridged and  
passable at all seasons, where the public heel  
had testified to their utility.  
  
T have looked after the wild stock of the town,  
which give a faithful herdsman a good deal of  
trouble by leaping fences; and I have had an  
eye to the unfrequented nooks and corners of

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22 WALDEN  
  
the farm; though I did not always know whether  
Jonas or Solomon worked in a particular field  
to-day; that was none of my business. I have  
watered the red huckleberry, the sand cherry  
and the nettle tree, the red pine and the black  
ash, the white grape and the yellow violet, which  
might have withered else in dry seasons.  
  
In short, I went on thus for a long time, I may  
say it without boasting, faithfully minding my  
business, till it became more and more evident  
that my townsmen would not after all admit me  
into the list of town officers, nor make my place  
a sinecure with a moderate allowance. My  
accounts, which I can swear to have kept faith-  
fully, I have, indeed, never got audited, still  
less accepted, still less paid and settled. How-  
ever, I have not set my heart on that.  
  
Not long since, a strolling Indian went to sell  
baskets at the house of a well-known lawyer  
in my neighborhood. “Do you wish to buy  
any baskets?” he asked. “No, we do not want  
any,” was the reply.  
  
“‘What!” exclaimed the Indian, as he went  
out the gate, “do you mean to starve us?”  
Having seen his industrious white neighbors so  
well off, — that the lawyer had only to weave  
arguments, and by some magic wealth and  
standing followed, he had said to himself: I  
will go into business; I will weave baskets; it  
is a thing which I can do. Thinking that when

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ECONOMY 23  
  
he had made the baskets he would have done  
his part, and then it would be the white man’s  
to buy them. He had not discovered that it was  
necessary for him to make it worth the other’s  
while to buy them, or at least make him think  
that it was so, or to make something else which  
it would be worth his while to buy. I too had  
woven a kind of basket of a delicate texture, but  
Thad not made it worth any one’s while to buy  
them. Yet not the less, in my case, did I think  
it worth my while to weave them, and instead  
of studying how to make it worth men’s while  
to buy my baskets, I studied rather how to avoid  
the necessity of selling them. The life which  
men praise and regard as successful is but one  
kind. Why should we exaggerate any one kind  
at the expense of the others?  
  
Finding that my fellow-citizens were not  
likely to offer me any room in the court house,  
or any curacy or living anywhere else, but I  
must shift for myself, I turned my face more  
exclusively than ever to the woods, where I was  
better known. I determined to go into busi-  
ness at once, and not wait to acquire the usual  
capital, using such slender means as I had  
already got. My purpose in going to Walden  
Pond was not to live cheaply nor to live dearly  
there, but to transact some private business  
with the fewest obstacles; to be hindered from  
accomplishing which for want of a little common

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2 WALDEN  
  
sense, a little enterprise and business talent,  
appeared not so sad as foolish.  
  
I have always endeavored to acquire strict  
business habits; they are indispensable to every  
man. If your trade is with the Celestial Empire,  
then some small counting house on the coast,  
in some Salem harbor, will be fixture enough.  
You will export such articles as the country  
affords, purely native products, much ice and  
pine timber and a little granite, always in native  
bottoms. These will be good ventures. To  
oversee all the details yourself in person; to  
be at once pilot and captain, and owner and  
underwriter; to buy and sell and keep the  
accounts; to read every letter received, and  
write or read every letter sent; to superintend  
the discharge of imports night and day; to be  
upon many parts of the coast almost at the  
same time; — often the richest freight will  
be discharged upon a Jersey shore;—to be  
your own telegraph, unweariedly sweeping the  
horizon, speaking all passing vessels bound  
coastwise; to keep up a steady despatch of com-  
modities, for the supply of such a distant and  
exorbitant market; to keep yourself informed  
of the state of the markets, prospects of war  
and peace everywhere, and anticipate the ten-  
dencies of trade and civilization, — taking ad-  
vantage of the results of all exploring expeditions,  
using new passages and all improvements in

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ECONOMY 25  
  
navigation ; — charts to be studied, the position  
of reefs and new lights and buoys to be ascer-  
tained, and ever, and ever, the logarithmic  
tables to be corrected, for by the error of some  
calculator the vessel often splits upon a rock  
that should have reached a friendly pier, —  
there is the untold fate of La Perouse; — univer-  
sal science to be kept pace with, studying the  
lives of all great discoverers and navigators,  
great adventurers and merchants, from Hanno  
and the Phoenicians down to our day; in fine,  
account of stock to be taken from time to time,  
to know how you stand. It is a labor to task  
the faculties of a man, — such problems of profit  
and loss, of interest, of tare and tret, and gaug-  
ing of all kinds in it, as demand a universal  
knowledge.  
  
I have thought that Walden Pond would be  
‘a good place for business, not solely on account  
of the railroad and the ice trade; it offers ad-  
vantages which it may not be good policy to  
divulge; it is a good post and a good founda-  
tion. No Neva marshes to be filled; though  
you must everywhere build on piles of your  
own driving. It is said that a flood-tide, with a  
westerly wind, and ice in the Neva, would sweep  
St. Petersburg from the face of the earth.  
  
As this business was to be entered into without  
the usual capital, it may not be easy to conjec-

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26 WALDEN  
  
ture where those means, that will still be indis-  
pensable to every such undertaking, were to be  
obtained. As for Clothing, to come at once to  
the practical part of the question, perhaps we  
are led oftener by the love of novelty, and a  
regard for the opinions of men, in procuring it,  
than by a true utility. Let him who has work  
to do recollect that the object of clothing is,  
first, to retain the vital heat, and secondly, in  
this state of society, to cover nakedness, and he  
may judge how much of any necessary or impor-  
tant work may be accomplished without adding  
to his wardrobe. Kings and queens who wear  
a suit but onge, though made by some tailor or  
dressmaker to their majesties, cannot know the  
comfort of wearing a suit that fits." They are  
no better than wooden horses to hang the clean  
clothes on. Every day our garments become  
more assimilated to ourselves, receiving the  
impress of the wearer’s character, until we  
hesitate to lay them aside, without such delay  
and medical appliances and some such solemnity  
even as our bodies. No man ever stood the  
lower in my estimation for having a patch in  
his clothes; yet I am sure that there is greater  
anxiety, commonly, to have fashionable, or at  
least clean and unpatched, clothes than to have  
a sound conscience. But even if the rent is not  
mended, perhaps the worst vice betrayed is  
improvidence. I sometimes try my acquaint-

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ECONOMY a7  
  
ances by such tests as this; — who could wear  
@ patch, or two extra seams only, over the knee?  
Most behave as if they believed that their pros-  
pects for life would be ruined if they should do  
it. It would be easier for them to hobble to  
town with a broken leg than with a broken  
pantaloon. Often if an accident happens to a  
gentleman’s legs, they can be mended; but if  
a similar accident happens to the legs of his  
pantaloons, there is no help for it; for he con-  
siders, not what is truly respectable, but what  
is respected. We know but few men, a great  
many coats and breeches. Dress a scarecrow  
in your last shift, you standing shiftless by, who  
would not soonest salute the scarecrow? Pass-  
ing a cornfield the other day, close by a hat and  
coat on a stake, I recognized the owner of the  
farm. He was only a little more weather-  
beaten than when I saw him last. I have heard  
of a dog that barked at every stranger who  
approached his master’s premises with clothes  
on, but was easily quieted by a naked thief.  
It is an interesting question how far men would  
retain their relative rank if they were divested  
of their clothes. Could you, in such a case, tell  
surely of any company of civilized men, which  
belonged to the most respected class? When  
Madam Pfeiffer, in her adventurous travels  
round the world, from east to west, had got so  
near home as Asiatic Russia, she says that she

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28 WALDEN  
  
felt the necessity of wearing other than a travel-  
ling dress, when she went to meet the authori-  
ties, for she “‘was now in a civilized coun-  
try, where . . . people are judged of by their  
clothes.” Even in our democratic New England  
towns the accidental possession of wealth, and  
its manifestation in dress and equipage alone,  
obtain for the possessor almost universal respect.  
But they who yield such respect, numerous as  
they are, are so far heathen, and need to have  
a missionary sent to them. Besides, clothes  
introduced sewing, a kind of work which you  
may call endless; a woman’s dress, at least, is  
never done.  
  
‘A man who has at length found something to  
do will not need to get a new suit to do it in;  
for him the old will do, that has lain dusty in  
the garret for an indeterminate period. Old  
shoes will serve a hero longer than they have  
served his valet, — if a hero ever has a valet, —  
bare feet are older than shoes, and he can make  
them do. Only they who go to soirées and  
legislative halls must have new coats, coats to  
change as often as the man changes in them.  
But if my jacket and trousers, my hat and shoes,  
are fit to worship God in, they will do; will  
they not? Who ever saw his old clothes, —  
his old coat, actually worn out, resolved into  
its primitive elements, so that it was not a deed  
of charity to bestow it on some poor boy, by

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ECONOMY 29  
  
him perchance to be bestowed on some poorer  
still, or shall we say richer, who could do with  
less? I say, beware of all enterprises that re-  
quire new clothes, and not rather a new wearer  
of clothes. If there is not a new man, how can  
the new clothes be made to fit? If you have  
any enterprise before you, try it in your old  
clothes. All men want, not something to do  
with, but something to do, or rather something  
to be. Perhaps we should never procure a new  
suit, however ragged or dirty the old, until we  
have so conducted, so enterprised or sailed in  
some way, that we feel like new men in the old,  
and that to retain it would be like keeping new  
wine in old bottles. Our moulting season, like  
that of the fowls, must be a crisis in our lives.  
‘The loon retires to solitary ponds to spend it.  
Thus also the snake casts its slough, and the  
caterpillar its wormy coat, by an internal  
industry and expansion; for clothes are but our  
outmost cuticle and mortal coil. Otherwise we  
shall be found sailing under false colors, and be  
inevitably cashiered at last by our own opinion,  
as well as that of mankind.  
  
‘We don garment after garment, as if we grew  
like exogenous plants by addition without. Our  
outside and often thin and fanciful clothes are  
our epidermis or false skin, which partakes not  
of our life, and may be stripped off here and  
there without fatal injury; our thicker gar

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30 WALDEN  
  
ments, constantly worn, are our cellular integu-  
ment, or cortex; but our shirts are our liber or  
true bark, which cannot be removed without  
girdling and so destroying the man. I believe  
that all races at some seasons wear something  
equivalent to the shirt. It is desirable that a  
man be clad so simply that he can lay his hands  
on -himself in the dark, and that he live in all  
respects so compactly and preparedly that, if  
an enemy take the town, he can, like the old  
philosopher, walk out the gate empty-handed  
without anxiety. While one thick garment is,  
for most purposes, as good as three thin ones,  
and cheap clothing can be obtained at prices  
really to suit customers; while a thick coat can  
be bought for five dollars, which will last as  
many years, thick pantaloons for two dollars,  
cowhide boots for a dollar and a half a pair,  
a summer hat for a quarter of a dollar, and a  
winter cap for sixty-two and a half cents, or a  
better be made at home at a nominal cost, where  
is he so poor that, clad in such a suit, of his own  
earning, there will not be found wise men to do  
him reverence?  
  
When I ask for a garment of a particular form,  
my tailoress tells me gravely, “They do not  
make them so now,” not emphasizing the  
“They” at all, as if she quoted an authority as  
impersonal as the Fates, and I find it difficult  
to get made what I want, simply because she

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ECONOMY 81  
  
cannot believe that I mean what I say, that I  
am so rash. When IJ hear this oracular sen-  
tence, I am for a moment absorbed in thought,  
emphasizing to myself each word separately  
that I may come at the meaning of it, that I  
may find out by what degree of consanguinity  
They are related to me, and what authority they  
may have in an affair which affects me so nearly ;  
and, finally, I am inclined to answer her with  
equal mystery, and without any more emphasis  
of the “they,” — “It is true, they did not make  
them so recently, but they do now.” Of what  
use this measuring of me if she does not measure  
my character, but only the breadth of my  
shoulders, as it were a peg to hang the coat on?  
We worship not the Graces, nor the Pares, but  
Fashion. She spins and weaves and cuts with  
full authority. The head monkey at Paris puts  
on a traveller’s cap, and all the monkeys in  
America do the same. I sometimes despair  
of getting anything quite simple and honest  
done in this world by the help of men. They  
would have to be passed through a powerful  
press first, to squeeze their old notions out of  
them, so that they would not soon get upon  
their legs again, and then there would be some  
one in the company with a maggot in his head,  
hatched from an egg deposited there nobody  
knows when, for not even fire kills these things,  
and you would have lost your labor. Never-

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82 WALDEN  
  
theless we will not forget that some Egyptian  
wheat was handed down to us by a mummy.  
On the whole, I think that it cannot be main-  
tained that dressing has in this or any country  
risen to the dignity of an art. At present, men  
make shift to wear what they can get. Like  
shipwrecked sailors, they put on what they  
can find on the beach, and at a little distance,  
whether of space or time, laugh at each other’s  
masquerade. Every generation laughs at the  
old fashions, but follows religiously the new.  
We are amused at beholding the costume of  
Henry VIII., or Queen Elizabeth, as much as  
if it was that of the King and Queen of the Can-  
nibal Islands. All costume off a man is pitiful  
or grotesque. It is only the serious eye peer-  
ing from and the sincere life passed within it,  
which restrain laughter and consecrate the  
costume of any people. Let Harlequin be taken  
with a fit of colic and his trappings will have to  
serve that mood too. When the soldier is hit by  
a cannon ball, rags are as becoming as purple.  
The childish and savage taste of men and  
women for new patterns keeps how many shak-  
ing and squinting through kaleidoscopes that  
they may discover the particular figure which  
this generation requires to-day. The manu-  
facturers have learned that this taste is merely  
whimsical. Of two patterns which differ only  
by a few threads more or less of a particular

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ECONOMY 83  
  
color, the one will be sold readily, the other lie  
on the shelf, though it frequently happens that  
after the lapse of a season the latter becomes the  
most fashionable. Comparatively, tattooing is  
not the hideous custom which it is called. It  
is not barbarous merely because the printing  
is skin-deep and unalterable.  
  
I cannot believe that our factory system is the  
best mode by which men may get clothing. The  
condition of the operatives is becoming every  
day more like that of the English; and it cannot  
be wondered at, since, as far as I have heard or  
observed, the principal object is, not that man-  
kind may be well and honestly clad, but, un-  
questionably, that the corporations may be  
enriched. In the long run men hit only what  
they aim at. Therefore, though they should  
fail immediately, they had better aim at some-  
thing high.  
  
As for a Shelter, I will not deny that this is  
now a necessary of life, though there are instances  
of men having done without it for long periods  
in colder countries than this. Samuel Laing  
says that “The Laplander in his skin dress, and  
in a skin bag which he puts over his head and  
shoulders, will sleep night after night on the  
snow... in a degree of cold which would  
extinguish the life of one exposed to it in any  
woollen clothing.” He has seen them asleep  
  
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84 WALDEN  
  
thus. Yet he adds, “They are not hardier than  
other people.” But, probably, man did not live  
long on the earth without discovering the con-  
venience which there is in a house, the domestic  
comforts, which phrase may have originally  
signified the satisfactions of the house more than  
of the family; though these must be extremely  
partial and occasional in those climates where  
the house is associated in our thoughts with  
winter or the rainy season chiefly, and two thirds  
of the year, except for a parasol, is unnecessary.  
In our climate, in the summer, it was formerly  
almost solely a covering at night. In the Indian  
gazettes a wigwam was the symbol of a day's  
march, and a row of them cut or painted on the  
bark of a tree signified that so many times they  
had camped. Man was not made so large  
limbed and robust but that he must seek to  
narrow his world, and wall in a space such as  
fitted him. He was at first bare and out of doors;  
but though this was pleasant enough in serene  
and warm weather, by daylight, the rainy season  
and the winter, to say nothing of the torrid sun,  
would perhaps have nipped his race in the bud  
if he had not made haste to clothe himself with  
the shelter of a house. Adam and Eve, accord-  
ing to the fable, wore the bower before other  
clothes. Man wanted a home, a place of warmth,  
or comfort, first of physical warmth, then the  
warmth of the affections.

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ECONOMY 35  
  
   
  
‘We may imagine a time when, in the infancy  
of the human race, some enterprising mortal  
crept into a hollow in a rock for shelter. Every  
child begins the world again, to some extent,  
and loves to stay out doors, even in wet and cold.  
It plays house, as well as horse, having an  
instinct for it. Who does not remember the  
interest with which when young he looked at  
shelving rocks, or any approach to a cave? It  
was the natural yearning of that portion of our  
most primitive ancestor which still survived in  
us. From the cave we have advanced to roofs  
of palm leaves, of bark and boughs, of linen  
woven and stretched, of grass and straw, of  
boards and shingles, of stones and tiles. At  
last, we know not what it is to live in the open  
air, and our lives are domestic in more senses  
than we think. From the hearth to the field  
is a great distance. It would be well perhaps  
if we were to spend more of our days and nights  
without any obstruction between us and the  
celestial bodies, if the poet did not speak so  
much from under a roof, or the saint dwell there  
so long. Birds do not sing in caves, nor do  
doves cherish their innocence in dovecots.  
  
However, if one designs to construct a dwelling  
house, it behooves him to exercise a little Yankee  
shrewdness, lest after all he find himself in a  
work-house, a labyrinth without a clew, a mu-  
seum, an almshouse,-a prison, or a splendid

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36 WALDEN  
  
mausoleum instead. Consider first how slight  
a shelter is absolutely necessary. I have seen  
Penobscot Indians, in this town, living in tents  
of thin cotton cloth, while the snow was nearly  
a foot deep around them, and I thought that  
they would be glad to have it deeper to keep out  
the wind. Formerly, when how to get my living  
honestly, with freedom left for my proper pur-  
suits, was a question which vexed me even more  
than it does now, for unfortunately I am become  
somewhat callous, I used to see a large box by  
the railroad, six feet long by three wide, in which  
the laborers locked up their tools at night, and  
it suggested to me that every man who was hard  
pushed might get such a one for a dollar, and,  
having bored a few auger holes in it, to admit  
the air at least, get into it when it rained and at  
night, and hook down the lid, and so have free-  
dom in his love, and in his soul be free. This  
did not appear the worst, nor by any means a  
despicable alternative. You could sit up as  
late as you pleased, and, whenever you got up,  
go abroad without any landlord or house-lord  
dogging you for rent. Many a man is harassed  
to death to pay the rent of a larger and more  
luxurious box who would not have frozen to  
death in such a box as this. I am far from jest-  
ing. Economy is a subject which admits of  
being treated with levity, but it cannot so be  
disposed of. A comfortable house for a rude

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ECONOMY 87  
  
and hardy race, that lived mostly out of doors,  
was once made here almost entirely of such  
materials as Nature furnished ready to their  
hands. Goodkin, who was superintendent of  
the Indians subject to the Massachusetts Colony,  
writing in 1674, says, ‘The best of their houses  
are covered very neatly, tight and warm, with  
barks of trees, slipped from their bodies at those  
seasons when the sap is up, and made into great  
flakes, with pressure of weighty timber, when  
they are green. . . . The meaner sort are cov-  
ered with mats which they make of a kind of  
bulrush, and are also indifferently tight and  
warm, but not so good as the former. . . . Some  
I have seen, sixty or a hundred feet long and  
thirty feet broad. . . . I have often lodged in  
their wigwams, and found them as warm as the  
best English houses.” He adds that they were  
commonly carpeted and lined within with well-  
wrought embroidered mats, and were furnished  
with various utensils. The Indians had ad-  
vanced so far as to regulate the effect of the  
wind by a mat suspended over the hole in the  
roof and moved by a string. Such a lodge was  
in the first instance constructed in a day or two  
at most, and taken down and put up in a few  
hours; and every family owned one, or its apart-  
ment in one.  
  
In the savage state every family owns a shelter  
‘as good as the best, and sufficient for its coarser

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38 WALDEN  
  
and simpler wants; but I think that I speak  
within bounds when I say that, though the birds  
of the air have their nests, and the foxes their  
holes, and the savages their wigwams, in modern  
civilized society not more than one half the  
families own a shelter. In the large towns and  
cities, where civilization especially prevails, the:  
number of those who own a shelter is a very  
small fraction of the whole. The rest pay an  
annual tax for this outside garment of all, be-  
come indispensable summer and winter, which  
would buy a village of Indian wigwams, but now  
helps to keep them poor as long as they live.  
I do not mean to insist here on the disadvantage  
of hiring compared with owning, but it is evident  
that the savage owns his shelter because it costs  
so little, while the civilized man hires his com-  
monly because he cannot afford to own it; nor  
can he, in the long run, any better afford to hire.  
But, answers one, by merely paying this tax  
the poor civilized man secures an abode which  
is a palace compared with the savage’s. An  
annual rent of from twenty-five to a hundred  
dollars, these are the country rates, entitles him  
to the benefit of the improvements of centuries,  
spacious apartments, clean paint and paper,  
Rumford fire-place, back plastering, Venetian  
blinds, copper pump, spring lock, a commodi-  
ous cellar, and many other things. But how  
happens it that he who is said to enjoy these

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ECONOMY 39  
  
things is so commonly a poor civilized man,  
while the savage, who has them not, is rich as  
a savage? If it is asserted that civilization is  
a real advance in the condition of man, — and I  
think that it is, though only the wise improve  
their advantages, — it must be shown that it has  
produced better dwellings without making them  
more costly; and the cost of a thing is the amount  
of what I will call life which is required to be  
exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run.  
An average house in this neighborhood costs  
perhaps eight hundred dollars, and to lay up  
this sum will take from ten to fifteen years of  
the laborer’s life, even if he is not encumbered  
with a family; — estimating the pecuniary value  
of every man’s labor at one dollar a day, for if  
some receive more, others receive less;— so  
that he must have spent more than half his life  
commonly before his wigwam will be earned.  
Tf we suppose him to pay a rent instead, this  
is but a doubtful choice of evils. Would the  
savage have been wise to exchange his wigwam  
for a palace on these terms?  
  
It may be guessed that I reduce almost the  
whole advantage of holding this superfluous  
property as a fund in store against the future,  
so far as the individual is concerned, mainly to  
the defraying of funeral expenses. But perhaps  
a man is not required to bury himself. Never-  
theless this points to an important distinction

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40 WALDEN  
  
between the civilized man and the savage; and,  
no doubt, they have designs on us for our bene-  
fit, in making the life of a civilized people an  
‘institution, in which the life of the individual  
is to a great extent absorbed, in order to preserve  
and perfect that of the race. But I wish to show  
at what @ sacrifice this advantage is at present  
obtained, and to suggest that we may possibly  
so live as to secure all the advantage without  
suffering any of the disadvantage. What mean  
ye by saying that the poor ye have always with  
you, or that the fathers have eaten sour grapes,  
and the children’s teeth are set on edge?  
  
“As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not  
have occasion any more to use this proverb in  
Israel.”  
  
“Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of  
the father, so also the soul of the son is mine:  
the soul that sinneth it shall die.”  
  
When I consider my neighbors, the farmers  
of Concord, who are at least as well off as the  
other classes, I find that for the most part they  
have been toiling twenty, thirty, or forty years,  
that they may become the real owners of their  
farms, which commonly they have inherited  
with encumbrances, or else bought with hired  
money, — and we may regard one third of that  
toil as the cost of their houses, — but commonly  
they have not paid for them yet. It is true, the  
encumbrances sometimes outweigh the value

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ECONOMY 41  
  
of the farm, so that the farm itself becomes one  
great encumbrance, and still a man is found to  
inherit it, being well acquainted with it, as he  
says. On applying to the assessors, I am sur-  
prised to learn that they cannot at once name  
a dozen in the town who own their farms free  
and clear. If you would know the history of  
these homesteads, inquire at the bank where  
they are mortgaged. ‘The man who has actually  
paid for his farm with labor on it is so rare that  
every neighbor can point to him. I doubt if  
there are three such men in Concord. What  
has been said of the merchants, that a very large  
majority, even ninety-seven in a hundred, are  
sure to fail, is equally true of the farmers. With  
regard to the merchants, however, one of them  
says pertinently that a great part of their failures  
are not genuine pecuniary failures, but merely  
failures to fulfil their engagements, because it  
is inconvenient; that is, it is the moral character  
that breaks down. But this puts an infinitely  
worse face on the matter, and suggests, besides,  
that probably not even the other three succeed  
in saving their souls, but are perchance bank-  
rupt in a worse sense than they who fail honestly.  
Bankruptcy and repudiation are the spring-  
boards from which much of our civilization  
vaults and turns its somersets, but the savage  
stands on the unelastic plank of famine. Yet  
the Middlesex Cattle Show goes off here with

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42 WALDEN  
  
éclat annually, as if all the joints of the agricul-  
tural machine were suent.  
  
The farmer is endeavoring to solve the prob-  
lem of a livelihood by a formula more compli-  
cated than the problem itself. To get his shoe-  
strings he speculates in herds of cattle. With  
consummate skill he has set his trap with a hair  
springe to catch comfort and independence, and  
then, as he turned away, got his own leg into it.  
This is the reason he is poor; and for a similar  
reason we are all poor in respect to a thousand  
savage comforts, though surrounded by luxuries.  
‘As Chapman sings: —  
  
“The false society of men —  
— for earthly greatness  
All heavenly comforts rarefies to air.”  
  
And when the farmer has got his house, he  
may not be the richer but the poorer for it, and  
it be the house that has got him. As I under-  
stand it, that was a valid objection urged by  
Momus against the house which Minerva made,  
that she “‘had not made it movable, by which  
means a bad neighborhood might be avoided ;”  
and it may still be urged, for our houses are  
such unwieldy property that we are often  
imprisoned rather than housed in them; and  
the bad neighborhood to be avoided is our own  
scurvy selves. I know one or two families, at  
least, in this town, who, for nearly a generation,

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ECONOMY 43  
  
have been wishing to sell their houses in the out-  
skirts and move into the village, but have not  
been able to accomplish it, and only death will  
set them free.  
  
Granted that the majority are able at last  
either to own or hire the modern house with  
all its improvements. While civilization has  
been improving our houses, it has not equally  
improved the men who are to inhabit them. It  
has created palaces, but it was not so easy to  
create noblemen and kings. And @f the civilized  
man’s pursuits are no worthier than the savage’s,  
if he is employed the greater part of his life in  
obtaining gross necessaries and comforts merely,  
why should we have a better dwelling than the  
former?  
  
But how do the poor minority fare? Perhaps  
it will be found that just in proportion as some  
have been placed in outward circumstances  
above the savage, others have been degraded  
below him. ‘The luxury of one class is counter  
balanced by the indigence of another. On the  
one side is the palace, on the other are the alms-  
house and “silent poor.” The myriads who  
built the pyramids to be the tombs of the Pha-  
raohs were fed on garlic, and it may be were not  
decently buried themselves. The-mason who  
finishes the cornice of the palace returns at night  
perchance to a hut not so good as a wigwam.  
It is a mistake to suppose that, in a country

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44 WALDEN  
  
where the usual evidences of civilization »  
the condition of a very large body of the inhabit-  
ants may not be as degraded as that of savages.  
I refer to the degraded poor, not now to the  
degraded rich. To know this I should not need  
to look farther than to the shanties which every-  
where border our railroads, that last improve-  
ment in civilization; where I see in my daily  
walks human beings living in sties, and all winter  
with an open door, for the sake of light, without  
any visible, often imaginable, wood pile, and  
the forms of both old and young are perma-  
nently contracted by the long habit of shrinking  
from cold and misery, and the development of  
all their limbs and faculties is checked. It  
certainly is fair to look at that class by whose  
labor the works which distinguish this genera-  
tion are accomplished. Such too, to a greater  
or less extent, is the condition of the operatives  
of every denomination in England, which is  
the great workhouse of the world. Or I could  
refer you to Ireland, which is marked as one of  
the white or enlightened spots on the map.  
Contrast the physical condition of the Irish with  
that of the North American Indian, or the South  
Sea Islander, or any other savage race before  
it was degraded by contact with the civilized  
man. Yet I have no doubt that that people’s  
rulers are as wise as the average of civilized  
rulers. Their condition only proves what

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ECONOMY 45  
  
squalidness may consist with civilization. I  
hardly need refer now to the laborers of our  
Southern States who produce the staple exports  
of this country, and are themselves a staple  
production of the South. But to confine myself  
to those who are said to be in moderate circum-  
stances.  
  
‘Most men appear never to have considered  
what a house is, and are actually though need-  
lessly poor all their lives because they think  
that they must have such a one as their neigh-  
bors have. As if one were to wear any sort of  
coat which the tailor might cut out for him, or,  
gradually leaving off palmleaf hat or cap of  
woodchuck skin, complain of hard times be-  
cause he could not afford to buy him a crown!  
It is possible to invent a house still more conven-  
ient and luxurious than we have, which yet all  
would admit that man could not afford to pay  
for. Shall we always study to obtain more of  
these things, and not sometimes to be content  
with less? Shall the respectable citizen thus  
gravely teach, by precept and example, the neces-  
sity of the young man’s providing a certain num-  
ber of superfluous glowshoes, and umbrellas,  
and empty guest chambers for empty guests,  
before he dies? Why should not our furniture  
be as simple as the Arab’s or the Indian’s?  
When I think of the benefactors of the race,  
whom we have apotheosized as messengers from

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46 ‘WALDEN  
  
heaven, bearers of divine gifts to man, I do not  
see in my mind any retinue at their heels, any  
car-load of fashionable furniture. Or what if  
I were to allow — would it not be a singular  
allowance ? — that our furniture should be more  
complex than the Arab’s, in proportion as we  
are morally and intellectually his superiors!  
At present our houses are cluttered and defiled  
with it, and a good housewife would sweep out  
the greater part into the dust hole, and not leave  
her morning’s work undone. Morning work!  
By the blushes of Aurora and the music of  
Memnon, what should be man’s morning work  
in this world? I had three pieces of limestone on  
my desk, but I was terrified to find that they  
required to be dusted daily, when the furniture  
of my mind was all undusted still, and I threw  
them out the window in disgust. How, then,  
could I have a furnished house? I would rather  
sit in the open air, for no dust gathers on the  
grass, unless where man has broken ground.  
  
It is the luxurious and dissipated who set the  
fashions which the herd so diligently follow.  
The traveller who stops at the best houses, so  
called, soon discovers this, for the publicans pre-  
sume him to be a Sardanapalus, and if he re-  
signed himself to their tender mercies he would  
soon be completely emasculated. I think that  
in the railroad car we are inclined to spend  
more on luxury than on safety and convenience,

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ECONOMY 47  
  
and it threatens without attaining these to be-  
come no better than a modern drawing-room,  
with its divans, and ottomans, and sunshades,  
and a hundred other Oriental things, which we  
are taking west with us, invented for the ladies  
of the harem and the effeminate natives of the  
Celestial Empire, which Jonathan should be  
ashamed to know the names of. I would rather  
sit on a pumpkin and have it all to myself, than  
be crowded on a velvet cushion. I would rather  
ride on earth in an ox cart with a free circula-  
tion, than go to heaven in the fancy car of an  
excursion train and breathe a malaria all the  
way.  
  
The very simplicity and nakedness of man’s  
life in the primitive ages imply this advantage  
at least, that they left him still but a sojourner  
in nature. When he was refreshed with food  
and sleep, he contemplated his journey again.  
He dwelt, as it were, in a tent in this world, and  
was either threading the valleys, or crossing the  
plains, or climbing the mountain tops. But lo!  
men have become the tools of their tools. The  
man who independently plucked the fruits when  
he was hungry is become a farmer: and he who  
stood under a tree for shelter, a housekeeper.  
‘We now no longer camp as for a night, but have  
settled down on earth and forgotten heaven. We  
have adopted Christianity merely as an improved  
method of agri-culture. We have built for this

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48 WALDEN  
  
world a family mansion, and for the next a family  
tomb. The best works of art are the expression  
of man’s struggle to free himself from this con-  
dition, but the effect of our art is merely to make  
this low state comfortable and that higher state  
to be forgotten. There is actually no place in  
this village for a work of fine art, if any had come  
down to us, to stand, for our lives, our houses and  
streets, furnish no proper pedestal for it. ‘There  
is not a nail to hang a picture on, nor a shelf to  
receive the bust of a hero or a saint. When I  
consider how our houses are built and paid for,  
or not paid for, and their internal economy man-  
aged and sustained, I wonder that the floor does  
not give way under the visitor while he is ad-  
miring the gewgaws upon the mantel-piece, and  
let him through into the cellar, to some solid and  
honest though earthy foundation. I cannot but  
perceive that this so-called rich and refined life  
is a thing jumped at, and I do not get on in the  
enjoyment of the fine arts which adorn it, my  
attention being wholly occupied with the jump;  
for I remember that the greatest genuine leap,  
due to human muscles alone, on record is that  
of certain wandering Arabs, who are said to have  
cleared twenty-five feet on level ground. With-  
out factitious support, man is sure to come to  
earth again beyond that distance. The first  
question which I am tempted to put to the pro-  
prietor of such great impropriety is, Who bol-

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ECONOMY 49  
  
sters you? Are you one of the ninety-seven who  
fail, or the three who succeed? Answer me these  
questions, and then perhaps I may look at your  
baubles and find them ornamental. The cart  
before the horse is neither beautiful nor useful.  
Before we can adorn our houses with beautiful  
objects the walls must be stripped, and our lives  
must be stripped, and beautiful housekeeping  
and beautiful living be laid for a foundation:  
now, a taste for the beautiful is most cultivated  
out of doors, where there is no house and no  
housekeeper.  
  
Old Johnson, in his “ Wonder-Working Provi-  
dence,” speaking of the first settlers of this town,  
with whom he was contemporary, tells us that  
“they burrow themselves in the earth for their  
first shelter under some hillside, and, casting the  
soil aloft upon timber, they make a smoky fire  
against the earth, at the highest side.” They  
did not “provide them houses,” says he, “till the  
earth, by the Lord’s blessing, brought forth  
bread to feed them,” and the first year’s crop  
was so light that “they were forced to cut their  
bread very thin for a long season.” ‘The secre-  
tary of the Province of New Netherland, writ-  
ing in Dutch, in 1650, for the information of  
those who wished to take up land there, states  
more particularly, that “those in New Nether-  
land, and especially in New England, who have  
no means to build farm houses at first according

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50 WALDEN  
  
to their wishes, dig a square pit in the ground,  
cellar fashion, six or seven feet deep, as long and  
as broad as they think proper, case the earth  
inside with wood all round the wall, and line the  
wood with the bark of trees or something else to  
prevent the caving in of the earth; floor this  
cellar with plank, and wainscot it overhead for a  
ceiling, raise a roof of spars clear up, and cover  
the spars with bark or green sods, so that they  
can live dry and warm in these houses with their  
entire families for two, three, and four years, it  
being understood that partitions are run through  
those cellars, which are adapted to the size of  
the family. ‘The wealthy and principal men in  
New England, in the beginning of the colonies,  
commenced their first dwelling houses in this  
fashion for two reasons: firstly, in order not to  
waste time in building, and not to want food the  
next season; secondly, in order not to discourage  
poor laboring people whom they brought over in  
numbers from Fatherland. In the course of three  
or four years, when the country became adapted  
to agriculture, they built themselves handsome  
houses, spending on them several thousands.”  
In this course which our ancestors took there  
was a show of prudence at least, as if their prin-  
ciple were to satisfy the more pressing wants  
first. But are the more pressing wants satisfied  
now? When I think of acquiring for myself  
one of our luxurious dwellings, I am deterred,

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ECONOMY 51  
  
for, so to speak, the country is not yet adapted to  
human culture, and we are still forced to cut our  
spiritual bread far thinner than our forefathers  
did their wheaten. Not that all architectural  
ornament is to be neglected even in the rudest  
period; but let our houses first be lined with  
beauty, where they come in contact with our  
lives, like the tenement of the shellfish, and not  
overlaid with it. But, alas! I have been inside  
one or two of them, and know what they are  
lined with.  
  
‘Though we are not so degenerate but that we  
might possibly live in a cave or a wigwam or  
wear skins to-day, it certainly is better to accept  
the advantages, though so dearly bought, which  
the invention and industry of mankind offer. In  
such a neighborhood as this, boards and shingles,  
lime and bricks, are cheaper and more easily  
obtained than suitable caves, or whole logs, or  
bark in sufficient quantities, or even well-tem-  
pered clay or flat stones. I speak understand-  
ingly on this subject, for I have made myself  
acquainted with it both theoretically and prac-  
tically. With a little more wit we might use these .  
materials so as to become richer than the richest  
now are, and make our civilization a blessing.  
‘The civilized man is a more experienced and  
wiser savage. But to make haste to my own  
experiment.

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52 ‘WALDEN  
  
Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an  
axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond,  
nearest to where I intended to build my house,  
and began to cut down some tall arrowy white  
pines, still in their youth, for timber. It is diffi-  
cult to begin without borrowing, but perhaps it  
is the most generous course thus to permit your  
fellow-men to have an interest in your enterprise.  
‘The owner of the axe, as he released his hold on  
it, said that it was the apple of his eye; but I  
returned it sharper than I received it. It was a  
pleasant hillside where I worked, covered with  
pine woods, through which I looked out on the  
pond, and a small open field in the woods where  
pines and hickories were springing up. The  
ice in the pond was not yet dissolved, though  
there were some open spaces, and it was all dark  
colored and saturated with water. There were  
some slight flurries of snow during the days that  
I worked there; but for the most part when I  
came out on to the railroad, on my way home,  
its yellow sand heap stretched away gleaming in  
the hazy atmosphere, and the rails shone in the  
spring sun, and I heard the lark and pewee and  
other birds already come to commence another  
year with us. They were pleasant spring days,  
in which the winter of man’s discontent was  
thawing as well as the earth, and the life that had  
lain torpid began to stretch itself. One day,  
when my axe had come off and I had cut a green

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The site of Thoreau’'s bouse in March

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ECONOMY 53  
  
hickory for a wedge, driving it with a stone, and  
had placed the whole to soak ina pond hole in  
order to swell the wood, I saw a striped snake  
run into the water, and he lay on the bottom,  
apparently without inconvenience, as long as I  
stayed there, or more than a quarter of an hour;  
perhaps because he had not yet fairly come out  
of the torpid state. It appeared to me that for a  
like reason men remain in their present low and  
primitive condition; but if they should feel the  
influence of the spring of springs arousing them,  
they would of necessity rise to a higher and more  
ethereal life. I had previously seen the snakes  
in frosty mornings in my path with portions of  
their bodies still numb and inflexible, waiting  
for the sun to thaw them. On the Ist of April it  
rained and melted the ice, and in the early part  
of the day, which was very foggy, I heard a stray  
goose groping about over the pond and cackling  
as if lost, or like the spirit of the fog.  
  
So I went on for some days cutting and hew-  
ing timber, and also studs and rafters, all with  
my narrow axe, not having many communicable  
or scholar-like thoughts, singing to myself, —  
  
Men say they know many things;  
But lo! they have taken wings,  
‘The arts and sciences,  
  
‘And a thousand appliances;  
‘The wind that blows  
  
Is all that anybody knows.

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54 WALDEN  
  
I hewed the main timbers six inches square,  
most of the studs on two sides only, and the  
rafters and floor timbers on one side, leaving  
the rest of the bark on, so that they were just as  
straight and much stronger than sawed ones.  
Each stick was carefully mortised or tenoned by  
its stump, for I had borrowed other tools by this  
time. My days in the woods were not very long  
ones; yet I usually carried my dinner of bread  
and butter, and read the newspaper in which it  
was wrapped, at noon, sitting amid the green  
pine boughs which I had cut off, and to my bread  
was imparted some of their fragrance, for my  
hands were covered with a thick coat of pitch.  
Before I had done I was more the friend than the  
foe of the pine tree, though I had cut down some  
of them, having become better acquainted with  
it. Sometimes a rambler in the wood was at-  
tracted by the sound of my axe, and we chatted  
pleasantly over the chips which I had made.  
  
By the middle of April, for I made no haste in  
my work, but rather made the most of it, my  
house was framed and ready for the raising. I  
had already bought the shanty of James Collins,  
an Irishman who worked on the Fitchburg Rail-  
road, for boards. James Collins’ shanty was  
considered an uncommonly fine one. When I  
called to see it he was not at home. I walked  
about the outside, at first unobserved from  
within, the window was so deep and high. It

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ECONOMY 55  
  
was of small dimensions, with a peaked cottage  
roof, and not much else to be seen, the dirt being  
raised five feet all around as if it were a compost  
heap. The roof was the soundest part, though  
a good deal warped and made brittle by the sun.  
Door-sill there was none, but a perennial pas-  
sage for the hens under the door board. Mrs.  
C. came to the door and asked me to view it from  
the inside. The hens were driven in by my  
approach. It was dark, and had a dirt floor for  
the most part, dank, clammy, and aguish, only  
here a board and there a board which would not  
bear removal. She lighted a lamp to show me  
the inside of the roof and the walls, and also that  
the board floor extended under the bed, warning  
me not to step into the cellar, a sort of dust hole  
two feet deep. In her own words, they were  
“good boards overhead, good boards all around,  
and a good window,” — of two whole squares  
originally, only the cat had passed out that way  
lately. ‘There was a stove, a bed, and a place to  
sit, an infant in the house where it was born, a  
silk parasol, gilt-framed looking-glass, and a  
patent new coffee mill nailed to an oak sapling,  
all told. The bargain was soon concluded, for  
James had in the meanwhile returned. I to  
pay four dollars and twenty-five cents to-night,  
he to vacate at five to-morrow morning, selling to  
nobody else meanwhile: I to take possession at  
six. It were well, he said, to be there early, and

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56 WALDEN  
  
anticipate certain indistinct but wholly unjust  
claims, on the score of ground rent and fuel.  
‘This he assured me was the only encumbrance.  
At six I passed him and his family on the road.  
One large bundle held their all, — bed, coffee  
mill, looking-glass, hens, — all but the cat, she  
took to the woods and became a wild cat, and,  
as I learned afterward, trod in a trap set for  
woodchucks, and so became a dead cat at last.  
  
I took down this dwelling the same morning,  
drawing the nails, and removed it to the pond  
side by small cartloads, spreading the boards on  
the grass there to bleach and warp back again in  
the sun. One early thrush gave me a note or  
two as I drove along the woodland path. I was  
informed treacherously by a young Patrick that  
neighbor Seeley, an Irishman, in the intervals of  
the carting, transferred the still tolerable, straight,  
and drivable nails, staples, and spikes to his  
pocket, and then stood when I came back to  
pass the time of day, and look freshly up, un-  
concerned with spring thoughts, at the devasta-  
tion; there being a dearth of work, as he said.  
He was there to represent spectatordom, and  
help make this seemingly insignificant event one  
with the removal of the gods of Troy.  
  
I dug my cellar in the side of a hill sloping to  
the south, where a woodchuck had formerly dug  
his burrow, down through sumach and black-  
berry roots, and the lowest stain of vegetation,

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ECONOMY &7  
  
six feet square by seven deep, to a fine sand  
where potatoes would not freeze in any winter.  
The sides were left shelving, and not stoned;  
but the sun having never shone on them, the  
sand still keeps its place. It was but two hours’  
work. I took particular pleasure in this break-  
ing of ground, for in almost all latitudes men dig  
into the earth for an equable temperature. Un-  
der the most splendid house in the city is still to  
be found the cellar where they store their roots  
as of old, and long after the superstructure has  
disappeared posterity remark its dent in the earth.  
The house is still but a sort of porch at the  
entrance of a burrow.  
  
At length, in the beginning of May, with the  
help of some of my acquaintances, rather to im-  
prove so good an occasion for neighborliness  
than from any necessity, I set up the frame of  
my house. No man was ever more honored in  
the character of his raisers than I. They are  
destined, I trust, to assist at the raising of loftier  
structures one day. I began to occupy my house  
on the 4th of July, as soon as it was boarded and  
roofed, for the boards were carefully feather-  
edged and lapped, so that it was perfectly im-  
pervious to rain; but before boarding I laid the  
foundation of a chimney at one end, bringing  
two cartloads of stones up the hill from the pond  
in my arms, I built the chimney after my hoeing  
in the fall, before a fire became necessary for

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58 WALDEN  
  
warmth, doing my cooking in the meanwhile out  
of doors on the ground, early in the morning:  
which mode I still think is in some respects more  
convenient and agreeable than the usual one.  
‘When it stormed before my bread was baked, I  
fixed a few boards over the fire, and sat under  
them to watch my loaf, and passed some pleasant  
hours in that way. In those days, when my hands  
were much employed, I read but little, but the  
least scraps of paper which lay on the ground,  
my holder, or tablecloth, afforded me as much  
entertainment, in fact answered the same pur-  
pose, as the Iliad.  
  
It would be worth the while to build still more  
deliberately than I did, considering, for instance,  
what foundation a door, a window, a cellar, a  
garret, have in the nature of man, and perchance  
never raising any superstructure until we found  
a better reason for it than our temporal necessi-  
ties even. ‘There is some of the same fitness in a  
man’s building his own house that there is in a  
bird’s building its own nest. Who knows but if  
men constructed their dwellings with their own  
hands, and provided food for themselves and  
families simply and honestly enough, the poetic  
faculty would be universally developed, as birds  
universally sing when they are so engaged?  
But alas! we do like cowbirds and cuckoos,  
which lay their eggs in nests which other birds

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ECONOMY 59  
  
have built, and cheer no traveller with their  
chattering and unmusical notes. Shall we for-  
ever resign the pleasure of construction to the  
carpenter? What does architecture amount to  
in the experience of the mass of men? I never  
in all my walks came across a man engaged in so  
simple and natural an occupation as building his  
house. We belong to the community. It is not  
the tailor alone who is the ninth part of a man:  
it is as much the preacher, and the merchant,  
and the farmer. Where is this division of labor  
to end? and what object does it finally serve?  
No doubt another may also think for me; but  
it is not therefore desirable that he should do so  
to the exclusion of my thinking for myself.  
‘True, there are architects so called in this  
country, and I have heard of one at least pos-  
sessed with the idea of making architectural or-  
naments have a core of truth, a necessity, and  
hence a beauty, as if it were a revelation to him.  
All very well perhaps from his point of view, but  
only a little better than the common dilettant-  
ism. A sentimental reformer in architecture,  
he began at the cornice, not at the foundation.  
It was only how to put a core of truth within the  
ornaments, that every sugar plum in fact might  
have an almond or caraway seed in it, — though  
I hold that almonds are most wholesome with-  
out the sugar,—and not how the inhabitant,  
the indweller, might build truly within and with-

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60 WALDEN  
  
out, and let the ornaments take care of them-  
selves. What reasonable man ever supposed  
that ornaments were something outward and  
in the skin merely, — that the tortoise got his  
spotted shell, or the shellfish its mother-o’-pearl  
tints, by such a contract as the inhabitants of  
Broadway their Trinity Church? But a man  
has no more to do with the style of architecture  
of his house than a tortoise with that of its shell :  
nor need the soldier be so idle as to try to paint  
the precise color of his virtue on his standard.  
The enemy will find it out. He may turn pale  
when the trial comes. This man seemed to me  
to lean over the cornice, and timidly whisper his  
half truth to the rude occupants, who really  
knew it better than he. What of architectural  
beauty I now see, I know has gradually grown  
from within outward, out of the necessities and  
character of the indweller, who is the only  
builder, — out of some unconscious truthful-  
ness, and nobleness, without ever a thought for  
the appearance; and whatever additional beauty  
of this kind is destined to be produced will be  
preceded by a like unconscious beauty of life.  
‘The most interesting dwellings in this country,  
as the painter knows, are the most unpretend-  
ing, humble log huts and cottages of the poor  
commonly; it is the life of the inhabitants whose  
shells they are, and not any peculiarity in their  
surfaces merely, which makes them picturesque;

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ECONOMY 61  
  
and equally interesting will be the citizen’s  
suburban box, when his life shall be as simple  
and as agreeable to the imagination, and there  
is as little straining after effect in the style of his  
dwelling. A great proportion of architectural  
omaments are literally hollow, and a Septem-  
ber gale would strip them off, like borrowed  
plumes, without injury to the substantials.  
‘They can do without architecture who have no  
olives nor wines in the cellar. What if an equal  
ado were made about the ornaments of style  
in literature, and the architects of our Bibles  
spent as much time about their cornices as the  
architects of our churches do? So are made  
the belles-letires and the beauz-arts and their  
professors. Much it concerns a man, forsooth,  
how a few sticks are slanted over him or under  
him, and what colors are daubed upon his  
box. It would signify somewhat, if, in any ear-  
nest sense, he slanted them and daubed it; but  
the spirit having departed out of the tenant, it is  
of a piece with constructing his own coffin, —  
the architecture of the grave, and “carpenter”  
is but another name.for ‘‘coffin-maker.” One  
man says, in his despair or indifference to life,  
take up a handful of the earth at your feet, and  
paint your house that color. Is he thinking of  
his last and narrow house? Toss up a copper  
for it as well. What an abundance of leisure he  
must have! Why do you take up a’ handful of

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62 WALDEN  
  
the dirt? Better paint your house your own  
complexion; let it turn pale or blush for you.  
An enterprise to improve the style of cottage  
architecture! When you have got my oma-  
ments ready I will wear them.  
  
Before winter I built a chimney, and shingled  
the sides of my house, which were already im-  
pervious to rain, with imperfect and sappy  
shingles made of the first slice of the log, whose  
edges I was obliged to straighten with a plane.  
  
T have thus a tight shingled and plastered  
house, ten feet wide by fifteen long, and eight-  
feet posts, with a garret and a closet, a large  
window on each side, two trap doors, one door  
at the end, and a brick fire-place opposite. The  
exact cost of my house, paying the usual price  
for such materials as I used, but not counting  
the work, all of which was done by myself, was  
as follows; and I give the details because very  
few are able to tell exactly what their houses  
cost, and fewer still, if any, the separate cost of  
the various materials which compose them: —  
  
‘Mostly shant  
BOE ose ace correo ee 88.03} {  
Refuse shingles for roof and sides. 400  
Tats... ee 125  
‘Twosecond-hand windows with glass 243  
  
One thousand old brick... . . 400  
  
‘Two casks of lime . ++ 240. ‘That was high.  
  
oar{ ‘More than I  
needed.

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ECONOMY 63  
  
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140}  
  
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os 888 12h  
  
part on my back.  
  
   
  
These are all the materials excepting the  
timber, stones, and sand, which I claimed by  
squatter’s right. I have also a small wood-shed  
adjoining, made chiefly of the stuff which was  
left after building the house.  
  
I intend to build me a house which will sur-  
pass any on the main street in Concord in grand-  
eur and luxury, as soon as it pleases me as much  
and will cost me no more than my present one.  
  
I thus found that the student who wishes for  
a shelter can obtain one for a lifetime at an ex-  
pense not greater than the rent which he now  
pays annually. If I seem to boast more than is  
becoming, my excuse is that I brag for human-  
ity rather than for myself; and my short-com-  
ings and inconsistencies do not affect the truth  
of my statement. Notwithstanding much cant  
and hypocrisy, — chaff which I find it difficult  
to separate from my wheat, but for which I am  
as sorry as any man, — I will breathe freely and  
stretch myself in this respect, it is such a relief  
to both the moral and physical system; and I  
am resolved that I will not through humility

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64 WALDEN  
  
become the devil’s attorney. I will endeavor to  
speak a good word for the truth. At Cambridge  
College the mere rent of a student’s room, which  
is only a little larger than my own, is thirty dol-  
lars each year, though the corporation had the  
advantage of building thirty-two side by side  
and under one roof, and the occupant suffers  
the inconvenience of many and noisy neighbors,  
and perhaps a residence in the fourth story. I  
cannot but think that if we had more true wis-  
dom in these respects, not only less education  
would be needed, because, forsooth, more would  
already have been acquired, but the pecuniary  
expense of getting an education would in a  
great measure vanish. Those conveniences  
which the student requires at Cambridge or  
elsewhere cost him or somebody else ten times  
as great a sacrifice of life as they would with  
proper management on both sides. ‘Those  
things for which the most money is demanded  
are never the things which the student most  
wants, Tuition, for instance, is an important  
item in the term bill, while for the far more  
valuable education which he gets by associating  
with the most cultivated of his contemporaries  
no charge is made. The mode of founding a  
college is, commonly, to get up a subscription  
of dollars and cents, and then following blindly  
the principles of a division of labor to its ex-  
treme, a principle which should never be fol-

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One of the pitch pines by the shore of Walden

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Google

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ECONOMY 65  
  
lowed but with circumspection, —to call in a  
contractor who makes this a subject of specula-  
tion, and he employs Irishmen or other opera-  
tives actually to lay the foundations, while the  
students that are to be are said to be fitting  
themselves for it; and for these oversights suc-  
cessive generations have to pay. I think that  
it would be better than this, for the students, or  
those who desire to be benefited by it, even to  
lay the foundation themselves. The student who  
secures his coveted leisure and retirement by  
systematically shirking any labor necessary to  
man obtains but an ignoble and unprofitable  
leisure, defrauding himself of the experience  
which alone can make leisure fruitful. “But,”  
says one, “you do not mean that the students  
should go to work with their hands instead of  
their heads?” I do not mean that exactly, but  
I mean something which he might think a good  
deal like that; I mean that they should not play  
life, or study it merely, while the community  
supports them at this expensive game, but ear-  
nestly live it from beginning to end. How could  
youths better learn to live than by at once trying  
the experiment of living? Methinks this would  
exercise their minds as much as mathematics.  
If I wished a boy to know something about the  
arts and sciences, for instance, I would not pur-  
sue the common course, which is merely to send  
  
him into the neighborhood of some professor,  
3

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66 WALDEN  
  
where anything is professed and practised but  
the art of life; — to survey the world through a  
telescope or a microscope, and never with his  
natural eye; to study chemistry, and not learn  
how his bread is made, or mechanics, and not  
learn how it is earned; to discover new satellites  
to Neptune, and not detect the motes in his eyes,  
or to what vagabond he is a satellite himself; or  
to be devoured by the monsters that swarm all  
around him, while contemplating the monsters  
in a drop of vinegar. Which would have ad-  
vanced the most at the end of a month, — the  
boy who had made his own jackknife from the  
ore which he had dug and smelted, reading as  
much as would be necessary for this, — or the  
boy who had attended the lectures on metal-  
lurgy at the Institute in the meanwhile, and had  
received a Rogers’ penknife from his father?  
Which would be most likely to cut his fingers?  
. +. To my astonishment I was informed on  
leaving college that I had studied navigation !—  
why, if I had taken one turn down the harbor  
I should have known more about it. Even the  
poor student studies and is taught only political  
economy, while that economy of living which is  
synonymous with philosophy is not even sin-  
cerely professed in our colleges. ‘The conse-  
quence is that while he is reading Adam Smith,  
Ricardo, and Say, he runs his father in debt  
irretrievably.

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ECONOMY 67  
  
As with our colleges, so with a hundred  
“modern improvements”: there is an illusion  
about them; there is not always a positive ad-  
vance. The devil goes on exacting compound  
interest to the last for his early share and nu-  
merous succeeding investments in them. Our  
inventions are wont to be pretty toys, which dis-  
tract our attention from serious things. They  
are but improved means to an unimproved end,  
an end which it was already but too easy to  
arrive at; as railroads lead to Boston or New  
York. We are in great haste to construct a  
magnetic telegraph from Maine to Texas; but  
Maine and Texas, it may be, have nothing im-  
portant to communicate. Either is in such a  
predicament as the man who was earnest to be  
introduced to a distinguished deaf woman, but  
when he was presented, and one end of her ear  
trumpet was put into his hand, had nothing to  
say. As if the main object were to talk fast and  
not to talk sensibly. We are eager to tunnel  
under the Atlantic and bring the old world some  
weeks nearer to the new; but perchance the  
first news that will leak through into the broad,  
flapping American ear will be that the Princess  
Adelaide has the whooping cough. After all,  
the man whose horse trots a mile in a minute  
does not carry the most important messages; he  
is not an evangelist, nor does he come round  
eating locusts and wild honey. I doubt if

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68 WALDEN  
  
Flying Childers ever carried a peck of corn to  
mill.  
  
One says to me, “I wonder that you do not  
lay up money; you love to travel; you might  
take the cars and go to Fitchburg to-day and  
see the country.” But I am wiser than that. I  
have learned that the swiftest traveller is he that  
goes afoot. I say to my friend, Suppose we try  
who will get there first. The distance is thirty  
miles; the fare ninety cents. That is almost a  
day’s wages. I remember when wages were  
sixty cents a day for laborers on this very road.  
Well, I start now on foot, and get there before  
night; I have travelled at that rate by the week  
together. You will in the meanwhile have  
earned your fare, and arrive there sometime to-  
morrow, or possibly this evening, if you are  
lucky enough to get a job in season. Instead of  
going to Fitchburg, you will be working here  
the greater part of the day. And so, if the rail-  
road reached round the world, I think that I  
should keep ahead of you; and as for seeing the  
country and getting experience of that kind, I  
should have to cut your acquaintance altogether.  
  
Such is the universal law, which no man can  
ever outwit, and with regard to the railroad  
even we may say it is as broad as it is long. To  
make a railroad round the world available to  
all mankind is equivalent to grading the whole  
surface of the planet. Men have an indistinct

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ECONOMY 69  
  
notion that if they keep up this activity of joint  
stocks and spades long enough all will at length  
ride somewhere, in next to no time, and for  
nothing; but though a crowd rushes to the  
depot, and the conductor shouts “‘All aboard !””  
when the smoke is blown away and the vapor  
condensed, it will be perceived that a few are  
riding, but the rest are run over, — and it will be  
called, and will be, “A melancholy accident.”  
No doubt they can ride at last who shall have  
earned their fare, that is, if they survive so long,  
but they will probably have lost their elasticity  
and desire to travel by that time. This spend-  
ing of the best part of one’s life earning money  
in order to enjoy a questionable liberty during  
the least valuable part of it, reminds me of the  
Englishman who went to India to make a for-  
tune first, in order that he might return to Eng-  
land and live the life of a poet. He should have  
gone up garret at once. “What!” exclaim a  
million Irishmen starting up from all the shan-  
ties in the land, “‘is not this railroad which we  
have built a good thing?” Yes, I answer,  
comparatively good, that is, you might have  
done worse; but I wish, as you are brothers of  
mine, that you could have spent your time bet-  
ter than digging in this dirt.  
  
Before I finished my house, wishing to earn  
ten or twelve dollars by some honest and agree-

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70 WALDEN  
  
able method, in order to meet my unusual ex-  
penses, I planted about two acres and a half of  
light and sandy soil near it chiefly with beans,  
but also a small part with potatoes, corn, peas,  
and turnips. The whole lot contains eleven  
acres, mostly growing up to pines and hickories,  
and was sold the preceding season for eight dol-  
lars and eight cents an acre. One farmer said  
that it was “good for nothing but to raise cheep-  
ing squirrels on.” I put no manure whatever  
on this land, not being the owner, but merely a  
squatter, and not expecting to cultivate so  
much again, and I did not quite hoe it all once.  
I got out several cords of stumps in ploughing,  
which supplied me with fuel for a long time,  
and left small circles of virgin mould, easily dis-  
tinguishable through the summer by the greater  
luxuriance of the beans there. The dead and  
for the most part unmerchantable wood be-  
hind my house, and the driftwood from the  
pond, have supplied the remainder of my fuel.  
I was obliged to hire a team and a man for the  
ploughing, though I held the plough myself.  
‘My farm outgoes for the first season were, for  
implements, seed, work, &c., $1472}. ‘The  
seed corn was given me. This never costs any-  
thing to speak of, unless you plant more than  
enough. I got twelve bushels of beans, and  
eighteen bushels of potatoes, besides some peas  
and sweet corn. The yellow com and turnips

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ECONOMY 1  
  
were too late to come to anything. My whole  
income from the farm was  
  
   
  
   
  
23.46  
Deducting the outgoes . se 1474  
‘There are left... ue 7h  
  
besides produce consumed and on hand at the  
time this estimate was made of the value of  
$4 50, — the amount on hand much more than  
balancing a little grass which I did not raise.  
All things considered, that is, considering the  
importance of a man’s soul and of to-day, not-  
withstanding the short time occupied by my  
experiment, nay, partly even because of its tran-  
sient character, I believe that that was doing  
better than any farmer in Concord did that  
year.  
  
The next year I did better still, for I spaded  
up all the land which I required, about a third  
of an acre, and I learned from the experience  
of-both years, not being in the least awed by  
many celebrated works on husbandry, Arthur  
Young among the rest, that if one would live  
simply and eat only the crop which he raised,  
and raise no more than he ate, and not exchange  
it for an insufficient quantity of more luxurious  
and expensive things, he would need to culti-  
  
\_ vate only a few rods of ground, and that it would  
be cheaper to spade up that than to use oxen  
to plough it, and to select a fresh spot from time  
to time than to manure the old, and he could

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72 WALDEN  
  
do all his necessary farm work as it were with  
his left hand at odd hours in the summer; and  
thus he would not be tied to an ox, or horse, or  
cow, or pig, as at present. I desire to speak  
impartially on this point, and as one not inter-  
ested in the success or failure of the present  
economical and social arrangements. I was  
more independent than any farmer in Concord,  
for I was not anchored to a house or farm, but  
could follow the bent of my genius, which is a  
very crooked one, every moment. Besides being  
better off than they already, if my house had  
been burned or my crops had failed, I should  
have been nearly as well off as before.  
  
I am wont to think that men are not so much  
the keepers of herds as herds are the keepers of  
men, the former are so much the freer. Men  
and oxen exchange work; but if we consider  
necessary work only, the oxen will be seen to  
have greatly the advantage, their farm is so  
much the larger. Man does some of his part  
of the exchange work in his six weeks of haying,  
and it is no boy’s play. Certainly no nation  
that lived simply in all respects, that is, no  
nation of philosophers, would commit so great  
a blunder as to use the labor of animals. True,  
there never was and is not likely soon to be a  
nation of philosophers, nor am I certain it is  
desirable that there should be. However, I  
should never have broken a horse or bull and

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ECONOMY 73  
  
taken him to board for any work he might do  
for me, for fear I should become a horseman or  
a herdsman merely; and if society seems to be  
the gainer by so doing, are we certain that what  
is one man’s gain is not another’s loss, and that  
the stable-boy has equal cause with his master  
to be satisfied? Granted that some public works  
would not have been constructed without this  
aid, and let man share the glory of such with  
the ox and horse; does it follow that he could  
not have accomplished works yet more worthy  
of himself in that case? When men begin to  
do, not merely unnecessary or artistic, but  
luxurious and idle work, with their assistance,  
it is inevitable that a few do all the exchange  
work with the oxen, or, in other words, become  
the slaves of the strongest. Man thus not only  
works for the animal within him, but, for a  
symbol of this, he works for the animal without  
him. Though we have many substantial houses  
of brick or stone, the prosperity of the farmer  
is still measured by the degree to which the barn  
overshadows the house. This town is said to  
have the largest houses for oxen, cows, and  
horses hereabouts, and it is not behindhand in  
its public buildings; but there are very few halls  
for free worship or free speech in this county.  
It should not be by their architecture, but why  
not even by their power of abstract thought,  
that nations should seek to commemorate them-

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4 WALDEN  
  
selves? How much more admirable the Bhagvat-  
Geeta than all the ruins of the East! Towers  
and temples are the luxury of princes. A simple  
and independent mind does not toil at the bid-  
ding of any prince. Genius is not a retainer to  
any emperor, nor is its material silver, or gold,  
or marble, except to a trifling extent. ‘To what  
end, pray, is so much stone hammered? In  
‘Arcadia, when I was there, I did not see any  
hammering stone. Nations are possessed with  
an insane ambition to perpetuate the memory  
of themselves by the amount of hammered  
stone they leave. What if equal pains were  
taken to smooth and polish their manners?  
One piece of good sense would be more memo-  
rable than a monument as high as the moon.  
Llove better to see stones in place. ‘The grandeur  
of Thebes was a vulgar grandeur. More sensible  
is a rod of stone wall that bounds an honest  
man’s field than a hundred-gated ‘Thebes that  
has wandered farther from the true end of life.  
The religion and civilization which are bar-  
barie and heathenish build splendid temples;  
but what you might call Christianity does not.  
Most of the stone a nation hammers goes toward  
its tomb only. It buries itself alive. As for the  
Pyramids, there is nothing to wonder at in them  
so much as the fact that so many men could be  
found degraded enough to spend their lives  
constructing a tomb for some ambitious booby,

Page-8010

qoungg, unuuoriupy 293 “Suspying 2yqnd smownf pow + passuery

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ECONOMY 15  
  
whom it would have been wiser and manlier  
to have drowned in the Nile, and then given  
his body to the dogs. I might possibly invent  
some excuse for them and him, but I have no  
time for it. As for the religion and love of art  
of the builders, it is much the same all the world  
over, whether the building be an Egyptian  
temple or the United States Bank. It costs  
more than it comes to. The mainspring is  
vanity, assisted by the love of garlic and bread  
and butter. Mr. Balcom, a promising young  
architect, designs it on the back of his Vitruvius,  
with hard pencil and ruler, and the job is let out  
to Dobson & Sons, stonecutters. When the  
thirty centuries begin to look down on it, man-  
kind begin to look up at it. As for your high  
towers and monuments, there was a crazy fellow  
once in this town who undertook to dig through  
to China, and he got so far that, as he said, he  
heard the Chinese pots and kettles rattle; but  
I think that I shall not go out of my way to ad-  
mire the hole which he made. Many are con-  
cerned about the monuments of the West and  
East, — to know who built them. For my part,  
I should like to know who in those days did not  
build them, — who were above such trifling.  
But to proceed with my statistics.  
  
By surveying, carpentry, and day-labor of  
various other kinds in the village in the mean-  
while, for I have as many trades as fingers, I

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76 WALDEN  
  
had eared $18 4. The expense of food for  
eight months, namely, from July 4th to March  
Ist, the time when these estimates were made,  
though I lived there more than two years, — not  
counting potatoes, a little green corn, and some  
peas, which I had raised, nor considering the  
value of what was on hand at the last date, was  
  
- 81784  
: 173. Cheapest form of the saccharine.  
  
‘Coats more than Indian meal,  
  
088 1 both money and trouble.  
  
ecco  
Bees  
Prey  
  
pry susmedso Ty  
  
   
  
Yes, I did eat 88 74, all told; but I should not  
thus unblushingly publish my guilt, if I did not  
know that most of my readers were equally  
guilty with myself, and that their deeds would  
look no better in print. ‘The next year I some-  
times caught a mess of fish for my dinner, and  
once I wént so far as to slaughter a woodchuck  
which ravaged my beanfield, — effect his trans-  
migration, as a Tartar would say, — and devour

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ECONOMY 7  
  
him, partly for experiment’s sake; but though  
it afforded me a momentary enjoyment, not-  
withstanding a musky flavor, I saw that the  
longest use would not make that a good practice,  
however it might seem to have your woodchucks  
ready dressed by the village butcher.  
  
Clothing and some incidental expenses within  
the same dates, though little can be inferred from  
this item, amounted to  
  
$8403  
Oj] and some household utensils... . . 200  
  
So that all the pecuniary outgoes, excepting for  
washing and mending, which for the most part  
were done out of the house, and their bills have  
not yet been received, —and these are all and  
more than all the ways by which money neces-  
sarily goes out in this part of the world, — were  
  
- $2812}  
  
eh  
87  
8 40t  
200  
  
Nai 005  
  
   
  
   
  
I address myself now to those of my readers who  
have a living to get. And to meet this I have  
for farm produce sold  
  
   
  
23 46  
Earned by day-labor . 1834  
Tall: sessy eee enw ane $3078

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73 WALDEN  
  
which subtracted from the sum of the outgoes  
leaves a balance of $25 213 on the one side, —  
this being very nearly the means with which I  
started, and the measure of expenses to be  
incurred, — and on the other, besides the leisure  
and independence and health thus secured, a  
comfortable house for me as long as I choose  
to occupy it.  
  
These statistics, however accidental and there-  
fore uninstructive they may appear, as they  
have a certain completeness, have a certain  
value also. Nothing was given me of which I  
have not rendered some account. It appears  
from the above estimate, that my food alone  
cost me in money about twenty-seven cents a  
week. It was, for nearly two years after this,  
rye and Indian meal without yeast, potatoes,  
rice, a very little salt pork, molasses, and salt,  
and my drink water. It was fit that I should  
live on rice, mainly, who loved so well the phil-  
osophy of India. To meet the objections of  
some inveterate cavillers, I may as well state  
that if I dined out occasionally, as I always  
had done, and I trust shall have opportunities  
to do again, it was frequently to the detriment  
of my domestic arrangements. But the dining  
out, being, as I have stated, constant element,  
does not in the least affect a comparative state-  
ment like this.  
  
I learned from my two years’ experience that

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ECONOMY 79  
  
it would cost incredibly little trouble to obtain  
one’s necessary food, even in this latitude; that  
a man may use as simple a diet as the animals,  
and yet retain health and strength. I have made  
a satisfactory dinner, satisfactory on several  
accounts, simply off a dish of purslane (Portu-  
laca oleracea) which I gathered in my cornfield,  
boiled and salted. I give the Latin on account  
of the savoriness of the trivial name. And pray  
what more can a reasonable man desire, in  
peaceful times, in ordinary noons, than a suffi-  
cient number of ears of green sweet-corn boiled,  
with the addition of salt? Even the little variety  
which I used was a yielding to the demands of  
appetite, and not of health. Yet men have  
come to such a pass that they frequently starve,  
not for want of necessaries, but for want of  
luxuries; and I know a good woman who thinks  
that her son lost his life because he took to  
drinking water only.  
  
‘The reader will perceive that I am treating  
the subject rather from an economic than a  
dietetic point of view, and he will not venture  
to put my abstemiousness to the test unless he  
has a well-stocked larder.  
  
Bread I at first made of pure Indian meal  
and salt, genuine hoe-cakes, which I baked  
before my fire out of doors on a shingle or the  
end of a stick of timber sawed off in building my  
house; but it was wont to get smoked and to

Page-8017

80 WALDEN  
  
have a piny flavor. I tried flour also; but have  
at last found a mixture of rye and Indian meal  
most convenient and agreeable. In cold weather  
it was no little amusement to bake several small  
loaves of this in succession, tending and turning  
them as carefully as an Egyptian his hatching  
eggs. They were a real cereal fruit which I  
ripened, and they had to my senses a fragrance  
like that of other noble fruits, which I kept in  
as long as possible by wrapping them in cloths.  
I made a study of the ancient and indispen-  
sable art of bread-making, consulting such au-  
thorities as offered, going back to the primitive  
days and first invention of the unleavened kind,  
when from the wildness of nuts and meats men  
first reached the mildness and refinement of  
this diet, and travelling gradually down in my  
studies through that accidental souring of the  
dough which, it is supposed, taught the leavening  
process, and through the various fermentations  
thereafter, till I came to ‘good, sweet, whole-  
some bread,” the staff of life. Leaven, which  
some deem the soul of bread, the spiritus which  
fills its cellular tissue, which is religiously pre-  
served like the -vestal fire,—some precious  
bottle-full, I suppose, first brought over in the  
Mayflower, did the business for America, and  
its influence is still rising, swelling, spreading,  
in cerealian billows over the land, — this seed  
I regularly and faithfully procured from the

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ECONOMY 81  
  
village, till at length one morning I forgot the  
rules, and scalded my yeast; by which accident  
I discovered that even this was not indispensable,  
—for my discoveries were not by the synthetic  
but analytic process,—and I have gladly  
omitted it since, though most housewives ear-  
nestly assured me that safe and wholesome bread  
without yeast might not be, and elderly people  
prophesied a speedy decay of the vital forces.  
Yet I find it not to be an essential ingredient,  
and after going without it for a year am still  
in the land of the living; and I am glad to  
escape the trivialness of carrying a bottle-full  
in my pocket, which would sometimes pop and  
discharge its contents to my discomfiture. It  
is simpler and more respectable to omit it. Man  
is an animal who more than any other can adapt  
himself to all climates and circumstances.  
Neither did I put any sal soda, or other acid  
or alkali, into my bread. It would seem that  
I made it according to the recipe which Marcus  
Porcius Cato gave about two centuries before  
Christ. “‘Panem depsticium sic facito. Manus  
mortariumque bene lavato. Farinam in mor-  
tarium indito, aque paulatim addito, subigito-  
que pulchre. Ubi bene subegeris, defingito,  
coquitoque sub testu.” Which I take to mean  
—‘“‘Make kneaded bread thus. Wash your  
hands and trough well. Put the meal into the  
trough, add water gradually, and knead it

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82 WALDEN  
  
thoroughly. When you have kneaded it well,  
mould it, and bake it under @ cover,” that is,  
in a baking-kettle. Not a word about leaven.  
But I did not always use this staff of life. At  
one time, owing to the emptiness of my purse,  
I saw none of it for more than a month.  
  
Every New Englander might easily raise all  
his own breadstufis in this land of rye and Indian  
corn, and not depend on distant and fluctuating  
markets for them. Yet so far are we from  
simplicity and independence that, in Concord,  
fresh and sweet meal is rarely sold in the shops,  
and hominy and corn in a still coarser form  
are hardly used by any. For the most part the  
farmer gives to his cattle and hogs the grain of  
his own producing, and buys flour, which is at  
least no more wholesome, at a greater cost, at  
the store. I saw that I could easily raise my  
bushel or two of rye and Indian comm, for the  
former will grow on the poorest land, and the  
latter does not require the best, and grind them  
in a hand-mill, and so do without rice and  
pork; and if I must have some concentrated  
sweet, I found by experiment that I could make  
a very good molasses either of pumpkins or  
beets, and I knew that I needed only to set out  
a few maples to obtain it more easily still, and  
while these were growing I could use various  
substitutes besides those which I have named.  
“For,” as the Forefathers sang, —

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ECONOMY 83  
  
“we can make liquor to sweeten our lips  
(Of pumpkins and parsnips and walnut-tree chips.”  
Finally, as for salt, that grossest of groceries, to  
obtain this might be a fit occasion for a visit to  
the seashore, or, if I did without it altogether,  
I should probably drink the less water. I do  
not learn that the Indians ever troubled them-  
  
selves to go after it.  
  
Thus I could avoid all trade and barter, so far  
as my food was concerned, and having a shelter  
already, it would only remain to get clothing  
and fuel. The pantaloons which I now wear  
were woven in a farmer’s family, — thank  
Heaven there is so much virtue still in man;  
for I think the fall from the farmer to the opera-  
tive as great and memorable as that from the  
man to the farmer;—and in a new country  
fuel is an encumbrance. As for a habitat, if I  
were not permitted still to squat, I might pur-  
chase one acre at the same price for which the  
land I cultivated was sold—namely, eight  
dollars and eight cents. But as it was, I con-  
sidered that I enhanced the value of the land by  
squatting on it.  
  
There is a certain class of unbelievers who  
sometimes ask me such questions as, if I think  
that I can live on vegetable food alone; and to  
strike at the root of the matter at once, — for  
the root is faith, —I am accustomed to answer  
such, that I can live on board nails. If they

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84 WALDEN  
  
cannot understand that, they cannot under-  
stand much that I have to say. For my part,  
I am glad to hear of experiments of this kind  
being tried; as that a young man tried for a  
fortnight to live on hard, raw corn on the ear,  
using his teeth for all mortar. The squirrel  
tribe tried the same and succeeded. The human  
race is interested in these experiments, though  
a few old women who are incapacitated for  
them, or who own their thirds in mills, may be  
alarmed.  
  
‘My furniture, part of which I made myself,  
and the rest cost me nothing of which I have  
not rendered an account, consisted of a bed, a  
table, a desk, three chairs, a looking-glass three  
inches in diameter, a pair of tongs and andirons,  
a kettle, a skillet, and a frying-pan, a dipper, a  
wash-bowl, two knives and forks, three plates,  
one cup, one spoon, a jug for oil, a jug for mo-  
lasses, and a japanned lamp. None is so poor  
that he need sit on a pumpkin. That is shift-  
lessness. ‘There is a plenty of such chairs as I  
like best in the village garrets to be had for tak-  
ing them away. Furniture! Thank God, I can  
sit and I can stand without the aid of a furniture  
warehouse. What man but a philosopher would  
not be ashamed to see his furniture packed in a  
cart and going up country exposed to the light  
of heaven and the eyes of men, a beggarly ac-

Page-8022

ECONOMY 85  
  
count of empty boxes? That is Spaulding’s  
furniture. I could never tell from inspecting  
such a load whether it belonged to a so-called  
rich man or a poor one; the owner always  
seemed poverty-stricken. Indeed, the more  
you have of such things the poorer you are.  
Each load looks as if it contained the contents  
of a dozen shanties; and if one shanty is poor,  
this is a dozen times as poor. Pray, for what  
do we move ever but to get rid of our furniture,  
our exuvie; at last to go from this world to  
another newly furnished, and leave this to be  
burned? It is the same as if all these traps  
were buckled to a man’s belt, and he could not  
move over the rough country where our lines  
are cast without dragging them, — dragging his  
trap. He was a lucky fox that left his tail in  
the trap. The muskrat will gnaw his third leg  
off to be free. No wonder man has lost his  
elasticity. How often he is at a dead set! “Sir,  
if I may be so bold, what do you mean by a  
dead set?” If you are a seer, whenever you  
meet a man you will see all that he owns, ay,  
and much that he pretends to disown, behind  
him, even to his kitchen furniture and all the  
trumpery which he saves and will not burn, and  
he will appear to be harnessed to it and making  
what headway he can. I think that the man  
is at a dead set who has got through a knot hole  
or gateway where his sledge load of furniture

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86 WALDEN  
  
cannot follow him. I cannot but feel compas-  
sion when I hear some trig, compact-looking  
man, seemingly free, all girded and ready, speak  
of his “furniture,” as whether it is insured or  
not. “But what shall I do with my furniture?”  
My gay butterfly is entangled in a spider’s web  
then. Even those who seem for a long while  
not to have any, if you inquire more narrowly  
you will find have some stored in somebody’s  
barn. I look upon England to-day as an old  
gentleman who is travelling with a great deal  
of baggage, trumpery which has accumulated  
from long housekeeping, which he has not the  
courage to burn; great trunk, little trunk, band-  
box, and bundle. Throw away the first three  
at least. It would surpass the powers of a well  
man nowadays to take up his bed and walk,  
and I should certainly advise a sick one to lay  
down his bed and run. When I have met an  
immigrant tottering under a bundle whjch con-  
tained his all — looking like an enormous wen  
which had grown out of the nape of his neck —  
T have pitied him, not because that was his all,  
but because he had all that he could carry. If  
Thave got to drag my trap, I will take care that  
it be a light one and do not nip me in a vital  
part. But perchance it would be wisest never  
to put one’s paw into it.  
  
I would observe, by the way, that it costs me  
nothing for curtains, for I have no gazers to shut

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ECONOMY 87  
  
out but the sun and moon, and I am willing that  
they should look in. ‘The moon will not sour  
milk nor taint meat of mine, nor will the sun  
injure my furniture or fade my carpet, and if he  
is sometimes too warm a friend, I find it still  
better economy to retreat behind some cur-  
tain which nature has provided, than to add  
a single item to the details of housekeeping.  
A lady once offered me a mat, but as I had  
no room to spare within the house, nor time to  
spare within or without to shake it, I declined  
it, preferring to wipe my feet on the sod before  
my door. It is best to avoid the beginnings of  
evil.  
  
Not long since I was present at the auction of  
2 deacon’s effects, for his life had not been  
ineffectual : —  
  
“The evil that men do lives after them.”  
  
As usual, a great proportion was trumpery which  
had begun to accumulate in his father’s day.  
Among the rest was a dried tapeworm, And  
now, after lying half a century in his garret and  
other dust holes, these things were not burned;  
instead of a bonfire, or purifying destruction of  
them, there was an auction, or increasing  
of them. The neighbors eagerly collected to  
view them, bought them all, and carefully trans-  
ported them to their garrets and dust holes, to  
lie there till their estates are settled, when they

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88 WALDEN  
  
will start again. When a man dies he kicks  
the dust.  
  
‘The customs of some savage nations might,  
perchance, be profitably imitated by us, for they  
at least go through the semblance of casting their  
slough annually; they have the idea of the thing,  
whether they have the reality or not. Would it  
not be well if we were to celebrate such a “‘busk,”  
or “feast of first fruits,” as Bartram describes to  
have been the custom of the Mucclasse Indians?  
“‘When a town celebrates the busk,” says he,  
“having previously provided themselves with  
new clothes, new pots, pans, and other house-  
hold utensils and furniture, they collect all their  
worn-out clothes and other despicable things,  
sweep and cleanse their houses, squares, and the  
whole town, of their filth, which with all the  
remaining grain and other old provisions they  
cast together into one common heap, and con-  
sume it with fire. After having taken medicine,  
and fasted for three days, all the fire in the town is  
extinguished. During this fast they abstain from  
the gratification of every appetite and passion  
whatever. A general amnesty is proclaimed; all  
malefactors may return to their town. . . .  
  
“On the fourth morning, the high priest, by  
rubbing dry wood together, produces new fire in  
the public square, from whence every habitation  
in the town is supplied with the new and pure  
flame.”

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ECONOMY 89  
  
‘They then feast on the new com and fruits  
and dance and sing for three days, “and the  
four following days they receive visits and re-  
joice with their friends from neighboring towns  
who have in like manner purified and prepared  
themselves.”  
  
The Mexicans also practised a similar purifi-  
cation at the end of every fifty-two years, in the  
belief that it was time for the world to come to  
an end.  
  
T have scarcely heard of a truer sacrament,  
that is, as the dictionary defines it, “outward and  
visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace,”  
than this, and I have no doubt that they were  
originally inspired directly from heaven to do  
thus, though they have no Biblical record of the  
revelation.  
  
For more than five years I maintained myself  
thus solely by the labor of my hands, and I found  
that by working about six weeks in a year, I  
could meet all the expenses of living. The whole  
of my winters, as well as most of my summers, I  
had free and clear for study. I have thoroughly  
tried school-keeping, and found that my expenses  
were in proportion, or rather out of proportion,  
to my income, for I was obliged to dress and  
train, not to say think and believe, accordingly,  
and I lost my time into the bargain. As I did not  
teach for the good of my fellow-men, but simply

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90 WALDEN  
  
for a livelihood, this was a failure. I have tried  
trade; but I found that it would take ten years  
to get under way in that, and that then I should  
probably be on my way to the devil. I was  
actually afraid that I might by that time be  
doing what is called a good business. When for-  
merly I was looking about to see what I could  
do for a living, some sad experience in conform-  
ing to the wishes of friends being fresh in my  
mind to tax my ingenuity, I thought often and  
seriously of picking huckleberries; that surely  
I could do, and its small profits might suffice, —  
for my greatest skill has been to want but little,  
— 50 little capital it required, so little distraction  
from my wonted moods, I foolishly thought.  
While my acquaintances went unhesitatingly into  
trade or the professions, I contemplated this occu-  
pation as most like theirs; ranging the hills all  
summer to pick the berries which came in my  
way, and thereafter carelessly dispose of them;  
so, to keep the flocks of Admetus. I also dreamed  
that I might gather the wild herbs, or carry ever-  
greens to such villagers as loved to be reminded  
of the woods, even to the city, by hay-cart loads.  
But I have since learned that trade curses  
everything it handles; and though you trade in  
messages from heaven, the whole curse of trade  
attaches to the business.  
  
As I preferred some things to others, and espe-  
cially valued my freedom, as I could fare hard

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ECONOMY 91  
  
and yet succeed well, I did not wish to spend my  
time in earning rich carpets or other fine furni-  
ture, or delicate cookery, or a house in the Gre-  
cian or the Gothic style just yet. If there are  
any to whom it is no interruption to acquire  
these things, and who know how to use them  
when acquired, I relinquish to them the pursuit.  
Some are “industrious,” and appear to love  
labor for its own sake, or perhaps because it  
keeps them out of worse mischief; to such I  
have at present nothing to say. ‘Those who would  
not know what to do with more leisure than they  
now enjoy, I might advise to work twice as hard  
as they do, — work till they pay for themselves,  
and get their free papers. For myself I found  
that the occupation of a day-laborer was the most  
independent of any, especially as it required only  
thirty or forty days in a year to support one. The  
laborer’s day ends with the going down of the  
sun, and he is then free to devote himself to his  
chosen pursuit, independent of his labor; but his  
employer, who speculates from month to month,  
has no respite from one end of the year to the  
other.  
  
In short, I am convinced, both by faith and  
experience, that to maintain one’s self on this  
earth is not a hardship but a pastime, if we will  
live simply and wisely; as the pursuits of the  
simpler nations are still the sports of the more  
artificial. It is not necessary that a man should

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92 WALDEN  
  
eam his living by the sweat of his brow, unless  
he sweats easier than I do.  
  
‘One young man of my acquaintance, who has  
inherited some acres, told me that he thought he  
should live as I did, if he had the means. I  
would not have any one adopt my mode of liv-  
ing on any account; for, besides that before he  
has fairly learned it I may have found out an-  
other for myself, I desire that there may be as  
many different persons in the world as possible;  
but I would have each one be very careful to find  
out and pursue his own way, and not his father’s  
or his mother’s or his neighbor's instead. ‘The  
youth may build or plant or sail, only let him not  
be hindered from doing that which he tells me  
he would like to do. It is by a mathematical  
point only that we are wise, as the sailor or the  
fugitive slave keeps the polestar in his eye; but  
that is sufficient guidance for all our life. We  
may not arrive at our port within a calculable  
period, but we would preserve the true course.  
  
Undoubtedly, in this case, what is true for one  
is truer still for a thousand, as a large house is not  
proportionally more expensive than a small one,  
since one roof may cover, one cellar underlie,  
and one wall separate several apartments. But  
for my part, I preferred the solitary dwelling.  
‘Moreover, it will commonly be cheaper to build  
the whole yourself than to convince another of  
the advantage of the common wall; and when

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A glimpse of Walden

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Google

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ECONOMY 93  
  
you have done this, the common partition, to be  
much cheaper, must be a thin one, and that other  
may prove a bad neighbor, and also not keep  
his side in repair. ‘The only codperation which  
is commonly possible is exceedingly partial and  
superficial; and what little true codperation  
there is, is as if it were not, being a harmony  
inaudible to men. If a man has faith he will co-  
operate with equal faith everywhere; if he has  
not faith, he will continue to live like the rest of  
the world, whatever company he is joined to.  
To coéperate, in the highest as well as the lowest  
sense, means to get our living together. I heard  
it proposed lately that two young men should  
travel together over the world, the one without  
money, earning his means as he went, before the  
mast and behind the plough, the other carrying  
a bill of exchange in his pocket. It was easy to  
see that they could not long be companions or  
codperate, since one would not operate at all.  
‘They would part at the first interesting crisis  
in their adventures. Above all, as I have im-  
plied, the man who goes alone can start to-day;  
but he who travels with another must wait till  
that other is ready, and it may be a long time  
before they get off.  
  
But all this is very selfish, I have heard some  
of my townsmen say. I confess that I have  
hitherto indulged very little in philanthropic

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94 WALDEN  
  
enterprises. I have made some sacrifices to a  
sense of duty, and among others have sacrificed  
this pleasure also. There are those who have  
used all their arts to persuade me to undertake  
the support of some poor family in the town; and  
if I had nothing to do, — for the devil finds em-  
ployment for the idle, — I might try my hand at  
some such pastime as that. However, when I  
have thought to indulge myself in this respect,  
and lay their Heaven under an obligation by  
maintaining certain poor persons in all respects  
as comfortably as I maintain myself, and have  
even ventured so far as to make them the offer,  
they have one and all unhesitatingly preferred  
toremain poor. While my townsmen and women  
are devoted in so many ways to the good of their  
fellows, I trust that one at least may be spared  
to other and less humane pursuits. You must  
have a genius for charity as well as for anything  
else. As for Doing-good, that is one of the pro-  
fessions which are full. Moreover, I have tried  
it fairly, and, strange as it may seem, am satis-  
fied that it does not agree with my constitution.  
Probably I should not consciously and deliber-  
ately forsake my particular calling to do the  
good which society demands of me, to save the  
universe from annihilation; and I believe that a  
like but infinitely greater steadfastness elsewhere  
is all that now preserves it. But I would not  
stand between any man and his genius; and to

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ECONOMY 95  
  
him who does this work, which I decline, with  
his whole heart and soul and life, I would say,  
Persevere, even if the world call it doing evil, as  
it is most likely they will.  
  
I am far from supposing that my case is a  
peculiar one; no doubt many of my readers  
would make a similar defence. At doing some-  
thing, —I will not engage that my neighbors  
shall pronounce it good, —I do not hesitate to  
say that I should be a capital fellow to hire;  
but what that is, it is for my employer to find  
out. What good I do, in the common sense of  
that word, must be aside from my main path,  
and for the most part wholly unintended. Men  
say, practically, Begin where you are and such  
as you are, without aiming mainly to become of  
more worth, and with kindness aforethought go  
about doing good. If I were to preach at all in  
this strain, I should say rather, Set about being  
  
As if the sun should stop when he has  
kindled his fires up to the splendor of a moon or  
a star of the sixth magnitude, and go about like  
a Robin Goodfellow, peeping in at every cot-  
tage window, inspiring lunatics, and tainting  
meats, and making darkness visible, instead of  
steadily increasing his genial heat and benefi-  
cence till he is of such brightness that no mortal  
can look him in the face, and then, and in the  
meanwhile too, going about the world in his own  
orbit, doing it good, or rather, as a truer philoso-

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96 WALDEN  
  
phy has discovered, the world going about him  
getting good. When Phaeton, wishing to prove  
his heavenly birth by his beneficence, had the  
sun’s chariot but one day, and drove out of the  
beaten track, he burned several blocks of houses  
in the lower streets of heaven, and scorched the  
surface of the earth, and dried up every spring,  
and made the great desert of Sahara, till at length  
Jupiter hurled him headlong to the earth with a  
thunderbolt, and the sun, through grief at his  
death, did not shine for a year.  
  
‘There is no odor so bad as that which arises  
from goodness tainted. It is human, it is divine,  
carrion. If I knew for a certainty that a man  
was coming to my house with the conscious de-  
sign of doing me good, I should run for my life,  
as from that dry and parching wind of the Afri-  
can deserts called the simoom, which fills the  
mouth and nose and ears and eyes with dust till  
you are suffocated, for fear that I should get some  
of his good done to me,— some of its virus  
mingled with my blood. No, — in this case I  
would rather suffer evil the natural way. A man  
is not a good man to me because he will feed me if  
I should be starving, or warm me if I should be  
freezing, or pull me out of a ditch if I should  
ever fall into one. I can find you a Newfound-  
land dog that will do’as much. Philanthropy  
is not love for one’s fellow-man in the broadest  
sense. Howard was no doubt an exceedingly

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ECONOMY 97  
  
kind and worthy man in his way, and has his  
reward; but, comparatively speaking, what are  
a hundred Howards to us, if their philanthropy  
do not help us in our best estate, when we are  
most worthy to be helped? I never heard of a  
philanthropic meeting in which it was sincerely  
proposed to do any good to me, or the like of me.  
  
‘The Jesuits were quite balked by those In-  
dians who, being burned at the stake, suggested  
new modes of torture to their tormentors. Being  
superior to physical suffering, it sometimes  
chanced that they were superior to any conso-  
lation which the missionaries could offer; and  
the law to do as you would be done by fell with  
less persuasiveness on the ears of those who, for  
their part, did not care how they were done by,  
who loved their enemies after a new fashion, and  
came very near freely forgiving them all they did.  
  
Be sure that you give the poor the aid they  
most need, though it be your example which  
leaves them far behind. If you give money,  
spend yourself with it, and do not merely aban-  
don it to them. We make curious mistakes  
sometimes. Often the poor man is not so cold  
and hungry as he is dirty and ragged and gross.  
It is partly his taste, and not merely his misfor-  
tune. If you give him money, he will perhaps  
buy more rags with it. I was wont to pity the  
clumsy Irish laborers who cut ice on the pond,  
  
in such mean and ragged clothes, while I shiv-  
4

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98 WALDEN  
  
ered in my more tidy and somewhat more fash-  
ionable garments, till, one bitter cold day, one  
who had slipped into the water came to my  
house to warm him, and I saw him strip off three  
pairs of pants and two pairs of stockings ere he  
got down to the skin, though they were dirty and  
ragged enough, it is true, and that he could af-  
ford to refuse the extra garments which I offered  
him, he had so many inira ones. This ducking  
was the very thing he needed. Then I began to  
pity myself, and I saw that it would be a greater  
charity to bestow on me a flannel shirt than a  
whole slop-shop on him. ‘There are a thousand  
hacking at the branches of evil to one who is  
striking at the root, and it may be that he who  
bestows the largest amount of time and money on  
the needy is doing the most by his mode of life  
to produce that misery which he strives in vain  
to relieve. It is the pious slave-breeder devoting  
the proceeds of every tenth slave to buy a Sun-  
day’s liberty for the rest. Some show their kind-  
ness to the poor by employing them in their  
kitchens. Would they not be kinder if they em-  
ployed themselves there? You boast of spend-  
ing a tenth part of your income in charity;  
maybe you should spend the nine tenths so, and  
done with it. Society recovers only a tenth part  
of the property then. Is this owing to the gener-  
osity of him in whose possession it is found, or  
to the remissness of the officers of justice?

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ECONOMY 99  
  
Philanthropy is almost the only virtue which  
is sufficiently appreciated by mankind. Nay,  
it is greatly overrated; and it is our selfishness  
which overrates it. A robust poor man, one  
sunny day here in Concord, praised a fellow-  
townsman to me, because, as he said, he was  
kind to the poor; meaning himself. ‘The kind  
uncles and aunts of the race are more esteemed  
than its true spiritual fathers and mothers. I  
once heard a reverend lecturer on England, a man  
of learning and intelligence, after enumerating  
her scientific, literary, and political worthies,  
Shakspeare, Bacon, Cromwell, Milton, Newton,  
and others, speak next of her Christian heroes,  
whom, as if his profession required it of him, he  
elevated to a place far above all the rest, as the  
greatest of the great. ‘They were Penn, Howard,  
and Mrs. Fry. Every one must feel the false-  
hood and cant of this. The last were not Eng-  
land’s best men and women; only, perhaps, her  
best philanthropists.  
  
I would not subtract anything from the praise  
that is due to philanthropy, but merely de-  
mand justice for all who by their lives and works  
are a blessing to mankind. I do not value  
chiefly a man’s uprightness and benevolence,  
which are, as it were, his stem and leaves. Those  
plants of whose greenness withered we make  
herb tea for the sick, serve but a humble use,  
and are most employed by quacks. I want the

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100 ‘WALDEN  
  
flower and fruit of a man; that some fragrance  
be wafted over from him to me, and some ripe-  
ness flavor our intercourse. His goodness must  
not be a partial and transitory act, but a con-  
stant superfluity, which costs him nothing and  
of which he is unconscious. This is a charity  
which hides a multitude of sins. The philan-  
thropist too often surrounds mankind with the  
remembrance of his own cast-off griefs as an  
atmosphere, and calls it sympathy. We should  
impart our courage, and not our despair, our  
health and ease, and not our disease, and take  
care that this does not spread by contagion.  
From what southern plains comes up the voice  
of wailing? Under what latitudes reside the  
heathen to whom we would send light? Who  
is that intemperate end brutal man whom we  
would redeem? If anything ail a man, so that  
he does not perform his functions, if he have a  
pain in his bowels even, — for that is the seat of  
sympathy, — he forthwith sets about reforming  
—the world. Being a microcosm himself, he  
discovers, and it is a true discovery, and he is  
the man to make it, — that the world has been  
eating green apples; to his eyes, in fact, the  
globe itself is a great green apple, which there is  
danger awful to think of that the children of  
men will nibble before it is ripe; and straight-  
way his drastic philanthropy seeks out the Es-  
quimau and the Patagonian, and embraces the

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ECONOMY 101  
  
populous Indian and Chinese villages; and thus,  
by a few years of philanthropic activity, the  
powers in the meanwhile using him for their  
own ends, no doubt, he cures himself of his dys-  
pepsia, the globe acquires a faint blush on one  
or both of its cheeks, as if it were beginning to  
be ripe, and life loses its crudity and is once  
more sweet and wholesome to live. I never  
dreamed of any enormity greater than I have  
committed. I never knew, and never shall  
know, a worse man than myself.  
  
I believe that what so saddens the reformer  
is not his sympathy with his fellows in distress,  
but, though he be the holiest son of God, is his  
private ail. Let this be righted, let the spring  
come to him, the morning rise over his couch,  
and he will forsake his generous companions  
without apology. My excuse for not lecturing  
against the use of tobacco is that I never chewed  
it; that is a penalty which reformed tobacco  
chewers have to pay; though there are things  
enough I have chewed, which I could lecture  
against. If you should ever be betrayed into  
any of these philanthropies, do not let your left  
hand know what your right hand does, for it is  
not worth knowing. Rescue the drowning and  
tie your shoe-strings. Take your time, and set  
about some free labor.  
  
Our manners have been corrupted by com-  
munication with the saints. Our hymn-books

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102 WALDEN  
  
resound with a melodious cursing of God and  
enduring him forever. One would say that even  
the prophets and redeemers had rather consoled  
the fears than confirmed the hopes of man.  
There is nowhere recorded a simple and irre-  
pressible satisfaction with the gift of life, any  
memorable praise of God. All health and suc-  
cess does me good, however far off and withdrawn  
it may appear; all disease and failure helps to  
make me sad and does me evil, however much  
sympathy it may have with me or I with it. If,  
then, we would indeed restore mankind by truly  
Indian, botanic, magnetic, or natural means, let  
us first be as simple and well as Nature our-  
selves, dispel the clouds which hang over our  
own brows, and take up a little life into our  
pores. Do not stay to be an overseer of the poor,  
but endeavor to become one of the worthies of  
the world.  
  
I read in the Gulistan, or Flower Garden, of  
Sheik Sadi of Shiraz, that “They asked a wise  
man, saying: Of the many celebrated trees  
which the Most High God has created lofty and  
umbrageous, they call none azad, or free, ex-  
cepting the cypress, which bears no fruit; what  
mystery is there in this? He replied: Each has  
its appropriate produce, and appointed season,  
during the continuance of which it is fresh and  
blooming, and during their absence dry and  
withered; to neither of which states is the cy-

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ECONOMY 103  
  
press exposed, being always flourishing; and of  
this nature are the azads, or religious independ-  
ents. — Fix not thy heart en that which is tran-  
sitory; for the Dijlab, or Tigris, will continue to  
flow through Bagdad after the race of caliphs is  
extinct: if thy hand has plenty, be liberal as the  
date tree; but if it affords nothing to give away,  
be an azad, or free man, like the cypress.”

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COMPLEMENTAL VERSES  
THE PRETENSIONS OF POVERTY  
  
“Thou dost presume too much, poor needy wretch,  
‘To claim a station in the firmament,  
Because thy humble cottage, or thy tub,  
‘Nurses some lazy or pedantic virtue  
In the cheap sunshine or by shsdy springs,  
With roots and pot-herbs; where thy right hand,  
‘Tearing those humane passions from the mind,  
Upon whose stocks fair blooming virtues flourish,  
Degradeth nature, and benumbeth sense,  
And, Gorgon-like, turns active men to stone.  
‘We not require the dull society  
Of your necessitated temperance,  
‘Or that unnatural stupidity  
‘That knows nor joy nor sorrow; nor your fore'd  
Falsely exalted passive fortitude  
Above the active. ‘This low abject brood,  
‘That fix their seats in mediocrity,  
Become your servile minds; but we advance  
Such virtues only as admit excess,  
Brave, bounteous acts, regal magnificence,  
All-sesing prudence, magnanimi  
‘That knows no bound, and that heroie virtue  
For which antiquity hath left no name,  
But patterns only, such as Hercules,  
Achilles, Theseus. Back to thy loath’d cell;  
‘And when thou seest the new enlightened sphere,  
Study to know but what those worthies were.”  
T. Canew.

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II  
WHERE I LIVED, AND WHAT I LIVED FOR  
  
T a certain season of our life we are ac-  
customed to consider every spot as the  
possible site of a house. I have thus sur-  
  
veyed the country on every side within a dozen  
miles of where I live. In imagination I have  
bought all the farms in succession, for all were  
to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked  
over each farmer’s premises, tasted his wild  
apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took  
his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging  
it to him in my mind; even put a higher price  
on it, —took everything but a deed of it, —  
took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to  
talk, — cultivated it, and him too to some ex-  
tent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed  
it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. ‘This  
experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort  
of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever  
I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radi-  
ated from me accordingly. What is a house but  
a sedes, a seat? — better if a country seat. I  
discovered many a site for a house not likely to  
be soon improved, which some might have

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106 WALDEN  
  
thought too far from the village, but to my eyes  
the village was too far from it. Well, there I  
might live, I said; and there I did live, for an  
hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I  
could let the years run off, buffet the winter  
through, and see the spring come in. The future  
inhabitants of this region, wherever they may  
place their houses, may be sure that they have  
been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay  
out the land into orchard, woodlot, and pasture,  
and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be  
left to stand before the door, and whence each  
blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage;  
and then I let it lie, fallow perchance, for a man  
is rich in proportion to the number of things  
which he can afford to let alone.  
  
‘My imagination carried me so far that I even  
had the refusal of several farms, — the refusal  
was all I wanted, — but I never got my fingers  
burned by actual possession. The nearest that  
I came to actual possession was when I bought  
the Hollowell place, and had begun to sort my  
seeds, and collected materials with which to  
make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with;  
but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his  
wife —every man has such a wife — changed  
her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered  
me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak  
the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and  
it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that

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WHERE I LIVED 107  
  
man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or  
ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him  
keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had  
carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous,  
I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it,  
and, as he was not a rich man, made him a  
present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents,  
and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left.  
I found thus that I had been a rich man with-  
out any damage to my property. But I retained  
the landscape, and I have since annually carried  
off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With  
respect to landscapes, —  
  
\* “Tam monarch of all I survey,  
‘My right there is none to dispute.”  
  
T have frequently seen a poet withdraw, hav-  
ing enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm,  
while the crusty farmer supposed that he had  
got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner  
does not know it for many years when a poet has  
put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind  
of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it,  
milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream,  
and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.  
  
The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to  
me, were: its complete retirement, being about  
two miles from the village, half a mile from the  
nearest neighbor, and separated from the high-  
way by a broad field; its bounding on the river,  
  
.

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108 WALDEN  
  
which the owner said protected it by its fogs from  
frosts in the spring, though that was nothing to  
me; the gray color and ruinous state of the house  
and barn, and the dilapidated fences, which put  
such an interval between me and the last occu-  
pant; the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees,  
gnawed by rabbits, showing what kind of neigh-  
bors I should have; but above all, the recollec-  
tion I had of it from my earliest voyages up the  
river, when the house was concealed behind a  
dense grove of red maples, through which I  
heard the house-dog bark. I was in haste to  
buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out  
some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees,  
and grubbing up some young birches which had  
sprung up in the pasture, or, in short, had made  
any more of his improvements. To enjoy these  
advantages I was ready to carry it on; like At-  
las, to take the world on my shoulders, —I  
never heard what compensation he received for  
that, — and do all those things which had no  
other motive or excuse but that I might pay for  
it and be unmolested in my possession of it; for  
I knew all the while that it would yield the most  
abundant crop of the kind I wanted if I could  
only afford to let it alone. But it turned out as  
I have said.  
  
All that I could say, then, with respect to  
farming on a large scale (I have always culti-  
vated a garden), was that I had had my seeds

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WHERE I LIVED 109  
  
ready. Many think that seeds improve with  
age. I have no doubt that time discriminates  
between the good and the bad: and when at  
last I shall plant, I shall be less likely to be dis-  
appointed. But I would say to my fellows, once  
for all, As long as possible live free and uncom-  
mitted. It makes but little difference whether  
you are committed to a farm or the county jail.  
  
Old Cato, whose “‘De Re Rusticé” is my  
“cultivator,” says, and the only translation I  
have seen makes sheer nonsense of the passage,  
“When you think of getting a farm, tum it thus  
in your mind, not to buy greedily; nor spare  
your pains to lock at it, and do not think it  
enough to go round it ance. The oftener you  
go there the more it will please you, if it is good.”  
T think I shall not buy greedily, but go round  
and round it as long as I live, and be buried  
in it first, that it may please me the more at  
last.  
  
‘The present was my next experiment of this  
kind, which I purpose to describe more at  
length; for convenience, putting the experience  
of two years into one. As I have said, I do  
not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to  
brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning,  
standing on his roost, if only to wake my neigh-  
bors up.  
  
When first I took up my abode in the woods,

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110 WALDEN  
  
that is, began to spend my nights as well as days  
there, which, by accident, was on Independence  
Day, or the fourth of July, 1845, my house was  
not finished for winter, but was merely a de-  
fence against the rain, without plastering or  
chimney, the walls being of rough weather-  
stained boards, with wide chinks, which made  
it cool at night. ‘The upright white hewn studs  
and freshly planed door and window casings  
gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the  
morning, when its timbers were saturated with  
dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet  
gum would exude from them. To my imagina-  
tion it retained throughout the day more or less  
of this auroral character, reminding me of a cer-  
tain house on a mountain which I had visited  
the year before. This was an airy and unplas-  
tered cabin, fit to entertain a travelling god, and  
where a goddess might trail her garments. The  
winds which passed over my dwelling were such  
as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing  
the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of  
terrestrial music. The morning wind forever  
blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted;  
but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is  
but the outside of the earth everywhere.  
  
‘The only house I had been the owner of be-  
fore, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I  
used occasionally when making excursions in  
the summer, and this is still rolled up in my

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WHERE I LIVED ll  
  
garret; but the boat, after passing from hand  
to hand, has gone down the stream of time.  
With this more substantial shelter about me,  
I had made some progress toward settling in the  
world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort  
of crystallization around me, and reacted on the  
builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a pic-  
ture in outlines. I did not need to go out doors  
to take the air, for the atmosphere within had  
lost none of its freshness. It was not so much  
within doors as behind a door where I sat, even  
in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says,  
“An abode without birds is like a meat without  
seasoning.” Such was not my abode, for I  
found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds;  
not by having imprisoned one, but having caged  
myself near them. I was not only nearer to  
some of those which commonly frequent the  
garden and the orchard, but to those wilder  
and more thrilling songsters of the forest  
which never, or rarely, serenade a villager, —  
the wood-thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager,  
the field-sparrow, the whippoorwill, and many  
others.  
  
I was seated by the shore of a small pond,  
about a mile and a half south of the village of  
Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the  
midst of an extensive wood between that town  
and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that  
our only field known to fame, Concord Battle

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11g WALDEN  
  
Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the  
opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest,  
covered with wood, was my most distant horizon.  
For the first week, whenever I looked out on the  
pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the  
side of a mountain, its bottom far above the sur-  
face of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw  
it throwing off its mighty clothing of mist, and  
here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its  
smooth reflecting surface were revealed, while  
the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdraw-  
ing in every direction into the woods, as at the  
breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The  
very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later  
into the day than usual, as on the sides of  
mountains.  
  
This small lake was of most value as a neigh-  
bor in the intervals of a gentle rain storm in  
August, when, both air and water being per-  
fectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon  
had all the serenity of evening, and the wood-  
thrush sang around, and was heard from shore  
to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than  
at such a time; and the clear portion of the air  
above it being shallow and darkened by clouds,  
the water, full of light and reflections, becomes  
a lower heaven itself so much the more im-  
portant. From a hill top near by, where the  
wood had recently been cut off, there was a  
pleasing vista southward across the pond,

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WHERE I LIVED 113  
  
through a wide indentation in the hills which  
form the shore there, where their opposite sides  
sloping toward each other suggested a stream  
flowing out in that direction through a wooded  
valley, but stream there was none. That way I  
looked between and over the near green hills to  
some distant and higher ones in the horizon,  
tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tip-  
toe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks  
of the still bluer and more distant mountain  
ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins  
from heaven’s own mint, and also of some por-  
tion of the village. But in other directions, even  
from this point, I could not see over or beyond  
the woods which surrounded me. It is well to  
have some water in your neighborhood, to give  
buoyancy to and float the earth. One value  
even of the smallest well is that when you look  
into it you see that the earth is not continent but  
insular. This is as important as that it keeps  
butter cool. When I looked across the pond  
from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows,  
which in time of flood I distinguished elevated  
perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley,  
like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the  
pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and  
floated even by this small sheet of intervening  
water, and I was reminded that this on which I  
dwelt was but dry land.  
  
‘Though the view from my door was still more

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114 WALDEN  
  
contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined  
in the least. ‘There was pasture enough for my  
imagination. The low shrub-oak plateau to  
which the opposite shore arose, stretched away  
toward the prairies of the West and the steppes  
of Tartary, affording ample room for all the rov-  
ing families of men. “There are none happy in  
the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast  
horizon,” — said Damodara, when his herds  
required new and larger pastures.  
  
Both place and time were changed and I  
dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and  
to those eras in history which had most at-  
tracted me. Where I live was as far off as many  
a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We  
are wont to imagine rare and delectable places  
in some remote and more celestial corner of the  
system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia’s  
Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I dis-  
covered that my house actually had its site in  
such a withdrawn, but forever new and unpro-  
faned, part of the universe. If it were worth thé  
while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades  
or the Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I  
was really there, or at an equal remoteness from  
the life which I had left behind, dwindled and  
twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neigh-  
bor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by  
him. Such was that part of creation where I had  
squatted: —

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WHERE I LIVED 5  
  
“There was a shepherd that did live,  
‘And held his thoughts as high  
‘As were the mounts whereon his flocks  
Did hourly feed him by.”  
  
What should we think of the shepherd’s life if  
his flocks always wandered ‘to higher pastures  
than his thoughts?  
  
Every morning was a cheerful invitation to  
make my life of equal simplicity, and I may  
say innocence, with Nature herself. I have  
been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the  
Greeks. I got up carly and bathed in the pond;  
that was a religious exercise, and one of the  
best things which I did. They say that char-  
acters were engraven on the bathing tub of king  
‘Tching-thang to this effect: “Renew thyself  
completely each day; do it again, and again,  
and forever again.” I can understand that.  
Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as  
much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito  
making its invisible and unimaginable tour  
through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I  
was sitting with door and windows open, as I  
could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame.  
It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and  
Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and  
wanderings. There was something cosmical  
about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden,  
of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world.  
‘The morning, which is the most memorable

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116 WALDEN  
  
season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then  
there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour,  
at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers  
all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be  
expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to  
which we are not awakened by our Genius, but  
by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor,  
are not awakened by our own newly acquired  
force and aspirations from within, accompanied  
by the undulations of celestial music, instead of  
factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air —  
to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and  
thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself  
to be good, no less than the light. ‘That man  
who does not believe that each day contains  
an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than  
he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and  
is pursuing a descending and darkening way.  
After a partial cessation of his sensuous life,  
the soul of man, or its organs rather, are rein-  
vigorated each day, and his Genius tries again  
what noble life it can make. All memorable  
events, I should say, transpire in morning time  
and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas say,  
“All intelligences awake with the morning.”  
Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memo-  
rable of the actions of men, date from such an  
hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are  
the children of Aurora, and emit their music  
at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous

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WHERE I LIVED gy  
  
thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a  
perpetual morning. It matters not what the  
clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men.  
Morning is when I am awake and there is a  
dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw  
off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an  
account of their day if they have fot been slum-  
bering? They are not such poor calculators.  
If they had not been overcome with drowsiness  
they would have performed something. The  
millions are awake enough for physical labor;  
but only one in a million is awake enough for  
effective intellectual exertion, only one in a  
hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To  
be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met  
a man who was quite awake. How could I have  
looked him in the face?  
  
‘We must learn to reawaken and keep our-  
selves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by  
an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does  
not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know  
of no more encouraging fact than the unques-  
tionable ability of man to elevate his life by  
conscious endeavor. It is something to be able  
to paint a particular picture, or to carve a  
statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful;  
but it is far more glorious to carve and paint  
the very atmosphere and medium through which  
we look, which morally we can do. To effect  
the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts.

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18 WALDEN  
  
Every man is tasked to make his life, even in  
its details, worthy of the contemplation of his  
most elevated and critical hour. If we refused,  
or rather used up, such paltry information as we  
get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how  
this might be done.  
  
I went to the woods because I wished to live  
deliberately, to front only the essential facts of  
life, and see if I could not learn what it had to  
teach, and not, when I came to die, discover  
that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what  
was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish  
to practise resignation, unless it was quite  
necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out  
all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and  
Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not  
life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to  
drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its  
lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why  
then to get the whole and genuine meanness of  
it, and publish its meanness to the world; or  
if it were sublime, to know it by experience,  
and be able to give a true account of it in my  
next excursion. For most men, it appears to  
me, are in a strange uncertainty about it,  
whether it is of the devil or of God, and have  
somewhat hastily concluded that it is the chief  
end of man here to “glorify God and enjoy him  
forever.””  
  
Still we live meanly, like ants; though the

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WHERE I LIVED ng  
  
fable tells us that we were long ago changed  
into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes;  
it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and  
our best virtue has for its occasion a superflu-  
ous and evitable wretchedness. Ouu life is  
frittered away by detail. An honest man has  
hardly need to count more than his ten fingers,  
or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes,  
and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity,  
simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or  
three, and not a hundred or a thousand ; instead  
of a million count half a dozen, and keep your  
accounts on your thumb nail. In the midst of  
this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the  
clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-  
and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has  
to live, if he would not founder and go to the  
bottom and not make his port at all, by dead  
reckoning, and he must be a great calculator  
indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. In-  
stead of three meals a day, if it be ne  
  
eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five;  
and reduce other things in proportion. Our  
life is like a German Confederacy, made up of  
petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuat-  
ing, so that even a German cannot tell you how  
it is bounded at any moment. The nation  
itself, with all its so-called internal improvements,  
which, by the way, are all external and superfi-  
cial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown estab-

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120 WALDEN  
  
lishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped  
up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and  
heedless expense, by want of calculation and a  
worthy aim, as the million households in the  
land; and the only cure for it as for them is in  
a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan  
simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It  
lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that  
the Nation have commerce, and export ice, and  
talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles  
an hour, without a doubt, whether they do or  
not; but whether we should live like baboons  
or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not  
get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote  
days and nights to the work, but go to tinker-  
ing upon our lives to improve them, who will  
build railroads? And if railroads are not built,  
how shall we get to heaven in season? But if  
we stay at home and mind our business, who  
will want railroads? We do not ride on the  
railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think  
what those sleepers are that underlie the rail-  
road? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a  
‘Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and  
they are covered with sand, and the cars run  
smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers,  
I assure you. And every few years a new lot  
is laid down and run over; so that, if some have  
the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the  
misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they

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WHERE I LIVED 121  
  
run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a  
supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position,  
and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars,  
and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were  
an exception. I am glad to know that it takes  
a gang of men for every five miles to keep the  
sleepers down and level in their beds as it is,  
for this is a sign that they may sometime get up  
  
again.  
  
‘Why should we live with such hurry and waste  
of life? We are determined to be starved before  
we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time  
saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches  
to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for work,  
we have n’t any of any consequence. We have  
the Saint Vitus’ dance, and cannot possibly  
keep our heads still. If I should only give a  
few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire,  
that is, without setting the bell, there is hardly  
man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord,  
notwithstanding that press of engagements which  
was his excuse so many times this morning, nor  
a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but  
would forsake all and follow that sound, not  
mainly to save property from the flames, but,  
if we will confess the truth, much more to see  
it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known,  
did not set it on fire,—or to see it put out,  
and have a hand in it, if that is done as hand-  
somely; yes, even if it were the parish church

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122 WALDEN  
  
itself. Hardly a man takes a half hour’s nap  
after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his  
head and asks, “What's the news?” as if the  
rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some  
give directions to be waked every half hour,  
doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to  
pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed.  
After a night’s sleep the news is as indispensable  
as the breakfast. “Pray tell me anything new  
that has happened to a man anywhere on this  
globe,” — and he reads it over his coffee and  
rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out  
this morning on the Wachito River; never  
dreaming the while that he lives in the dark  
unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and  
has but the rudiment of an eye himself.  
  
For my part, I could easily do without the  
post-office. I think that there are very few  
important communications made through it.  
To speak critically, I never received more than  
one or two letters in my life — I wrote this some  
years ago — that were worth the postage. The  
penny-post is, commonly, an institution through  
which you seriously offer a man that penny for  
his thought which is so often safely offered in  
jest, And I am sure that I never read any  
memorable news in a newspaper. If we read  
of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by  
accident, or one house burned, or one vessel  
wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one

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WHERE I LIVED 123  
  
cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one  
mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in  
the winter, — we never need read of another.  
One is enough. If you are acquainted with the  
principle, what do you care for a myriad instances  
and applications? To a philosopher all news,  
as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and  
read it are old women over their tea. Yet not  
a few are greedy after this gossip. There was  
such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of  
the offices to learn the foreign news by the last  
arrival, that several large squares of plate glass  
belonging to the establishment were broken by  
the pressure, — news which I seriously think  
a ready wit might write a twelvemonth or twelve  
years beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As  
for Spain, for instance, if you know how to  
throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don  
Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to  
time in the right proportions, — they may have  
changed the names a little since I saw the papers,  
—and serve up a bull-fight when other enter-  
tainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and  
give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin  
of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid  
reports under this head in the newspapers: and  
as for England, almost the last significant scrap  
of news from that quarter was the revolution  
of 1649; and if you have learned the history of  
her crops for an average year, you never need

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124 WALDEN  
  
attend to that thing again, unless your specula-  
tions are of a merely pecuniary character. If  
one may judge who rarely looks into the news-  
papers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign  
parts, a French revolution not excepted.  
  
‘What news! how much more important to  
know what that is which was never old! ‘“Kieou-  
he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent  
a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news.  
Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated  
near him, and questioned him in these terms:  
What is your master doing? The messenger  
answered with respect: My master desires to  
diminish the number of his faults, but he can-  
not come to the end of them. The messenger  
being gone, the philosopher remarked: What  
a worthy messenger! What a worthy mes-  
senger!” The preacher, instead of vexing the  
ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at  
the end of the week, —for Sunday is the fit  
conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the  
fresh and brave beginning of a new ohe, — with  
this one other draggletail of a sermon, should  
shout with thundering voice, —‘“Pause! Avast!  
Why s0 seeming fast, but deadly slow?”  
  
Shams and delusions are esteemed for sound-  
est truths, while reality is fabulous. If men  
would steadily observe realities only, and not  
allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare  
it with such things as we know, would be like

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WHERE I LIVED 125  
  
a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights’ Entertain-  
ments. If we respected only what is inevitable  
and has a right to be, music and poetry would  
resound along the streets. When we are un-  
hurried and wise, we perceive that only great  
and worthy things have any permanent and  
absolute existence, — that petty fears and petty  
pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. ‘This  
is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing  
the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be  
deceived by shows, men establish and confirm  
their daily life of routine and habit everywhere,  
which still is built on purely illusory foundations.  
Children, who play life, discern its true law and  
relations more clearly than men, who fail to  
live it worthily, but who think that they are  
wiser by experience, that is, by failure. I have  
read in a Hindoo book that “There was a king’s  
son, who, being expelled ip infancy from his  
native city, was brought up by a forester, and,  
growing up to maturity in that state, imagined  
himself to belong to the barbarous race with  
which he lived. One of his father’s ministers  
having discovered him, revealed to him what  
he was, and the misconception of his character  
was removed, and he knew himself to be a  
prince. So soul,” continues the Hindoo phil-  
osopher, “from the circumstances in which it  
is placed, mistakes its own character, until the  
truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and

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126 WALDEN  
  
then it knows itself to be Brahme.” I perceive  
that we inhabitants of New England live this  
mean life that we do because our vision does not  
penetrate the surface of things. We think that  
that is which appears to be. If a man should  
walk through this town and see only the reality,  
where, think you, would the “Mill-dam” go  
to? If he should give us an account of the  
realities he beheld there, we should not recog-  
nize the place in his description. Look at a  
meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a  
shop, or a dwelling-house, and say what that  
thing really is before a true gaze, and they would  
all go to pieces in your account of them. Men  
esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the sys-  
tem, behind the farthest star, before Adam and  
after the last man. In eternity there is indeed  
something true and sublime. But all these  
times and places and occasions are now and  
| here. God Himself culminates in the present  
moment, and will never be more divine in the  
lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to  
apprehend at all what is sublime and noble  
only by the perpetual instilling and drenching  
of the reality that surrounds us. The uni-  
verse constantly and obediently answers to our  
conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow,  
the track is laid for us. Let us spend our  
lives in conceiving then. ‘The poet or the art-  
ist never yet had so fair and noble a design

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WHERE I LIVED 127  
  
but some of his posterity at least could accom-  
plish it.  
  
Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature,  
and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell  
and mosquito’s wing that falls on the rails. Let  
us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and  
without perturbation; let company come and  
let company go, let the bells ring and the children  
cry, — determined to make a day of it. Why  
should we knock under and go with the stream ?  
Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that  
terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner,  
situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this  
danger and you are safe, for the rest of the way  
is down hill, With unrelaxed nerves, with  
morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way,  
tied to the mast like Ulysses. If the engine  
whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its  
pains. If the bell rings, why should we run?  
We will consider what kind of music they are  
like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and  
wedge our feet downward through the mud  
and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradi-  
tion, and delusion and appearance, that alluvion  
which covers the globe, through Paris and  
London, through New York and Boston and  
Concord, through church and state, through  
poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come  
to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we  
can call reality, and say, This is, and no mistake;

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198 WALDEN  
  
and then begin, having a point @appui, below  
freshet and frost and fire, a place where you  
might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-  
post safely, or perhaps a gauge, not a Nilometer,  
but a Realometer, that future ages might know  
how deep a freshet of shams and appearances  
had gathered from time to time. If you stand  
right fronting and face to face to a fact, you  
will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces,  
as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge  
dividing you through the heart and marrow,  
and so you will happily conclude your mortal  
career. Be it life or death, we crave only reality.  
If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in  
our throats and feel cold in the extremities; if  
we are alive, let us go about our business.  
  
‘Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I  
drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy  
bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin  
current slides away, but eternity remains. I  
would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bot-  
tom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one.  
I know not the first letter of the alphabet, I have  
always been regretting that I was not as wise as  
the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver;  
it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of  
things. I do not wish to be any more busy with  
my hands than is necessary. My head is hands  
and feet. I feel all my best faculties concen-  
trated in it. My instinct tells me that my head

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WHERE I LIVED 129  
  
is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use  
their snout and fore-paws, and with it I would  
mine and burrow my way through these hills.  
I think that the richest vein is somewhere here-  
abouts; so by the divining rod and thin rising  
vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.

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tl  
READING  
  
(TH a little more deliberation in the  
  
choice of their pursuits, all men would  
  
perhaps become essentially students  
  
and observers, for certainly their nature and  
destiny are interesting to all alike. In accumu-  
lating property for ourselves or our posterity, in  
founding a family or a state, or acquiring fame  
even, we are mortal; but in dealing with truth we  
are immortal, and need fear no change nor acci-  
dent. The oldest Egyptian or Hindoo philoso-  
pher raised a corner of the veil from the statue  
of the divinity; and still the trembling robe re-  
mains raised, and I gaze upon as fresh a glory as  
he did, since it was I in him that was then so  
bold, and it is he in me that now reviews the  
vision. No dust has settled on that robe; no  
time has elapsed since that divinity was revealed.  
‘That time which we really improve, or which is  
improvable, is neither past, present, nor future.  
My residence was more favorable, not only to  
thought, but to serious reading, than a university ;  
and though I was beyond the range of the ordi-  
nary circulating library, I had more than ever

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READING 181  
  
come within the influence of those books which  
circulate round the world, whose sentences were  
first written on bark, and are now merely copied  
from time to time on to linen paper. Says the  
poet Mir Camar Uddin Mast, “Being seated to  
run through the region of the spiritual world; I  
have had this advantage in books. To be in-  
toxicated by a single glass of wine; I have ex-  
perienced this pleasure when I have drunk the  
liquor of the esoteric doctrines.” I kept Homer's  
Iliad on my table through the summer, though I  
looked at his page only now and then. Inces-  
sant labor with my hands, at first, for I had my  
house to finish and my beans to hoe at the same  
time, made more study impossible. Yet I sus-  
tained myself by the prospect of such reading in  
future. I read one or two shallow books of travel  
in the intervals of my work, till that employment  
made me ashamed of myself, and I asked where  
it was then that I lived.  
  
‘The student may read Homer or Zschylus in  
the Greek without danger of dissipation or luxu-  
riousness, for it implies that he in some measure  
emulate their heroes, and consecrate morning  
hours to their pages. The heroic books, even if  
printed in the character of our mother tongue,  
will always be in a language dead to degenerate  
times; and we must laboriously seek the meaning  
of each word and line, conjecturing a larger sense  
than common use permits out of what wisdom

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1382 WALDEN  
  
and valor and generosity we have. ‘The modern  
cheap and fertile press, with all its translations,  
has done little to bring us nearer to the heroic  
writers of antiquity. They seem as solitary, and  
the letter in which they are printed as rare and  
curious, as ever. It is worth the expense of youth-  
ful days and costly hours, if you learn only some  
words of an ancient language, which are raised  
out of the trivialness of the street, to be perpetual  
suggestions and provocations. It is not in vain  
that the farmer remembers and repeats the few  
Latin words which he has heard. Men some-  
times speak as if the study of the classics would  
at length make way for more modern and prac-  
tical studies; but the adventurous student will  
always study classics, in whatever language they  
may be written and however ancient they may  
be. For what are the classics but the noblest  
recorded thoughts of man? They are the only  
oracles which are not decayed, and there are  
such answers to the most modern inquiry in them  
as Delphi and Dodona never gave. We might  
as well omit to study Nature because she is old.  
To read well, that is, to read true books in a true  
spirit, is a noble exercise, and one that will task  
the reader more than any exercise which the  
customs of the day esteem. It requires a train-  
ing such as the athletes underwent, the steady  
intention almost of the whole life to this object.  
Books must be read as deliberately and reserv-

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READING 133  
  
edly as they were written. It is not enough even  
to be able to speak the language of that nation  
by which they are written, for there is a memo-  
rable interval between the spoken and the written  
language, the language heard and the language  
read. The one is commonly transitory, a sound,  
@ tongue, a dialect merely, almost brutish, and  
we learn it unconsciously, like the brutes, of our  
mothers. The other is the maturity and experi-  
ence of that; if that is our mother tongue, this  
is our father tongue, a reserved and select ex-  
pression, too significant to be heard by the ear,  
which we must be born again in order to speak.  
‘The crowds of men who merely spoke the Greek  
and Latin tongues in the Middle Ages were not  
entitled by the accident of birth to read the works  
of genius written in those languages; for these  
were not written in that Greek or Latin which  
they knew, but in the select language of litera-  
ture. They had not learned the nobler dialects  
of Greece and Rome, but the very materials on  
which they were written were waste paper to  
them, and they prized instead a cheap contem-  
porary literature. But when the several nations  
of Europe had acquired distinct though rude  
written languages of their own, sufficient for the  
purposes of their rising literatures, then first learn-  
ing revived, and scholars were enabled to discern  
from that remoteness the treasures of antiquity.  
What the Roman and Grecian multitude could

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134 WALDEN  
  
not hear, after the lapse of ages a few scholars  
read, and a few scholars only are still reading it.  
  
However much we may admire the orator’s  
occasional bursts of eloquence, the noblest  
written words are commonly as far behind or  
above the fleeting spoken language as the fir-  
mament with its stars is behind the clouds.  
There are the stars, and they who can may  
read them. The astronomers forever comment  
on and observe them. They are not exhalations  
like our daily colloquies and vaporous breath.  
What is called eloquence in the forum is com-  
monly found to be rhetoric in the study. The  
orator yields to the inspiration of a transient  
occasion, and speaks to the mob before him,  
to those who can hear him; but the writer, whose  
more equable life is his occasion, and who would  
be distracted by the event and the crowd which  
inspire the orator, speaks to the intellect and  
heart of mankind, to all in any age who can un-  
derstand him.  
  
No wonder that Alexander carried the Iliad  
with him on his expeditions in a precious casket.  
A written word is the choicest of relics. It is  
something at once more intimate with us and  
more universal than any other work of art. It  
is the work of art nearest to life itself. It may  
be translated into every language, and not only  
be read but actually breathed from all human  
lips; — not be represented on canvas or in marble

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Where Thoreau’s cabin stood

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READING 135  
  
only, but be carved out of the breath of life itself.  
‘The symbol of an ancient man’s thought becomes  
amodern man’s speech. ‘Two thousand summers  
have imparted to the monuments of Grecian lit-  
erature, as to her marbles, only a maturer golden  
and autumnal tint, for they have carried their  
own serene and celestial atmosphere into all  
lands to protect them against the corrosion of  
time. Books are the treasured wealth of the  
world and the fit inheritance of generations and  
nations. Books, the oldest and the best, stand  
naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every  
cottage. They have no cause of their own to  
plead, but while they enlighten and sustain the  
reader his common sense will not refuse them.  
‘Their authors are a natural and irresistible  
aristocracy in every society, and, more than kings  
or emperors, exert an influence on mankind.  
‘When the illiterate and perhaps scornful trader  
has earned by enterprise and industry his cov-  
eted leisure and independence, and is admitted  
to the circles of wealth and fashion, he turns in-  
evitably at last to those still higher but yet inac-  
cessible circles of intellect and genius, and is sen-  
sible only of the imperfection of his culture and  
the vanity and insufficiency of all his riches, and  
further proves his good sense by the pains which  
he takes to secure for his children that intellectual  
culture whose want he so keenly feels; and thus  
it is that he becomes the founder of a family.

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136 WALDEN  
  
‘Those who have not learned to read the an-  
cient classics in the language in which they were  
written must have a very imperfect knowledge  
of the history of the human race; for it is re-  
markable that no transcript of them has ever  
been made into any modern tongue, unless our  
civilization itself may be regarded as such a  
transcript. Homer has never yet been printed  
in English, nor Zschylus, nor Virgil even, —  
works as refined, as solidly done, and as beauti-  
ful almost as the morning itself; for later writers,  
say what we will of their genius, have rarely, if  
ever, equalled the elaborate beauty and finish  
and the lifelong and heroic literary labors of the  
ancients. They only talk of forgetting them who  
never knew them. It will be soon enough to  
forget them when we have the learning and  
the genius which will enable us to attend to and  
appreciate them. That age will be rich indeed  
when those relics which we call Classics, and  
the still older and more than classic but even less  
known Scriptures of the nations, shall have still  
further accumulated, when the Vaticans shall be  
filled with Vedas and Zendavestas and Bibles,  
with Homers and Dantes and Shakspeares, and  
all the centuries to come shall have successively  
deposited their trophies in the forum of the  
world. By such a pile we may hope to scale  
heaven at last.  
  
The works of the great poets have never yet

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READING 137  
  
been read by mankind, for only great poets can  
read them. They have only been read as the  
multitude read the stars, at most astrologically,  
not astronomically. Most men have learned to  
read to serve a paltry convenience, as they have  
learned to cipher in order to keep accounts and  
not be cheated in trade; but of reading as a  
noble intellectual exercise they know little or  
nothing; yet this only is reading, in a high sense,  
not that which lulls us as a luxury and suffers the  
nobler faculties to sleep the while, but what we  
have to stand on tiptoe to read and devote our  
most alert and wakeful hours to.  
  
I think that having learned our letters we  
should read the best that is in literature, and not  
be forever repeating our ab abs, and words of  
one syllable, in the fourth or fifth classes, sitting  
on the lowest and foremost form all our lives.  
Most men are satisfied if they read or hear read,  
and perchance have been convicted by the wis-  
dom of one good book, the Bible, and for the rest  
of their lives vegetate and dissipate their faculties  
in what is called easy reading. There is a work  
in several volumes in our Circulating Library en-  
titled Little Reading, which I thought referred  
to a town of that name which I had not been to.  
There are those who, like cormorants and os-  
triches, can digest all sorts of this, even after the  
fullest dinner of meats and vegetables, for they  
suffer nothing to be wasted. If others are the

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188 WALDEN  
  
machines to provide this provender, they are the  
machines to read it. They read the nine thou-  
sandth tale about Zebulon and Sephronia, and  
how they loved as none had ever loved before,  
and neither did the course of their true love run  
smooth, — at any rate, how it did run and stum-  
ble, and get up again and go on! how some  
poor unfortunate got up on to a steeple, who had  
better never have gone up as far as the belfry;  
and then, having needlessly got him up there,  
the happy novelist rings the bell for all the world  
to come together and hear, O dear! how he  
did get down again! For my part, I think that  
they had better metamorphose all such aspiring  
heroes of universal noveldom into man weather-  
cocks, as they used to put heroes among the con-  
stellations, and let them swing round there till  
they are rusty, and not come down at all to bother  
honest men with their pranks. The next time  
the novelist rings the bell I will not stir though  
the meeting-house burn down. “The Skip of the  
Tip-Toe-Hop, a Romance of the Middle Ages,  
by the celebrated author of “Tittle-Tol-Tan,’ to  
appear in monthly parts; a great rush; don’t  
all come together.” All this they read with saucer  
eyes, and erect and primitive curiosity, and with  
unwearied gizzard, whose corrugations even yet  
need no sharpening, just as some little four-year-  
old bencher his two-cent gilt-covered edition of  
Cinderella, — without any improvement, that I

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READING 139  
  
can see, in the pronunciation, or accent, or em-  
phasis, or any more skill in extracting or insert-  
ing the moral. The result is dulness of sight, a  
stagnation of the vital circulations, and a general  
deliquium and sloughing off of all the intellectual  
faculties. This sort of gingerbread is baked  
daily and more sedulously than pure wheat or  
rye-and-Indian in almost every oven, and finds a  
surer market.  
  
The best books are not read even by those who  
are called good readers. What does our Concord  
culture amount to? There is in this town, with  
a very few exceptions, no taste for the best or  
for very good books even in English literature,  
whose words all can read and spell. Even the  
college-bred and so-called liberally educated men  
here and elsewhere have really little or no ac-  
quaintance with the English classics; and as for  
the recorded wisdom of mankind, the ancient  
classics and Bibles, which are accessible to all  
who will know of them, there are the feeblest  
efforts anywhere made to become acquainted  
with them. I know a woodchopper, of middle  
age, who takes a French paper, not for news as  
he says, for he is above that, but to “‘keep him-  
self in practice,” he being a Canadian by birth;  
and when I ask him what he considers the best  
thing he can do in this world, he says, besides  
this, to keep up and add to his English. ‘This is  
about as much as the college-bred generally do

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140 WALDEN  
  
or aspire to do, and they take an English paper  
for the purpose. One who has just come from  
reading perhaps one of the best English books  
will find how many with whom he can converse  
about it? Or suppose he comes from reading a  
Greek or Latin classic in the original, whose  
praises are familiar even to the so-called illit-  
erate; he will find nobody at all to speak to, but  
must keep silence about it. Indeed, there is  
hardly the professor in our colleges who, if he  
has mastered the difficulties of the language, has  
proportionately mastered the difficulties of the  
wit and poetry of a Greek poet, and has any  
sympathy to impart to the alert and heroic  
reader; and as for the sacred Scriptures, or  
Bibles of mankind, who in this town can tell me  
even their titles? Most men do not know that  
any nation but the Hebrews have had a scrip-  
ture. A man, any man, will go considerably out  
of his way to pick up a silver dollar; but here are  
golden words, which the wisest men of antiquity  
have uttered, and whose worth the wise of every  
succeeding age have assured us of; —and yet  
we learn to read only as far as Easy Reading, the  
primers and class-books, and when we leave  
school, the “Little Reading,” and story books,  
which are for boys and beginners; and our read-  
ing, our conversation and thinking, are all on a  
very low level, worthy only of pygmies and  
manikins.

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READING 141  
  
I aspire to be acquainted with wiser men than  
this our Concord soil has produced, whose  
names are hardly known here. Or shall I hear  
the name of Plato and never read his book? As  
if Plato were my townsman and I never saw  
him, — my next neighbor and I never heard  
him speak or attended to the wisdom of his  
words. But how actually is it? His Dialogues,  
which contain what was immortal in him, lie  
on the next shelf, and yet I never read them.  
We are under-bred and low-lived and illiterate;  
and in this respect I confess I do not make any  
very broad distinction between the illiterate-  
ness of my townsman who cannot read at all,  
and the illiterateness of him who has learned to  
read only what is for children and feeble intel-  
lects. We should be as good as the worthies of  
antiquity, but partly by first knowing how good  
they were. We are a race of tit-men, and soar  
but little higher in our intellectual flights than  
the columns of the daily paper.  
  
It is not all books that are as dull as their  
readers. There are probably words addressed  
to our condition exactly, which, if we could really  
hear and understand, would be more salutary  
than the morning or the spring to our lives, and  
possibly put a new aspect on the face of things  
for us. How many a man has dated a new era  
in his life from the reading of a book. The book  
exists for us perchance which will explain our

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142 WALDEN  
  
miracles and reveal new ones. The at present  
unutterable things we may find somewhere ut-  
tered. These same questions that disturb and  
puzzle and confound us have in their turn oc-  
curred to all the wise men; not one has been  
omitted; and each has answered them, accord-  
ing to his ability, by his words and his life.  
Moreover, with wisdom we shall learn liberality.  
‘The solitary hired man on a farm in the out-  
skirts of.Concord, who has had his second birth  
and peculiar religious experience, and is driven  
as he believes into silent gravity and exclusive-  
ness by his faith, may think it is not true; but  
Zoroaster, thousands of years ago, travelled the  
same road and had the same experience; but  
he, being wise, knew it to be universal, and  
treated his neighbors accordingly, and is even  
said to have invented and established worship  
among men. Let him humbly commune with  
Zoroaster then, and, through the liberalizing in-  
fluence of all the worthies, with Jesus Christ  
Himself, and let “our church” go by the board.  
  
We boast that we belong to the nineteenth  
century and are making the most rapid strides of  
any nation. But consider how little this vil-  
lage does for its own culture. I do not wish to  
flatter my townsmen, nor to be flattered by them,  
for that will not advance either of us. We need  
to be provoked, — goaded like oxen, as we are,  
into a trot. We have a comparatively decent

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READING 143  
  
system of common schools, schools for infants  
only; but excepting the half-starved Lyceum in  
the winter, and latterly the puny beginning of a  
library suggested by the state, no school for our-  
selves. We spend more on almost any article  
of bodily aliment or ailment than on our mental  
aliment. It is time that we had uncommon  
schools, that we did not leave off our education  
when we begin to be men and women. It is  
time that villages were universities, and their  
elder inhabitants the fellows of universities,  
with leisure—if they are indeed so well off —  
to pursue liberal studies the rest of their lives.  
Shall the world be confined to one Paris or one  
Oxford forever? Cannot students be boarded  
here and get a liberal education under the skies  
of Concord? Can we not hire some Abelard to  
lecture to us? Alas! what with foddering the  
cattle and tending the store, we are kept from  
school too long, and our education is sadly neg-  
lected. In this country, the village should in  
some respects take the place of the nobleman  
of Europe. It should be the patron of the fine  
arts. It is rich enough. It wants only the mag-  
nanimity and refinement. It can spend money  
enough on such things as farmers and traders  
value, but it is thought Utopian to propose  
spending money for things which more intelli-  
gent men know to be of far more worth. This  
town has spent seventeen thousand dollars on a

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144 WALDEN  
  
townhouse, thank fortune or politics, but prob-  
ably it will not spend so much on living wit, the  
true meat to put into that shell, in a hundred  
years. The one hundred and twenty-five dol-  
lars annually subscribed for a Lyceum in the  
winter is better spent than any other equal sum  
raised in the town. If we live in the nineteenth  
century, why should we not enjoy the advan-  
tages which the nineteenth century offers? Why  
should our life be in any respect provincial? If  
we will read newspapers, why not skip the gos-  
sip of Boston and take the best newspaper in the  
world at once? —not be sucking the pap of  
“neutral family” papers, or browsing “Olive  
Branches” here in New England. Let the re-  
ports of all the learned societies come to us, and  
we will see if they know anything. Why should  
we leave it to Harper & Brothers and Redding  
& Co. to select our reading? As the nobleman  
of cultivated taste surrounds himself with what-  
ever conduces to his culture, — genius —learn-  
ing — wit — books — paintings — statuary —  
music — philosophical instruments, and the like;  
so let the village do, — not stop short at a peda-  
gogue, a parson, a sexton, a parish library, and  
three selectmen, because our pilgrim forefathers  
got through a cold winter once on a bleak rock  
with these. To act collectively is according to  
the spirit of our institutions; and I am confident  
that, as our circumstances are more flourishing,

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READING 145  
  
our means are greater than the nobleman’s.  
New England can hire all the wise men in the  
world to come and teach her, and board them  
round the while, and not be provincial at all.  
That is the uncommon school we want. Instead  
of noblemen, let us have noble villages of men.  
If it is necessary, omit one bridge over the river,  
go round a little there, and throw one arch at  
least over the darker gulf of ignorance which  
surrounds us.

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Iv  
SOUNDS  
  
UT while we are confined to books, though  
the most select and classic, and read only  
particular written languages, which are  
  
themselves but dialects and provincial, we are  
in danger of forgetting the language which all  
things and events speak without metaphor,  
which alone is copious and standard. Much is  
published, but little printed. ‘The rays which  
stream through the shutter will be no longer re-  
membered when the shutter is wholly removed.  
No method nor discipline can supersede the  
necessity of being forever on the alert. What is  
a course of history, or philosophy, or poetry, no  
matter how well selected, or the best society, or  
the most admirable routine of life, compared  
with the discipline of looking always at what is  
to be seen? Will you be a reader, a student  
merely, or a seer? Read your fate, see what is  
before you, and walk on into futurity.  
  
I did not read books the first summer; I  
hoed beans. Nay, I often did better than this.  
‘There were times when I could not afford to  
sacrifice the bloom of the present moment to any

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SOUNDS 147  
  
work, whether of the head or hands. I love a  
broad margin to my life. Sometimes, in a sum-  
mer morning, having taken my accustomed bath,  
I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon,  
rapt in a revery, amidst the pines and hickories  
and sumachs, in undisturbed solitude and still-  
ness, while the birds sang around or flitted noise-  
less through the house, until by the sun falling  
in at my west window, or the noise of some  
traveller's wagon on the distant highway, I was  
reminded of the lapse of time. I grew in those  
seasons like corn in the night, and they were far  
better than any work of the hands would have  
been. They were not time subtracted from my  
life, but so much over and above my usual al-  
lowance. I realized what the Orientals mean  
by contemplation and the forsaking of works.  
For the most part, I minded not how the hours  
went. The day advanced as if to light some  
work of mine; it was morning, and lo, now it  
is evening, and nothing memorable is accom-  
plished. Instead of singing like the birds, I  
silently smiled at my incessant good fortune.  
As the sparrow had its trill, sitting on the hick-  
ory before my door, so had I my chuckle or sup-  
pressed warble which he might hear out of my  
nest. My days were not days of the week, bear-  
ing the stamp of any heathen deity, nor were  
they minced into hours and fretted by the tick-  
ing of a clock; for I lived like the Puri Indians,

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148 WALDEN  
  
of whom it is said that “for yesterday, to-day,  
and to-morrow they have only one word, and  
they express the variety of meaning by pointing  
backward for yesterday, forward for to-morrow,  
and overhead for the passing day.” This was  
sheer idleness to my fellow-townsmen, no doubt;  
but if the birds and flowers had tried me by their  
standard, I should not have been found wanting.  
A man must find his occasions in himself, it is  
true. The natural day is very calm, and will  
hardly reprove his indolence.  
  
T had this advantage, at least, in my mode of  
life, over those who were obliged to look abroad  
for amusement, to society and the theatre, that  
my life itself was become my amusement and  
never ceased to be novel. It was a drama of  
many scenes and without an end. If we were  
always indeed getting our living, and regulating  
our lives according to the last and best mode we  
had learned, we should never be troubled with  
ennui. Follow your genius closely enough, and  
it will not fail to show you a fresh prospect every  
hour. Housework was a pleasant pastime.  
When my floor was dirty, I rose early, and,  
setting ail my furniture out of doors on the  
grass, bed and bedstead making but one budget,  
dashed water on the floor, and sprinkled white  
sand from the pond on it, and then with a broom  
scrubbed it clean and white; and by the time  
the villagers had broken their fast the morning

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SOUNDS 149  
  
sun had dried my house sufficiently to allow me  
to move in again, and my meditations were al-  
most uninterrupted. It was pleasant to see my  
whole household effects out on the grass, mak-  
ing a little pile like a gypsy’s pack, and my three-  
legged table, from which I did not remove the  
books and pen and ink, standing amid the pines  
and hickories. They seemed glad to get out  
themselves, and as if unwilling to be brought in.  
I was sometimes tempted to stretch an awning  
over them and take my seat there. It was worth  
the while to see the sun shine on these things,  
and hear the free wind blow on them; so much  
more interesting most familiar objects look out  
doors than in the house. A bird sits on the next  
bough, life-everlasting grows under the table,  
and blackberry vines run round its legs; pine  
cones, chestnut burs, and strawberry leaves are  
strewn about. It looked as if this was the way  
these forms came to be transferred to our fur-  
niture, to tables, chairs, and bedstead, — be-  
cause they once stood in their midst.  
  
My house was on the side of a hill, immedi-  
ately on the edge of the larger wood, in the  
midst of a young forest of pitch pines and hick-  
ories, and half a dozen rods from the pond, to  
which a narrow footpath led down the hill. In  
my front yard grew the strawberry, blackberry,  
and life-everlasting, johnswort and goldenrod,  
shrub-oaks and sand-cherry, blueberry and

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150 WALDEN  
  
ground-nut. Near the end of May, the sand-  
cherry (cerasu pumila) adorned the sides of the  
path with its delicate fowers arranged in um-  
bels cylindrically about its short stems, which  
last, in the fall, weighed down with good-sized  
and handsome cherries, fell over in wreaths like  
rays on every side. I tasted them out of compli-  
ment to Nature, though they were scarcely pala-  
table. The sumach (rhus glabra) grew luxuri-  
antly about the house, pushing up through the  
embankment which I had made, and growing  
five or six feet the first season. Its broad pinnate  
tropical leaf was pleasant though strange to look  
on. The large buds, suddenly pushing out late  
in the spring from dry sticks which had seemed  
to be dead, developed themselves as by magic  
into graceful green and tender boughs, an inch  
in diameter; and sometimes, as I sat at my win-  
dow, so heedlessly did they grow and tax their  
weak joints, I heard a fresh and tender bough  
suddenly fall like » fan to the ground, when  
there was not a breath of air stirring, broken off  
by its own weight. In August, the large masses  
of berries, which, when in flower, had attracted  
many wild bees, gradually assumed their bright  
velvety crimson hue, and by their weight again  
bent down and broke the tender limbs.  
  
As I sit at my window this summer afternoon,  
hawks are circling about my clearing; the tan-  
tivy of wild pigeons, flying by twos and threes

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SOUNDS 151-  
  
athwart my view, or perching restless on the  
white-pine boughs behind my house, gives a  
voice to the air; a fishhawk dimples the glassy  
surface of the pond and brings up a fish; a  
mink steals out of the marsh before my door and  
seizes a frog by the shore; the sedge is bending  
under the weight of the reed-birds flitting hither  
and thither; and for the last half hour I have  
heard the rattle of railroad cars, now dying away  
and then reviving like the beat of a partridge,  
conveying travellers from Boston to the country.  
For I did not live so out of the world as that boy  
who, as I hear, was put out to a farmer in the  
east part of the town, but erelong ran away and  
came home again, quite down at the heel and  
homesick. He had never seen such a dull and  
out-of-the-way place; the folks were all gone  
off; why, you could n’t even hear the whistle!  
I doubt if there is such a place in Massachusetts  
now: —  
  
“In truth, our village has become a butt  
  
For one of those fleet railroad shafts, and o'er  
‘Our peaceful plain its soothing sound is — Concord.”  
  
The Fitchburg Railroad touches the pond  
about a hundred rods south of where I dwell. I  
usually go to the village along its causeway, and  
am, as it were, related to society by this link.  
‘The men on the freight trains, who go over the  
whole length of the road, bow to me as to an old  
acquaintance, they pass me so often, and ap-

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152 WALDEN  
  
parently they take me for an employee; and so  
I am. I too would fain be a track-repairer  
somewhere in the orbit of the earth.  
  
The whistle of the locomotive penetrates my  
woods summer and winter, sounding like the  
scream of a hawk sailing over some farmer's  
yard, informing me that many restless city mer-  
chants are arriving within the circle of the town,  
or adventurous country traders from the other  
side. As they come under one horizon, they  
shout their warning to get off the track to the  
other, heard sometimes through the circles of  
two towns. Here come your groceries, country ;  
your rations, countrymen! Nor is there any  
mart so independent on his farm that he can say  
them nay. And here’s your pay for them!  
screams the countryman’s whistle; timber like  
long battering rams going twenty miles an hour  
against the city’s walls, and chairs enough to  
seat all the weary and heavy laden that dwell  
within them. With such huge and lumbering  
civility the country hands a chair to the city.  
Alll the Indian huckleberry hills are stripped, all  
the cranberry meadows are raked into the city.  
Up comes the cotton, down goes the woven cloth;  
up comes the silk, down goes the woollen; up  
come the books, but down goes the wit that writes  
them.  
  
When I meet the engine with its train of cars  
moving off with planetary motion, — or, rather,

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SOUNDS 158  
  
like a comet, for the beholder knows not if with  
that velocity and with that direction it will ever  
revisit this system, since its orbit does not look  
like a returning curve, — with its steam cloud  
like a banner streaming behind in golden and  
silver wreaths, like many a downy cloud which  
T have seen, high in the heavens, unfolding its  
masses to the light, — as if this travelling demi-  
god, this cloud-compeller, would erelong take  
the sunset sky for the livery of his train; when  
I hear the iron horse make the hills echo with  
his snort like thunder, shaking the earth with  
his feet, and breathing fire and smoke from his  
nostrils (what kind of winged horse or fiery  
dragon they will put into the new Mythology  
I don’t know), it seems as if the earth had got a  
race now worthy to inhabit it. If all were as it  
seems, and men made the elements their servants  
for noble ends! If the cloud that hangs over  
the engine were the perspiration of heroic deeds,  
or as beneficent as that which floats over the  
farmer’s fields, then the elements and Nature  
herself would cheerfully accompany men on  
their errands and be their escort.  
  
I watch the passage of the morning cars with  
the same feeling that I do the rising of the sun,  
which is hardly more regular. Their train of  
clouds stretching far behind and rising higher  
and higher, going to heaven while the cars are  
going to Boston, conceals the sun for a minute

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154 WALDEN  
  
and casts my distant field into the shade, a  
celestial train beside which the petty train of  
cars which hugs the earth is but the barb of the  
spear. The stabler of the iron horse was up  
early this winter morning by the light of the  
stars amid the mountains, to fodder and harness  
his steed. Fire, too, was awakened thus early  
to put the vital heat in him and get him off. If  
the enterprise were as innocent as it is early!  
If the snow lies deep, they strap on his snow-  
shoes, and with the giant plough plough a fur-  
row from the mountains to the seaboard, in  
which the cars, like a following drill-barrow,  
sprinkle all the restless men and floating mer-  
chandise in the country for seed. All day the  
fire-steed flies over the country, stopping only  
that his master may rest, and I am awakened  
by his tramp and defiant snort at midnight,  
when in some remote glen in the woods he fronts  
the elements incased in ice and snow; and he  
will reach his stall only with the morning star,  
to start once more on his travels without rest or  
slumber. Or perchance, at evening, I hear him  
in his stable blowing off the superfluous energy  
of the day, that he may calm his nerves and  
cool his liver and brain for a few hours of iron  
slumber. If the enterprise were as heroic and  
commanding as it is protracted and unwearied!  
  
Far through unfrequented woods on the con-  
fines of towns, where once only the hunter pene-

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SOUNDS 155  
  
trated by day, in the darkest night dart these  
bright saloons without the knowledge of their  
inhabitants; this moment stopping at some bril-  
liant station-house in town or city, where a  
social crowd is gathered, the next in the Dismal  
Swamp, scaring the owl and fox. The startings  
and arrivals of the cars are now the epochs in the  
village day. They go and come with such regu-  
larity and precision, and their whistle can be  
heard so far, that the farmers set their clocks by  
them, and thus one well-conducted institution  
regulates a whole country. Have not men im-  
proved somewhat in punctuality since the rail-  
road was invented? Do they not talk and think  
faster in the depot than they did in the stage-  
office? There is something electrifying in the  
atmosphere of the former place. I have been  
astonished at the miracles it has wrought; that  
some of my neighbors, who, I should have  
prophesied, once for all, would never get to  
Boston by so prompt a conveyance, are on hand  
when the bell rings. To do things “railroad  
fashion” is now the by-word; and it is worth  
the while to be warned so often and so sincerely  
by any power to get off its track. There is no  
stopping to read the riot act, no firing over the  
heads of the mob, in this case. We have con-  
structed a fate, an Atropos, that never turns  
aside. (Let that be the name of your engine.)  
Men are advertised that at a certain hour and

Page-8101

156 WALDEN  
  
minute these bolts will be shot toward par-  
ticular points of the compass; yet it interferes  
with no man’s business, and the children go to  
school on the other track. We live the steadier  
for it. We are all educated thus to be sons of  
Tell. The air is full of invisible bolts. Every  
path but your own is the path of fate. Keep  
on your own track, then.  
  
What recommends commerce to me is its  
enterprise and bravery. It does not clasp its  
hands and pray to Jupiter. I see these men  
every day go about their business with more or  
less courage and content, doing more even than  
they suspect, and perchance better employed  
than they could have consciously devised. I  
am less affected by their heroism who stood up  
for half an hour in the front line at Buena  
Vista, than by the steady and cheerful valor of  
the men who inhabit the snow-plough for their  
winter quarters; who have not merely the three  
o’clock in the morning courage, which Bona-  
parte thought was the rarest, but whose courage  
does not go to rest so early, who go to sleep only  
when the storm sleeps or the sinews of their iron  
steed are frozen. On this morning of the Great  
Snow, perchance, which is still raging and chill-  
ing men’s blood, I hear the mufifed tone of their  
engine bell from out the fog bank of their chilled  
breath, which announces that the cars are coming,  
without long delay, notwithstanding the veto

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SOUNDS 187  
  
of a New England northeast snow storm, and  
I behold the ploughmen covered with snow and  
rime, their heads peering above the mould-  
board which is turning down other than daisies  
and the nests of field-mice, like boulders of the  
Sierra Nevada, that occupy an outside place in  
the universe.  
  
Commerce is unexpectedly confident and  
serene, alert, adventurous, and unwearied. It  
is very natural in its methods withal, far more  
so than many fantastic enterprises and senti-  
mental experiments, and hence its singular  
success. I am refreshed and expanded when  
the freight train rattles past me, and I smell  
the stores which go dispensing their odors all  
the way from Long Wharf to Lake Champlain,  
reminding me of foreign parts, of coral reefs,  
and Indian oceans, and tropical climes, and the  
extent of the globe. I feel more like a citizen of  
the world at the sight of the palm-leaf which  
will cover so many flaxen New England heads  
the next summer, the Manilla hemp and cocoa-  
nut husks, the old junk, gunny bags, scrap iron,  
and rusty nails. This carload of torn sails is  
more legible and interesting now than if they  
should be wrought into paper and printed books.  
‘Who can write so graphically the history of the  
storms they have weathered as these rents have  
done? They are proof-sheets which need no  
correction. Here goes lumber from the Maine

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158 WALDEN  
  
woods, which did not go out to sea in the last  
freshet, risen four dollars on the thousand be-  
cause of what did go out or was split up: pine,  
spruce, cedar, — first, second, third, and fourth  
qualities, so lately all of one quality, to wave  
over the bear, and moose, and caribou. Next  
rolls Thomaston lime, a prime lot, which will  
get far among the hills before it gets slacked.  
‘These rags in bales, of all hues and qualities,  
the lowest condition to which cotton and linen  
descend, the final result of dress, — of patterns  
which are now no longer cried up, unless it be  
in Milwaukie, as those splendid articles, Eng-  
lish, French, or American prints, ginghams,  
muslins, &., gathered from all quarters both  
of fashion and poverty, going to become paper  
of one color or a few shades only, on which for-  
sooth will be written tales of real life, high and  
low, and founded on fact! This closed car  
smells of salt fish, the strong New England and  
commercial scent, reminding me of the Grand  
Banks and the fisheries. Who has not seen a  
salt fish, thoroughly cured for this world, so  
that nothing can spoil it, and putting the per-  
severance of the saints to the blush? with which  
you may sweep or pave the streets, and split  
your kindlings, and the teamster shelter himself  
and his lading against sun, wind, and rain be-  
hind it, — and the trader, as a Concord trader  
once did, hang it up by his door for a sign when

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SOUNDS 159  
  
he commences business, until at last his oldest  
customer cannot tell surely whether it be animal,  
vegetable, or mineral, and yet it shall be as pure  
as a snowflake, and if it be put into a pot and  
boiled, will come out an excellent dun fish for a  
Saturday's dinner. Next Spanish hides, with the  
tails still preserving their twist and the angle  
of elevation they had when the oxen that wore  
them were careering over the pampas of the  
Spanish main, —a type of all obstinacy, and  
evineing how almost hopeless and incurable  
are all constitutional vices. I confess that,  
practically speaking, when I have learned a  
man’s real disposition, I have no hopes of  
changing it for the better or worse in this state  
of existence. As the Orientals say, “A cur’s  
tail may be warmed, and pressed, and bound  
round with ligatures, and after a twelve years’  
labor bestowed upon it, still it will retain its  
natural form.” The only effectual cure for such  
inveteracies as these tails exhibit is to make  
glue of them, which I believe is what is usually  
done with them, and then they will stay put and  
stick. Here is a hogshead of molasses or of  
brandy directed to John Smith, Cuttingsville,  
Vermont, some trader among the Green Moun-  
tains, who imports for the farmers near his clear-  
ing, and now perchance stands over his bulk-  
head and thinks of the last arrivals on the coast,  
how they may affect the price for him, telling

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160 WALDEN  
  
his customers this moment, as he has told them  
twenty times before this morning, that he ex-  
pects some by the next train of prime quality.  
It is advertised in the Cuttingsville Times.  
While these things go up other things come  
down. Warned by the whizzing sound, I look  
up from my book and see some tall pine, hewn  
on far northern hills, which has winged its way  
over the Green Mountains and the Connecticut,  
shot like an arrow through the township within  
ten minutes, and scarce another eye beholds  
  
going  
  
   
  
“to be the mast  
Of some great ammiral.”  
And hark! here comes the cattle-train bearing  
the cattle of a thousand hills, sheepcots, stables,  
and cow-yards in the air, drovers with their  
sticks, and shepherd boys in the midst of their  
flocks, all but the mountain pastures, whirled  
along like leaves blown from the mountains by  
the September gales. The air is filled with the  
bleating of calves and sheep, and the hustling of  
oxen, as if a pastoral valley were going by. When  
the old bell-wether at the head rattles his bell,  
the mountains do indeed skip like rams and the  
little hills like lambs. A car-load of drovers, too,  
in the midst, on a level with their droves now,  
their vocation gone, but still clinging to their  
useless sticks as their badge of office. But their  
dogs, where are they? It is a stampede to them;

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SOUNDS 161  
  
they are quite thrown out; they have lost the  
scent. Methinks I hear them barking behind  
the Peterboro’ Hills, or panting up the western  
slope of the Green Mountains. They will not  
be in at the death. Their vocation, too, is gone.  
‘Their fidelity and sagacity are below par now.  
They will slink back to their kennels in dis-  
grace, or perchance run wild and strike a league  
with the wolf and the fox. So is your pastoral  
life whirled past and away. But the bell rings,  
and I must get off the track and let the cars go  
by:—  
  
‘What's the railroad to me?  
  
T never go to see  
  
Where it ends.  
  
It fills a few hollows,  
  
And makes banks for the swallows,  
  
Tt sets the sand s-blowing,  
  
‘And the blackberries a-growing,  
but I cross it like a cart-path in the woods. I  
will not have my eyes put out and my ears  
spoiled by its smoke and steam and hissing.  
  
Now that the cars are gone by and all the  
restless world with them, and the fishes in the  
pond no longer feel their rumbling, I am more  
alone than ever. For the rest of the long after-  
noon, perhaps, my meditations are interrupted  
only by the faint rattle of a carriage or team  
along the distant highway.  
  
Sometimes, on Sundays, I heard the bells, the  
  
6

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162 WALDEN  
  
Lincoln, Acton, Bedford, or Concord bell, when  
the wind was favorable, a faint, sweet, and, as  
it were, natural melody, worth importing into  
the wilderness. At a sufficient distance over  
the woods this sound acquires a certain vibratory  
hum, as if the pine needles in the horizon were  
the strings of a harp which it swept. All sound  
heard at the greatest possible distance produces  
one and the same effect, a vibration of the uni-  
versal lyre, just as the intervening atmosphere  
makes a distant ridge of earth interesting to  
our eyes by the azure tint it imparts to it. There  
came to me in this case a melody which the air  
had strained, and which had conversed with  
every leaf and needle of the wood, that portion  
of the sound which the elements had taken up  
and modulated and echoed from vale to vale.  
The echo is, to some extent, an original sound,  
and therein is the magic and charm of it. It is  
not merely a repetition of what was worth re-  
peating in the bell, but partly the voice of the  
wood; the same trivial words and notes sung by  
a wood-nymph.  
  
At evening, the distant lowing of some cow  
in the horizon beyond the woods sounded sweet  
and melodious, and at first I would mistake it  
for the voices of certain minstrels by whom I  
‘was sometimes serenaded, who might be stray-  
ing over hill and dale; but soon I was not un-  
pleasantly disappointed when it was prolonged

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SOUNDS 163  
  
into the cheap and natural music of the cow. I  
do not mean to be satirical, but to express my  
appreciation of those youths’ singing, when I  
state that I perceived clearly that it was akin to  
the music of the cow, and they were at length one  
articulation of Nature.  
  
Regularly at half-past seven, in one part of  
the summer, after the evening train had gone  
by, the whippoorwills chanted their vespers for  
half an hour, sitting on a stump by my door,  
or upon the ridge pole of the house. They would  
begin to sing almost with as much precision as  
a clock, within five minutes of a particular time,  
referred to the setting of the sun, every evening.  
I had a rare opportunity to become acquainted  
with their habits. Sometimes I heard four or  
five at once in different parts of the wood, by  
accident one a bar behind another, and so near  
me that I distinguished not only the cluck after  
each note, but often that singular buzzing sound  
like a fly in a spider's web, only proportionally  
louder. Sometimes one would circle round and  
round me in the woods a few feet distant as if  
tethered by a string, when probably I was near  
its eggs. They sang at intervals throughout  
the night, and were again as musical as ever  
just before and about dawn.  
  
When other birds are still the screech owls  
take up the strain, like mourning women their  
ancient u-lu-lu. Their dismal scream is truly

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164 WALDEN  
  
Ben Jonsonian. Wise midnight hags! It is no  
honest and blunt tu-whit tu-who of the poets,  
but, without jesting, a most solemn graveyard  
ditty, the mutual consolations of suicide lovers  
remembering the pangs and delights of supernal  
love in the infernal groves. Yet I love to hear  
their wailing, their doleful responses, trilled  
along the woodside; reminding me sometimes  
of music and singing birds; as if it were the dark  
and tearful side of music, the regrets and sighs  
that would fain be sung. They are the spirits,  
the low spirits and melancholy forebodings, of  
fallen souls that once in human shape night-  
walked the earth and did the deeds of darkness,  
now expiating their sins with their wailing  
hymns or threnodies in the scenery of their  
transgressions. They give me a new sense of  
the variety and capacity of that nature which is  
our common dwelling. Oh-o-0-o-0 that I never  
had been bor-r-r-n! sighs one on this side of the  
pond, and circles with the restlessness of de-  
spair to some new perch on the gray oaks. ‘Then  
— that I never had been bor-r-r-r-n! echoes  
another on the farther side with tremulous  
sincerity, and — bor-r-r-r-n! comes faintly from  
far in the Lincoln woods.  
  
I was also serenaded by a hooting owl. Near  
at hand you could fancy it the most melancholy  
‘sound in Nature, as if she meant by this to stereo-  
type and make permanent in her choir the dying

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SOUNDS 165  
  
moans of a human being,—some poor weak  
relic of mortality who has left hope behind, and  
howls like an animal, yet with human sobs, on  
entering the dark valley, made more awful by a  
certain gurgling melodiousness, —I find my-  
self beginning with the letters gl when I try to  
imitate it, — expressive of a mind which has  
reached the gelatinous mildewy stage in the mor-  
tification of all healthy and courageous thought.  
It reminded me of ghouls and idiots and insane  
howlings. But now one answers from far woods in  
astrain made really melodious by distance, —Hoo  
hoo hoo hoorer hoo; and indeed for the most part  
it suggested only pleasing associations, whether  
heard by day or night, summer or winter.  
  
I rejoice that there are owls. Let them do the  
idiotic and maniacal hooting for men. It is a  
sound admirably suited to swamps and twilight  
woods which no day illustrates, suggesting a  
vast and undeveloped nature which men have not  
recognized. They represent the stark twilight  
and unsatisfied thoughts which all have. All day  
the sun has shone on the surface of some savage  
swamp, where the single spruce stands hung with  
usnea lichens, and small hawks circulate above,  
and the chickadee lisps amid the evergreens, and  
the partridge and rabbit skulk beneath; but now  
a more. dismal and fitting day dawns, and a  
different race of creatures awakes to express the  
meaning of Nature there.

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166 WALDEN  
  
Late in the evening I heard the distant rum-  
bling of wagons over bridges, —a sound heard  
farther than almost any other at night, — the  
baying of dogs, and sometimes again the lowing  
of some disconsolate cow in a distant barn-yard.  
In the meanwhile all the shore rang with the  
trump of bullfrogs, the sturdy spirits of ancient  
wine-bibbers and wassailers, still unrepentant,  
trying to sing a catch in their Stygian lake, — if  
the Walden nymphs will pardon the comparison,  
for though there are almost no weeds, there are  
frogs there, — who would fain keep up the hila-  
rious rules of their old festal tables, though their  
voices have waxed hoarse and solemnly grave,  
mocking at mirth, and the wine has lost its flavor,  
and become only liquor to distend their paunches,  
and sweet intoxication never comes to drown the  
memory of the past, but mere saturation and  
waterloggedness and distention. The most alder-  
manic, with his chin upon a heart-leaf, which  
serves for a napkin to his drooling chaps, under  
this northern shore quaffs a deep draught of the  
once scorned water, and passes round the cup  
with the ejaculation tr-r-r-oonk, tr-r-r-oonk, tr-r-r-  
oonk! and straightway comes over the water  
from some distant cove the same password re-  
peated, where the next in seniority and girth has  
gulped down to his mark; and when this ob-  
servance has made the circuit of the shores, then  
ejaculates the master of ceremonies, with satis-

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SOUNDS 167  
  
faction, tr-r-r-oonk! and each in his turn re-  
peats the same down to the least distended, leak-  
iest, and flabbiest-paunched, that there be no  
mistake; and then the bowl goes round again  
and again, until the sun disperses the morning  
mist, and only the patriarch is not under the  
pond, but vainly bellowing troonk from time to  
time, and pausing for a reply.  
  
I am not sure that I ever heard the sound of  
cock-crowing from my clearing, and I thought  
that it might be worth the while to keep a cockerel  
for his music merely, as a singing bird. The note  
of this once wild Indian pheasant is certainly the  
most remarkable of any bird’s, and if they could  
be naturalized without being domesticated, it  
would soon become the most famous sound in  
our woods, surpassing the clangor of the goose  
and the hooting of the owl; and then imagine  
the cackling of the hens to fill the pauses when  
their lords’ clarions rested! No wonder that  
man added this bird to his tame stock, — to say  
nothing of the eggs and drumsticks. To walk in  
a winter morning in a wood where these  
abounded, their native woods, and hear the wild  
cockerels crow on the trees, clear and shrill for  
miles over the resounding earth, drowning the  
feebler notes of other birds, — think of it! It  
would put nations on the alert. Who would not  
be early to rise, and rise earlier and earlier every  
successive day of his life, till he became unspeak-

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168 WALDEN  
  
ably healthy, wealthy, and wise? This foreign  
bird’s note is celebrated by the poets of all coun-  
tries along with the notes of their native song-  
sters. All climates agree with brave. Chanticleer.  
He is more indigenous even than the natives.  
His health is ever good, his lungs are sound, his  
spirits never flag. Even the sailor on the Atlantic  
and Pacific is awakened by his voice; but its  
shrill sound never roused me from my slumbers.  
I kept neither dog, cat, cow, pig, nor hens, so  
that you would have said there was a deficiency  
of domestic sounds; neither the churn, nor the  
spinning-wheel, nor even the singing of the kettle,  
nor the hissing of the urn, nor children crying,  
to comfort one. An old-fashioned man would  
have lost his senses or died of ennui before this.  
Not even rats in the wall, for they were starved  
out, or rather were never baited in, —only  
squirrels on the roof and under the floor, a whip-  
poorwill on the ridge pole, a blue-jay screaming  
beneath the window, a hare or woodchuck under  
the house, a screech-owl or a cat-owl behind it, a  
flock of wild geese or a laughing loon on the pond,  
and a fox to bark in the night. Not even a lark  
or an oriole, those mild plantation birds, ever  
visited my clearing. No cockerels to crow nor  
hens to cackle in the yard. No yard! but un-  
fenced Nature reaching up to your very sills.  
A young forest growing up under your windows,  
and wild sumachs and blackberry vines breaking

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SOUNDS 169  
  
through into your cellar; sturdy pitch-pines  
rubbing and creaking against the shingles for  
want of room, their roots reaching quite under  
the house. Instead of a scuttle or a blind blown  
off in the gale, — a pine tree snapped off or torn  
up by the roots behind your house for fuel. In-  
stead of no path to the front-yard gate in the  
Great Snow, — no gate — no front-yard, — and  
no path to the civilized world!

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Vv  
SOLITUDE  
  
HIS is a delicious evening, when the whole  
body is one sense, and imbibes delight  
through every pore. I go and come with  
  
a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. As  
I walk along the stony shore of the pond in my  
shirt sleeves, though it is cool as well as cloudy  
and windy, and I see nothing special to attract  
me, all the elements are unusually congenial to  
me. The bullfrogs trump to usher in the night,  
and the note of the whippoorwill is borne on the  
rippling wind from over the water. Sympathy  
with the fluttering alder and poplar leaves almost  
takes away my breath; yet, like the lake, my  
serenity is rippled but not ruffled. ‘These small  
waves raised by the evening wind are as remote  
from storm as the smooth reflecting surface.  
Though it is now dark, the wind still blows and  
roars in the wood, the waves still dash, and some  
creatures lull the rest with their notes. The re-  
pose is never complete. ‘The wildest animals do  
not repose, but seek their prey now; the fox, and  
skunk, and rabbit, now roam the fields and  
woods without fear. They are Nature's watch-

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SOLITUDE m7  
  
men, — links which connect the days of animated  
life.  
  
When I return to my house I find that visitors  
have been there and left their cards, either a  
bunch of flowers, or a wreath of evergreen, or a  
name in pencil on a yellow walnut leaf or a chip.  
They who come rarely to the woods take some  
little piece of the forest into their hands to play  
with by the way, which they leave, either inten-  
tionally or accidentally. One has peeled a wil-  
low wand, woven it into a ring, and dropped it  
on my table. I could always tell if visitors had  
called in my absence, either by the bended twigs  
or grass, or the print of their shoes, and generally  
of what sex or age or quality they were by some  
slight trace left, as a flower dropped, or a bunch  
of grass plucked and thrown away, even as far  
off as the railroad, half a mile distant, or by the  
lingering odor of a cigar or pipe. Nay, I was  
frequently notified of the passage of a traveller  
along the highway sixty rods off by the scent of  
his pipe.  
  
There is commonly sufficient space about us.  
Our horizon is never quite at our elbows. The  
thick wood is not just at our door, nor the pond,  
but somewhat is always clearing, familiar and  
worn by us, appropriated and fenced in some  
way, and reclaimed from Nature. For what rea-  
son have I this vast range and circuit, some  
square miles of unfrequented forest, for my

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172 WALDEN  
  
privacy, abandoned to me by men? My nearest  
neighbor is a mile distant, and no house is visible  
from any place but the hill tops within half a  
mile of my own. I have my horizon bounded by  
woods all to myself; a distant view of the rail-  
road where it touches the pond on the one hand,  
and of the fence which skirts the woodland road  
on the other. But for the most part it is as soli-  
tary where I live as on the prairies. It is as much  
Asia or Africa as New England. I have, asit  
were, my own sun and moon and stars, and a  
little world all to myself. At night there was  
never a traveller passed my house, or knocked at  
my door, more than if I were the first or last  
man; unless it were in the spring, when at long  
intervals some came from the village to fish for  
pouts,— they plainly fished much more in the  
Walden Pond of their own natures, and baited  
their hooks with darkness, — but they soon re-  
treated, usually with light baskets, and left “the  
world to darkness and to me,” and the black  
kernel of the night was never profaned by any  
human neighborhood. I believe that men are  
generally still a little afraid of the dark, though  
the witches are all hung, and Christianity and  
candles have been introduced.  
  
Yet I experienced sometimes that the most  
‘sweet and tender, the most innocent and encour-  
aging society may be found in any natural ob-  
ject, even for the poor misanthrope and most

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SOLITUDE 173  
  
melancholy man. There can be no very black  
melancholy to him who lives in the midst of  
Nature and has his senses still. There was never  
yet such @ storm but it was Holian music to a  
healthy and innocent ear. Nothing can rightly  
compel a simple and brave man to a vulgar sad-  
ness. While I enjoy the friendship of the seasons  
I trust that nothing can make life a burden to  
me. The gentle rain which waters my beans and  
keeps me in the house to-day is not drear and  
melancholy, but good for me, too. Though it  
prevents my hoeing them, it is of far more worth  
than my hoeing. If it should continue so long as  
to cause the seeds to rot in the ground and destroy  
the potatoes in the low lands, it would still be good  
for the grass on the uplands, and, being good for  
the grass, it would be good for me. Sometimes,  
when I compare myself with other men, it seems  
as if I were more favored by the gods than they,  
beyond any deserts that I am conscious of; as if  
Thad a warrant and surety at their hands which  
my fellows have not, and were especially guided  
and guarded. I do not flatter myself, but if it be  
possible they flatter me. I have never felt lone-  
some, or in the least oppressed by a sense of soli-  
tude, but once, and that was a few weeks after I  
came to the woods, when, for an hour, I doubted  
if the near neighborhood of man was not essen-  
tial to a serene and healthy life. To be alone was  
something unpleasant. But I was at the same

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174 WALDEN  
  
time conscious of a slight insanity in my mood,  
and seemed to foresee my recovery. In the midst  
of a gentle rain while these thoughts prevailed, I  
was suddenly sensible of such sweet and benefi-  
cent society in Nature, in the very pattering of  
the drops, and in every sound and sight around  
my house, an infinite and unaccountable friendli-  
ness all at once like an atmosphere sustaining me,  
as made the fancied advantages of human neigh-  
borhood insignificant, and I have never thought  
of them since. Every little pine needle expanded  
and swelled with sympathy and befriended me.  
I was so distinctly made aware of the presence of  
something kindred to me, even in scenes which  
we are accustomed to call wild and dreary, and  
also that the nearest of blood to me and humanest  
‘was not a person nor a villager, that I thought no  
place could ever be strange to me again. —  
  
“Mourning untimely consumes the aad;  
Few are their days in the land of the living,  
Beautiful daughter of Tosca.”  
  
Some of my pleasantest hours were during the  
long rain storms in the spring or fall, which con-  
fined me to the house for the afternoon as well as  
the forenoon, soothed by their ceaseless roar and  
pelting; when an early twilight ushered in a  
long evening in which many thoughts had time  
to take root and unfold themselves. In those  
driving northeast rains which tried the village

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SOLITUDE 175  
  
houses so, when the maids stood ready with mop  
and pail in front entries to keep the deluge out,  
I sat behind my door in my little house, which  
was all entry, and thoroughly enjoyed its protec-  
tion. In one heavy thunder shower the lightning  
struck a large pitch-pine across the pond, making  
a very conspicuous and perfectly regular spiral  
groove from top to bottom, an inch or more deep,  
and four or five inches wide, as you would groove  
a walking-stick. I passed it again the other day,  
and was struck with awe on looking up and be-  
holding that mark, now more distinct than ever,  
where a terrific and resistless bolt came down  
out of the harmless sky eight years ago. Men  
frequently say to me, “I should think you would  
feel Ionesome down there, and want to be nearer  
to folks, rainy and snowy days and nights espe-  
cially.” I am tempted to reply to such, — This  
whole earth which we inhabit is but a point in  
space. How far apart, think you, dwell the two  
most distant inhabitants of yonder star, the  
breadth of whose disk cannot be appreciated by  
- our instruments? Why should I feel lonely? is  
not our planet in the Milky Way? This which  
you put seems to me not to be the most important  
question. What sort of space is that which sepa-  
rates a man from his fellows and makes him soli-  
tary? I have found that no exertion of the legs  
can bring two minds much nearer to one another.  
What do we want most to dwell-near to? Not to

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176 ‘WALDEN  
  
many men surely, the depot, the post-office, the  
bar-room, the meeting-house, the school-house,  
the grocery, Beacon Hill, or the Five Points,  
where men most congregate, but to the perennial  
source of our life, whence in all our experience  
we have found that to issue, as the willow stands  
near the water and sends out its roots in that  
direction. This will vary with different natures,  
but this is the place where a wise man will dig  
his cellar. . . . I one evening overtook one of  
my townsmen, who has accumulated what is  
called ‘“‘a handsome property,” — though I  
never got a fair view of it, — on the Walden road,  
driving a pair of cattle to market, who inquired  
of me how I could bring my mind to give up so  
many of the comforts of life. I answered that I  
was very sure I liked it passably well; I was not  
joking. And so I went home to my bed, and left  
him to pick his way through the darkness and  
the mud to Brighton, — or Bright-town, — which  
place he would reach sometime in the morning.  
  
Any prospect of awakening or coming to life  
to a dead man makes indifferent all times and  
places. The place where that may occur is  
always the same, and indescribably pleasant to  
all our senses. For the most part we allow only  
outlying and transient circumstances to make our  
occasions. They are, in fact, the cause of our  
distraction. Nearest to all things is that power  
which fashions their being. Neat to us the grand-

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‘he cartpath near Thorean's but

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SOLITUDE 7  
  
est laws are continually being executed. Nest to  
us is not the workman whom we have hired, with  
whom we love so well to talk, but the workman  
whose work we are.  
  
“How vast and profound is the influence of  
the subtile powers of Heaven and of Earth!”  
  
“We seek to perceive them, and we do not see  
them; we seek to hear them, and we do not hear  
them; identified with the substance of things,  
they cannot be separated from them.”  
  
“They cause that in all the universe men  
purify and sanctify theiy hearts, and clothe them-  
selves in their holiday garments to offer sacrifices  
and oblations to their ancestors. It is an ocean  
of subtile intelligences. They are everywhere,  
above us, on our left, on our right; they environ  
us on all sides.”  
  
‘We are the subjects of an experiment which is  
not a little interesting to me. Can we not do  
without the society of our gossips a little while  
under these circumstances,—have our own  
thoughts to cheer us? Confucius says truly,  
“Virtue does not remain as an abandoned  
orphan; it must of necessity have neighbors.”  
  
With thinking we may be beside ourselves in  
a sane sense. By a conscious effort of the mind  
we can stand aloof from actions and their con-  
sequences; and all things, good and bad, go by  
us like a torrent. We are not wholly involved in  
Nature. I may be either the driftwood in the

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178 WALDEN  
  
stream, or Indra in the sky looking down on it.  
I may be affected by a theatrical exhibition; on  
the other hand, I may not be affected by an act-  
ual event which appears to concern me much  
more. I only know myself as a human entity;  
the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections;  
and am sensible of a certain doubleness by which-  
I can stand as remote from myself as from an-  
other. However intense my experience, I am  
conscious of the presence of and criticism of a  
part of me, which, as it were, is not a part of  
me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but  
taking note of it; and that is no more I than it  
is you. When the play, it may be the tragedy, of  
life is over, the spectator goes his way. It was  
a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only,  
so far as he was concerned. This doubleness  
may easily make us poor neighbors and friends  
sometimes.  
  
I find it wholesome to be alone the greater  
part of the time. To be in company, even with  
the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I  
love to be alone. I never found the companion  
that was so companionable as solitude. We are  
for the most part more lonely when we go abroad  
among men than when we stay in our chambers.  
‘A man thinking or working is always alone, let  
him be where he will. Solitude is not measured  
by the miles of space that intervene between a  
man and his fellows. The really diligent stu-

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SOLITUDE 179  
  
dent in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge  
College is as solitary as a dervish in the desert.  
‘The farmer can work alone in the field or the  
woods all day, hoeing or chopping, and not feel  
lonesome, because he is employed; but when he  
comes home at night he cannot sit down in a  
room alone, at the mercy of his thoughts, but  
must be where he can “see the folks,” and  
recreate, and as he thinks remunerate, himself  
for his day’s solitude; and hence he wonders  
how the student can sit alone in the house all  
night and most of the day without ennui and  
“the blues”; but he does not realize that the  
student, though in the house, is still at work in  
his field, and chopping in his woods, as the  
farmer in his, and in turn seeks the same recre-  
ation and society that the latter does, though it  
may be a more condensed form of it.  
  
Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at  
very short intervals, not having had time to ac- |  
quire any new value for each other. We meet  
at meals three times a day, and give each other  
a new taste of that old musty cheese that we are.  
‘We have to agree on a certain set of rules, called  
etiquette and politeness, to make this frequent  
meeting tolerable and that we need not come to  
open war. We meet at the post-office, and at  
the sociable, and about the fireside every night;  
we live thick and are in each other's way, and  
stumble over one another, and I think that we

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180 WALDEN  
  
thus lose some respect for one another. Cer-  
tainly less frequency would suffice for all im-  
portant and hearty communications. Consider  
the girls in a factory, — never alone, hardly in  
their dreams. It would be better if there were  
but one inhabitant to a square mile, as where I  
live. The value of a man is not in his skin, that  
we should touch him.  
  
I have heard of a man lost in the woods and  
dying of famine and exhaustion at the foot of a  
tree, whose loneliness was relieved by the gro-  
tesque visions with which, owing to bodily  
weakness, his diseased imagination surrounded  
him, and which he believed to be real. So also,  
owing to bodily and mental health and strength,  
we may be continually cheered by a like but more  
normal and natural society, and come to know  
that we are never alone.  
  
T have a great deal of company in my house;  
especially in the morning, when nobody calls.  
Let me suggest a few comparisons, that some  
one may convey an idea of my situation. I am  
no more lonely than the loon in the pond that  
laughs so loud, or than Walden Pond itself.  
‘What company has that lonely lake, I pray?  
And yet it has not the blue devils, but the blue  
angels in it, in the azure tint of its waters. The  
sun is alone, except in thick weather, when there  
sometimes appear to be two, but one is a mock  
sun. God is alone, — but the devil, he is far

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SOLITUDE 181  
  
from being alone; he sees a great deal of com-  
pany; he is legion. I am no more lonely than a  
single mullein or dandelion in a pasture, or a  
bean leaf, or sorrel, or a horse-fly, or a humble-  
bee. I am no more lonely than the Mill Brook,  
or a weathercock, or the north star, or the south  
wind, or an April shower, or a January thaw, or  
the first spider in a new house.  
  
I have occasional visits in the long winter  
evenings, when the snow falls fast and the wind  
howls in the wood, from an old settler and origi-  
nal proprietor, who is reported to have dug  
Walden Pond, and stoned it, and fringed it with  
pine woods; who tells me stories of old time and  
of new eternity; and between us we manage to  
pass a cheerful evening with social mirth and  
pleasant views of things, even without apples or  
cider, —a most wise and humorous friend,  
whom I love much, who keeps himself more  
secret than ever did Goffe or Whalley; and  
though he is thought to be dead, none can show  
where he is buried. An elderly dame, too, dwells  
in my neighborhood, invisible to most persons,  
in whose odorous herb garden I love to stroll  
sometimes, gathering simples and listening to  
her fables; for she has a genius of unequalled  
fertility, and her memory runs back farther than  
mythology, and she can tell me the original  
of every fable, and on what fact every one is  
founded, for the incidents occurred when she

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182 ‘WALDEN  
  
was young. A ruddy and lusty old dame, who  
delights in all weathers and seasons, and is likely  
to outlive all her children yet.  
  
The indescribable innocence and beneficence  
of Nature, — of sun and wind and rain, of sum-  
mer and winter, — such health, such cheer, they  
afford forever! and such sympathy have they  
ever with our race, that all Nature would be  
affected, and the sun’s brightness fade, and the  
winds would sigh humanely, and the clouds rain  
tears, and the woods shed their leaves and put  
on mourning in midsummer, if any man should  
ever for a just cause grieve. Shall I not have  
intelligence with the earth? Am I not partly  
leaves and vegetable mould myself?  
  
What is the pill which will keep us well,  
serene, contented? Not my or thy great-grand-  
father’s, but our great-grandmother Nature’s  
universal, vegetable, botanic medicines, by which  
she has kept herself young always, outlived so  
many old Parrs in her day, and fed her health  
with their decaying fatness. For my panacea,  
instead of one of those quack vials of a mixture  
dipped from Acheron and the Dead Sea, which  
come out of those long shallow black-schooner-  
looking wagons which we sometimes see made  
to carry bottles, let me have a draught of undi-  
luted morning air. Morning air! If men will  
not drink of this at the fountain-head of the day,  
why, then, we must even bottle up some and sell

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SOLITUDE 183  
  
it in the shops, for the benefit of those who have  
lost their subscription ticket to morning time in  
this world. But remember, it will not keep quite  
till noonday even in the coolest cellar, but drive  
out the stopples long ere that and follow west-  
ward the steps of Aurora. I am no worshipper  
of Hygeia, who was the daughter of that old  
herb-doctor Asculapius, and who is represented  
on monuments holding a serpent in one hand,  
and in the other a cup out of which the serpent  
sometimes drinks; but rather of Hebe, cup-  
bearer to Jupiter, who was the daughter of Juno  
and wild lettuce, and who hed the power of re-  
storing gods and men to the vigor of youth. She  
was probably the only thoroughly sound-con-  
ditioned, healthy, and robust young lady that  
ever walked the globe, and wherever she came  
  
it was spring.

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VI  
‘VISITORS  
  
‘THINK that I love society as much as most,  
  
and am ready enough to fasten myself like  
  
a bloodsucker for the time to any full-  
blooded man that comes in my way. I am natu-  
rally no hermit, but might possibly sit out the  
sturdiest frequenter of the bar-room, if my  
business called me thither.  
  
I had three chairs in my house: one for soli-  
tude, two for friendship, three for society. When  
visitors came in larger and unexpected numbers,  
there was but the third chair for them all, but  
they generally economized the room by stand-  
ing up. It is surprising how many great men and  
women a small house will contain. I have had  
twenty-five or thirty souls, with their bodies, at  
ence under my roof, and yet we often parted  
without being aware that we had come very near  
to one another. Many of our houses, both pub-  
lic and private, with their almost innumerable  
apartments, their huge halls and their cellars  
for the storage of wines and other munitions of  
peace, appear to me extravagantly large for their  
inhabitants. They are so vast and magnificent

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VISITORS 185  
  
that the latter seem to be only vermin which in-  
fest them. I am surprised when the herald  
blows his summons before some Tremont or  
Astor or Middlesex House, to see come creeping  
out over the piazza for all inhabitants a ridicu-  
lous mouse, which soon again slinks into some  
hole in the pavement.  
  
One inconvenience I sometimes experienced  
in so small a house, the difficulty of getting to a  
sufficient distance from my guest when we be-  
gan to utter the big thoughts in big words. You  
want room for your thoughts to get into sailing  
trim and run a course or two before they make  
their port. The bullet of your thought must.  
have overcome its lateral and ricochet motion  
and fallen into its last and steady course before  
it reaches the ear of the hearer, else it may plough  
out again through the side of his head. Also,  
our sentences wanted room to unfold and form  
their columns in the interval. Individuals, like  
nations, must have suitable broad and natural  
boundaries, even a considerable neutral ground,  
between them. I have found it a singular lux-  
ury to talk across the pond to a companion on  
the opposite side. In my house we were so near  
that we could not begin to hear, — we could not  
speak low enough to be heard; as when you  
throw two stones into calm water so near that  
they break each other’s undulations. If we are  
merely loquacious and loud talkers, then we

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186 WALDEN  
  
can afford to stand very near together, cheek by  
jowl, and feel each other’s breath; but if we  
speak reservedly and thoughtfully, we want to  
be farther apart, that all animal heat and mois-  
ture may have a chance to evaporate. If we  
would enjoy the most intimate society with that  
in each of us which is without, or above, being  
spoken to, we must not only be silent, but com-  
monly so far apart bodily that we cannot  
possibly hear each other’s voice in any case.  
Referred to this standard, speech is for the  
convenience of those who are hard of hear-  
ing; but there are many fine things which we  
cannot say if we have to shout. As the con-  
versation began to assume a loftier and grander  
tone, we gradually shoved our chairs farther  
apart till they touched the wall in opposite  
corners, and then commonly there was not room  
enough.  
  
My “‘best” room, however, my withdrawing  
room, always ready for company, on whose  
carpet the sun rarely fell, was the pine wood  
behind my house. Thither in summer days,  
when distinguished guests came, I took them,  
and a priceless domestic swept the floor and  
dusted the furniture and kept the things in  
order.  
  
If one guest came he sometimes partook of  
my frugal meal and it was no interruption to  
conversation to be stirring a hasty-pudding, or

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VISITORS 187  
  
watching the rising and maturing of » loaf of  
bread in the ashes, in the meanwhile. But if  
twenty came and sat in my house, there was  
nothing said about dinner, though there might  
be bread enough for two, more than if eating  
were a forsaken habit; but we naturally prac-  
tised abstinence; and this was never felt to be  
an offence against hospitality, but the most  
proper and considerate course. The waste and  
decay of physical life, which so often needs re-  
pair, seemed miraculously retarded in such a  
case, and the vital vigor stood its ground. I  
could entertain thus a thousand as well as  
twenty; and if any ever went away disappointed  
or hungry from my house when they found me  
at home, they may depend upon it that I sym-  
pathized with them at least. So easy is it, though  
many housekeepers doubt it, to establish new  
and better customs in the place of the old. You  
need not rest your reputation on the dinners you  
give. For my own part, I was never so effectu-  
ally deterred from frequenting a man’s house,  
by any kind of Cerberus whatever, as by the  
parade one made about dining me, which I took  
to be a very polite and roundabout hint never to  
trouble him so again. I think I shall never re-  
visit those scenes. I should be proud to have for  
the motto of my cabin those lines of Spenser  
which one of my visitors inscribed on a yellow  
walnut leaf for a card: —

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188, WALDEN  
  
“‘Arrivéd there, the little house they fil,  
Ne looke for entertainment where none was;  
‘Rest is their feast, and all things at their wil  
‘The noblest mind the best contentment has.’  
  
   
  
When Winslow, afterward governor of the  
Plymouth Colony, went with a companion on a  
visit of ceremony to Massasoit on foot through  
the woods, and arrived tired and hungry at his  
lodge, they were well received by the king, but  
nothing was said about eating that day. When  
the night arrived, to quote their own words, —  
“He laid us on the bed with himself and his  
wife, they at the one end and we at the other, it  
being only plank, laid a foot from the ground,  
and a thin mat upon them. Two more of his  
chief men, for want of room, pressed by and  
upon us; so that we were worse weary of our  
lodging than of our journey.” At one o'clock  
the next day Massasoit “brought two fishes that  
he had shot,” about thrice as big as a bream;  
“these being boiled, there were at least forty  
looked for a share in them. The most ate of  
them. This meal only we had in two nights and  
aday; and had not one of us bought a partridge,  
we had taken our journey fasting.” Fearing  
that they would be light-headed for want of  
food and also sleep, owing to “the savages’ bar-  
barous singing (for they used to sing themselves  
asleep),” and that they might get home while  
they had strength to travel, they departed. As

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VISITORS 189  
  
for lodging, it is true they were but poorly en-  
tertained, though what they found an incon-  
venience was no doubt intended for an honor;  
but as far as eating was concerned, I do not see  
how the Indians could have done better. ‘They  
had nothing to eat themselves, and they were  
wiser than to think that apologies could supply  
the place of food to their guests; so they drew  
their belts tighter and said nothing about it.  
Another time when Winslow visited them, it  
being a season of plenty with them, there was  
no deficiency in this respect.  
  
As for men, they will hardly fail one anywhere.  
I had more visitors while I lived in the woods  
than at any other period of my life; I mean that  
I had some. I met several there under more  
favorable circumstances than I could anywhere  
else. But fewer came to see me upon trivial  
business. In this respect, my company was win-  
nowed by my mere distance from town. I had  
withdrawn so far within the great ocean of soli-  
tude, into which the rivers of society empty, that  
for the most part, so far as my needs were con-  
cerned, only the finest sediment was deposited  
around me. Besides, there were wafted to me  
evidences of unexplored and uncultivated con-  
tinents on the other side.  
  
Who should come to my lodge this morning  
but a true Homeric or Paphlagonian man, — he  
had so suitable and poetic a name that I am sorry

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190 WALDEN  
  
I cannot print it here, —a Canadian, a wood-  
chopper and post-maker, who can hole fifty  
posts in a day, who made his last supper on a  
woodchuck which his dog caught. He, too, has  
heard of Homer, and, “‘if it were not for books,”  
would “not know what to do rainy days,” though  
perhaps he has not read one wholly through for  
many rainy seasons. Some priest who could  
pronounce the Greek itself taught him to read  
his verse in the testament in his native parish far  
away; and now I must translate to him, while  
he holds the book, Achilles’ reproof to Patroclus,  
for his sad countenance. — “Why are you in  
tears, Patroclus, like a young girl?” —  
“Or have you alone heard some news from Phthia ?  
  
‘They say that Menottius lives yet, son of Actor,  
  
And Peleus lives, son of Hacus, among the Myrmidons,  
Either of whom having died, we should greatly grieve.”  
He says, “That ’s good.” He has a great bundle  
of white-oak bark under his arm for a sick man,  
gathered this Sunday morning. “I suppose  
there ’s no harm in going after such a thing to-  
day,” says he. To him Homer was a great writer,  
though what his writing was about he did not  
know. A more simple and natural man it would  
be hard to find. Vice and disease, which cast  
such a sombre moral hue over the world, seemed  
to have hardly any existence for him. He was  
about twenty-eight years old, and had left  
Canada and his father’s house a dozen years be-

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VISITORS 191  
  
fore to work in the States, and earn money to  
buy a farm with at last, perhaps in his native  
country. He was cast in the coarsest mould; a  
stout but sluggish body, yet gracefully carried,  
with a thick sunburnt neck, dark bushy hair,  
and dull sleepy blue eyes, which were occasion-  
ally lit up with expression. He wore a flat gray  
cloth cap, a dingy wool-colored greatcoat, and  
cowhide boots. He was a great consumer of  
meat, usually carrying his dinner to his work a  
couple of miles past my house, — for he chopped  
all summer, — in a tin pail; cold meats, often  
cold woodchucks, and coffee in a stone bottle  
which dangled by a string from his belt; and  
sometimes he offered me a drink. He came  
along early, crossing my beanfield, though with-  
out anxiety or haste to get to his work, such as  
Yankees exhibit. He wasn’t a-going to hurt  
himself. He didn’t care if he only earned his  
board. Frequently he would leave his dinner  
in the bushes, when his dog had caught a wood-  
chuck by the way, and go back a mile and a half  
to dress it and leave it in the cellar of the house  
where he boarded, after deliberating first for half  
an hour whether he could not sink it in the pond  
safely till nightfall, — loving to dwell long upon  
these themes. He would say, as he went by in  
the morning: “How thick the pigeons are! If  
working every day were not my trade, I could  
get all the meat I should want by hunting, —

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192 WALDEN  
  
pigeons, woodchucks, rabbits, partridges, — by  
gosh! I could get all I should want for a week  
in one day.”  
  
He was a skilful chopper, and indulged in  
some flourishes and ornaments in his art. He  
cut his trees level and close to the ground, that  
the sprouts which came up afterward might be  
more vigorous and a sled might slide over the  
stumps; and instead of leaving a whole tree to  
support his corded wood, he would pare it away  
to a slender stake or splinter which you could  
break off with your hand at last.  
  
He interested me because he was so quiet and  
solitary and so happy withal: a well of good  
humor and contentment which overflowed at  
his eyes. His mirth was without alloy. Some-  
times I saw him at his work in the woods, felling  
trees, and he would greet me with a laugh of in-  
expressible satisfaction, and a salutation in  
Canadian French, though he spoke English as  
well. When I approached him he would sus-  
pend his work, and with half-suppressed mirth  
lie along the trunk of a pine which he had felled,  
and, peeling off the inner bark, roll it up into a  
ball and chew it while he laughed and talked.  
Such an exuberance of animal spirits had he that  
he sometimes tumbled down and rolled on the  
ground with laughter at anything which made  
him think and tickled him. Looking round upon  
the trees he would exclaim, — “By George! I

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VISITORS 193  
  
can enjoy myself well enough here chopping; I  
want no better sport.” Sometimes, when at  
leisure, he amused himself all day in the woods  
with a pocket pistol, firing salutes to himself at  
regular intervals as he walked. In the winter he  
had a fire by which at noon he warmed his coffee  
ina kettle; and as he sat on a log to eat his dinner  
the chickadees would sometimes come round and  
alight on his arm and peck at the potato in his  
fingers; and he said that he “‘liked to have the  
little jellers about him.”  
  
In him the animal man chiefly was developed.  
In physical endurance and contentment he was  
cousin to the pine and the rock. I asked him  
once if he was not sometimes tired at night, after  
working all day; and he answered with a sin-  
cere and serious look, ‘“‘Gorrappit, I never was  
tired in my life.” But the intellectual and what  
is called spiritual man in him were slumbering  
as in an infant. He had been instructed only in  
that innocent and ineffectual way in which the  
Catholic priests teach the aborigines, by which  
the pupil is never educated to the degree of con-  
sciousness, but only to the degree of trust and  
reverence, and a child is not made a man, but  
kept a child. When Nature made him, she gave  
him a strong body and contentment for his por-  
tion, and propped him on every side with rever-  
ence and reliance, that he might live out his three-  
score years and ten a child. He was so genuine  
  
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194 WALDEN  
  
and unsophisticated that no introduction would  
serve to introduce him, more than if you intro-  
duced a woodchuck to your neighbor. He had  
got to find him out as you did. He would not  
play any part. Men paid him wages for work,  
and so helped to feed and clothe him; but he  
never exchanged opinions with them. He was so  
simply and naturally humble —if he can be  
called humble who never aspires — that humility  
was no distinct quality in him, nor could he con-  
ceive of it. Wiser men were demigods to him. If  
you told him that such a one was coming, he did  
fas if he thought that anything so grand would ex-  
pect nothing of himself, but take all the respon-  
sibility on itself, and let him be forgotten still.  
He never heard the sound of praise. He par-  
ticularly reverenced the writer and the preacher.  
‘Their performances were miracles. When I  
told him that I wrote considerably, he thought  
for a long time that it was merely the hand-  
writing which I meant, for he could write a re-  
markably good hand himself. I sometimes  
found the name of his native parish handsomely  
written in the snow by the highway, with the  
proper French accent, and knew that he had  
passed. I asked him if he ever wished to write  
his thoughts. He said that he had read and  
written letters for those who could not, but he  
never tried to write thoughts, —no, he could  
not, he could not tell what to put first, it would

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VISITORS 195  
  
kill him, and then there was spelling to be at-  
tended to at the same time!  
  
I heard that a distinguished wise man and re-  
former asked him if he did not want the world  
to be changed; but he answered with a chuckle  
of surprise in his Canadian accent, not knowing  
that the question had ever been entertained be-  
fore, “No, I like it well enough.” It would have  
suggested many things to a philosopher to have  
dealings with him. To a stranger he appeared  
to know nothing of things in general; yet I  
sometimes saw in him a man whom J had not seen  
before, and I did not know whether he was as  
wise as Shakspeare or as simply ignorant as a  
child, whether to suspect him of a fine poetic  
consciousness or of stupidity. A townsman told  
me that when he met him sauntering through  
the village in his small close-fitting cap, and  
whistling to himself, he reminded him of a prince  
in disguise.  
  
His only books were an almanac and an arith-  
metic, in which last he was considerably expert.  
‘The former was a sort of cyclopedia to him,  
which he supposed to contain an abstract of  
human knowledge, as indeed it does to a consid-  
erable extent. I loved to sound him on the vari-  
ous reforms of the day, and he never failed to  
look at them in the most simple and practical  
light. He had never heard of such things be-  
fore. Could he do without factories? I asked.

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196 WALDEN  
  
He had worn the home-made Vermont gray, he  
said, and that was good. Could he dispense  
with tea and coffee? Did this country afford any  
beverage besides water? He had soaked hem-  
lock leaves in water and drunk it, and thought  
that was better than water in warm weather.  
When I asked him if he could do without money,  
he showed the convenience of money in such &  
way as to suggest and coincide with the most  
philosophical accounts of the origin of this insti-  
tution, and the very derivation of the word  
pecunia. If an ox were his property, and he  
wished to get needles and thread at the store, he  
thought it would be inconvenient, and impossi-  
ble soon, to go on mortgaging some portion of  
the creature each time to that amount. He  
could defend many institutions better than any  
philosopher, because, in describing them as they  
concerned him, he gave the true reason for their  
prevalence, and speculation had not suggested to  
him any other. At another time, hearing Plato’s  
definition of a man, a biped without feathers,  
—and that one exhibited a cock plucked and  
called it Plato’s man, he thought it an important  
difference that the kecs bent the wrong way.  
He would sometimes exclaim: “How I love to  
talk! By George, I could talk all day!” I  
asked him once, when I had not seen him for  
many months, if he had got a new idea this sum-  
mer. “Good Lord,” said he, “‘a man that has

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VISITORS 197  
  
to work as I do, if he does not forget the ideas  
he has had, he will do well. Maybe the man  
you hoe with is inclined to race; then, by gorry,  
your mind must be there; you think of weeds.”  
He would sometimes ask me first, on such occa-  
sions, if I had made any improvement. One  
winter day I asked him if he was always satisfied  
with himself, wishing to suggest a substitute  
within him for the priest without, and some higher  
motive for living. “Satisfied!” said he; “some  
men are satisfied with one thing, and some with  
another. One man, perhaps, if he has got enough,  
will be satisfied to sit all day with his back to  
the fire and his belly to the table, by George!”  
Yet I never, by any manceuvring, could get him  
to take the spiritual view of things; the highest  
that he appeared to conceive of was a simple ex-  
pediency, such as you might expect an snimal to  
appreciate; and this, practically, is true of most  
men. If I suggested any improvement in his  
mode of life, he merely answered, without ex-  
pressing any regret, that it was too late. Yet  
he thoroughly believed in honesty and the like  
virtues.  
  
‘There was a certain positive originality, how-  
ever slight, to be detected in him, and I occasion-  
ally observed that he was thinking for himself  
and expressing his own opinion, a phenomenon  
so rare that I would any day walk ten miles  
to observe it, and it amounted to the reorig-

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198 WALDEN  
  
ination of many of the institutions of society,  
‘Though he hesitated, and perhaps failed to ex-  
press himself distinctly, he always had a pre-  
sentable thought behind. Yet his thinking  
was so primitive and immersed in his animal  
life, that, though more promising than a merely  
learned man’s, it rarely ripened to anything  
which can be reported. He suggested that there  
might be men of genius in the lowest grades of  
life, however permanently humble and illiterate,  
who take their own view always, or do not pre-  
tend to see at all; who are as bottomless even as  
‘Walden Pond was thought to be, though they  
may be dark and muddy.  
  
Many a traveller came out of his way to see me  
and the inside of my house, and, as an excuse for  
calling, asked for a glass of water. I told them  
that I drank at the pond, and pointed thither,  
offering to lend them a dipper. Far off as I lived,  
I was not exempted from that annual visitation  
which occurs, methinks, about the first of April,  
when everybody is on the move; and I had my  
share of good luck, though there were some  
curious specimens among my visitors. Half-  
witted men from the almshouse and elsewhere  
came to see me; but I endeavored to make them  
exercise all the wit they had, and make their con-  
fessions to me; in such cases making wit the  
theme of our conversation; and so was com-

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VISITORS 199  
  
pensated. Indeed, I found some of them to be  
wiser than the so-called overseers of the poor and  
selectmen of the town, and thought it was time  
that the tables were turned. With respect to wit,  
I learned that there was not much difference be-  
tween the half and the whole. One day, in par-  
ticular, an inoffensive, simple-minded pauper,  
whom with others I had often seen used as fenc-  
ing stuff, standing or sitting on a bushel in the  
fields to keep cattle and himself from straying,  
visited me, and expressed a wish to live as I did.  
He told me, with the utmost simplicity and  
truth, quite superior, or rather inferior, to any-  
thing that is called humility, that he was “‘defi-  
cient in intellect.” These were his words. The  
Lord had made him so, yet he supposed the  
Lord cared as much for him as for another.  
“T have always been so,” said he, “from my  
childhood ; I never had much mind; I was not  
like other children; I am weak in the head. It  
was the Lord’s will, I suppose.” And there be  
was to prove the truth of his words. He was a  
metaphysical puzzle tome. I have rarely met a  
fellow-man on such promising ground, — it was  
so simple and sincere and so true, all that he  
said. And, true enough, in proportion as he ap-  
peared to humble himself was he exalted. I did  
not know at first but it was the result of a wise  
policy. It seemed that from such a basis of  
truth and frankness as the poor weak-headed

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200 WALDEN  
  
pauper had laid, our intercourse might go for-  
ward to something better than the intercourse  
of :  
  
I had some guests from those not reckoned  
commonly among the town’s poor, but who  
should be; who are among the world’s poor, at  
any rate; guests who appeal, not to your hospital-  
ity, but to your hospital-ality ; who earnestly wish  
to be helped, and preface their appeal with the i  
formation that they are resolved, for one thing,  
never to help themselves. I require of a visitor  
that he be not actually starving, though he may  
have the very best appetite in the world, however  
he got it. Objects of charity are not guests.  
Men who did not know when their visit had  
terminated, though I went about my business  
again, answering them from greater and greater  
remoteness. Men of almost every degree of wit  
called on me in the migrating season. Some  
who had more wits than they knew what to do  
with; runaway slaves with plantation manners,  
who listened from time to time, like the fox in the  
fable, as if they heard the hounds a-baying on  
their track, and looked at me beseechingly, as  
much as to say, —  
  
“O Christian, will you send me back?”  
  
   
  
One real runaway slave among the rest, whom I  
helped to forward toward the north star. Men of  
one idea, like a hen with one chicken, and that a

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Children in the woods by the pond

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VISITORS 201  
  
duckling; men of a thousand idess, and un-  
Kempt heads, like those hens which are made to  
take charge of a hundred chickens, all in pursuit  
of one bug, a score of them lost in every morn-  
ing’s dew, — and become frizzled and mangy in  
consequence; men of ideas instead of legs, a  
sort of intellectual centipede that made you crawl  
all over. One man proposed » book in which  
visitors should write their names, as at the White  
Mountains; but, alas ! I have too good a mem-  
ory to make that necessary.  
  
T could not but notice some of the peculiarities  
of my visitors. Girls and boys and young  
women generally seemed glad to be in the woods.  
They looked in the pond and at the flowers, and  
improved their time. Men of business, even  
farmers, thought only of solitude and employ-  
ment, and of the great distance at which I dwelt  
from something or other; and though they said  
that they loved a ramble in the woods occa-  
sionally, it was obvious that they did not. Rest-  
less committed men, whose time was all taken  
up in getting a living or keeping it; ministers  
who spoke of God as if they enjoyed a monop-  
oly of the subject, who could not bear all kinds of  
opinions; doctors, lawyers, uneasy housekeepers  
who pried into my cupboard and bed when I  
was out, —how came Mrs. — to know that  
my sheets were not as clean as hers? — young  
men who had ceased to be young, and had con-

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202 WALDEN  
  
cluded that it was safest to follow the beaten  
track of the professions, —all these generally  
said that it was not possible to do so much good  
in my position. Ay! there was the rub. The  
old and infirm and the timid, of whatever age or  
sex, thought most of sickness, and sudden acci-  
dent and death; to them life seemed full of dan-  
ger, — what danger is there if you don’t think of  
any?—and they thought that a prudent man  
would carefully select the safest position, where  
Dr. B. might be on hand at a moment’s warn-  
ing. To them the village was literally a com-  
munity, a league for mutual defence, and you  
would suppose that they would not go a-huckle-  
berrying without a medicine chest. ‘The amount  
of it is, if « man is alive, there is always danger  
that he may die, though the danger must be al-  
lowed to be less in proportion as he is dead-and-  
alive to begin with. A man sits as many risks  
as he runs. Finally, there were the self-styled  
reformers, the greatest bores of all, who thought  
that I was forever singing, —  
‘This is the house that I built;  
‘This is the man that lives in the house that I built;  
  
but they did not know that the third line was, —  
  
‘These are the folks that worry the man  
‘That lives in the house that I built,  
  
I did not fear the hen-harriers, for I kept no  
chickens; but I feared the men-harriers rather. -

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VISITORS 208  
  
I bad more cheering visitors than the last.  
Children come a-berrying, railroad men taking  
a Sunday morning walk in clean shirts, fisher-  
men and hunters, poets and philosophers, in  
short, all honest pilgrims, who came out to the  
woods for freedom’s sake, and really left the vil-  
lage behind, I was ready to greet with, — “‘Wel-  
come, Englishmen! welcome, Englishmen!”  
for I had had communication with that race.

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VIt  
‘THE BEANFIELD  
  
EANWHILE my beans, the length of  
whose rows, added together, was seven  
miles already planted, were impatient  
  
to be hoed, for the earliest had grown consider-  
ably before the latest were in the ground;  
deed, they were not easily to be put off. What  
was the meaning of this so steady and self-re-  
specting, this small Herculean labor, I knew not.  
T came to love my rows, my beans, though so  
many more than I wanted. They attached me  
to the earth, and so I got strength like Anteus.  
But why should I raise them? Only Heaven  
knows. This was my curious labor all summer,  
—to make this portion of the earth’s surface,  
which had yielded only cinquefoil, blackberries,  
jobnswort, and the like, before, sweet wild fruits  
and pleasant flowers, produce instead this pulse.  
‘What shall I learn of beans or beans of me? I  
cherish them, I hoe them, early and late I have  
an eye to them; and this is my day’s work. It  
is a fine broad leaf to look on. My auxiliaries are  
the dews and rains which water this dry soil, and

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THE BEANFIELD 205  
  
what fertility is in the soil itself, which for the  
most part is lean and effete. My enemies are  
worms, cool days, and most of all woodchucks.  
‘The last have nibbled for me a quarter of an  
acre clean. But what right had I to oust johns-  
wort and the rest, and break up their ancient  
herb garden? Soon, however, the remaining  
beans will be too tough for them, and go for-  
ward to meet new foes.  
  
When I was four years old, as I well remem-  
ber, I was brought from Boston to this my  
native town, through these very woods and this  
field, to the pond. It is one of the oldest scenes  
stamped on my memory. And now to-night my  
flute has waked the echoes over that very water.  
The pines still stand here older than I; or, if  
some have fallen, I have cooked my supper with  
their stumps, and a new growth is rising all  
around, preparing another aspect for new in-  
fant eyes. Almost the same johnswort springs  
from the same perennial root in this pasture,  
and even I have at length helped to clothe that  
fabulous landscape of my infant dreams, and  
one of the results of my presence and influence  
is seen in these bean leaves, corn blades, and  
potato vines.  
  
T planted about two acres and a half of up-  
land; and as it was only about fifteen years since  
the land was cleared, and I myself had got out  
two or three cords of stumps, I did not give it

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206 WALDEN  
  
any manure; but in the course of the summer  
it appeared by the arrow-heads which I turned  
up in hoeing, that an extinct nation had an-  
ciently dwelt here and planted com and beans  
ere white men came to clear the land, and so, to  
some extent, had exhausted the soil for this very  
crop.  
  
Before yet any woodchuck or squirrel had run  
across the road, or the sun had got above the  
shrub-oaks, while all the dew was on, though  
the farmers warned me against it, —I would  
advise you to do all your work if possible while  
the dew is on, —I began to level the ranks of  
haughty weeds in my beanfield and throw dust  
upon their heads. Early in the morning I  
worked barefooted, dabbling like a plastic artist  
in the dewy and crumbling sand, but later in the  
day the sun blistered my feet. ‘There the sun  
lighted me to hoe beans, pacing slowly back-  
ward and forward over that yellow gravelly up-  
land, between the long green rows, fifteen rods,  
the one end terminating in a shrub-oak copse  
where I could rest in the shade, the other in a  
blackberry field where the green berries deep-  
ened their tints by the time I had made another  
bout. Removing the weeds, putting fresh soil  
about the bean stems, and encouraging this  
weed which I had sown, making the yellow soil  
express its summer thought in bean leaves and  
blossoms rather than in wormwood and piper

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THE BEANFIELD 207  
  
and millet grass, making the earth say beans  
instead of grass, — this was my daily work. As  
I had little aid from horses or cattle, or hired  
men or boys, or improved implements of hus-  
bandry, I was much slower, and became much  
more intimate with my beans than usual. But  
labor of the hands, even when pursued to the  
verge of drudgery, is perhaps never the worst  
form of idleness. It has a constant and imper-  
ishable moral, and to the scholar it yields a  
classic result. A very agricola laboriosus was  
T to travellers bound westward through Lincoln  
and Wayland to nobody knows where; they  
sitting at their ease in gigs, with elbows on  
knees, and reins loosely hanging in festoons; I  
the home-staying laborious native of the soil.  
But soon my homestead was out of their sight  
and thought. It was the only open and culti-  
vated field for a great distance on either side of  
the road; so they made the most of it; and  
sometimes the man in the field heard more of  
travellers’ gossip and comment than was meant  
. for his ear: “Beans so late! peas so late!” —  
for I continued to plant when others had begun  
to hoe, — the ministerial husbandman had not  
suspected it. “Corn, my boy, for fodder; corn  
for fodder.” “Does he live there?” asks the  
black bonnet of the gray coat; and the hard-  
featured farmer reins up his grateful dobbin to  
inquire what you are doing where he sees no

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208 WALDEN  
  
manure in the furrow, and recommends a little  
chip dirt, or any little waste stuff, or it may be  
ashes or plaster. But here were two acres and a  
half of furrows, and only a hoe for cart and two  
hands to draw it, — there being an aversion to  
other carts and horses, — and chip dirt far away.  
Fellow-travellers as they rattled by compared it  
aloud with the fields which they had passed, so  
that I came to know how I stood in the agricul-  
tural world. This was one field not in Mr. Cole-  
man’s report. And, by the way, who estimates  
the value of the crop which Nature yields in the  
still wilder fields unimproved by man? The crop  
of English hay is carefully weighed, the moist-  
ure calculated, the silicates and the potash; but  
in all dells and pond holes in the woods and  
pastures and swamps grows a rich and various  
crop only unreaped by man. Mine was, as it  
were, the connecting link between wild and cul-  
tivated fields; as some states are civilized, and  
others half-civilized, and others savage or bar-  
barous, so my field was, though not in » bad  
sense, a half-cultivated field. ‘They were beans  
cheerfully returning to their wild and primitive  
state that I cultivated, and my hoe played the  
Rana des Vaches for them.  
  
Near at hand, upon the topmost spray of a  
birch, sings the brown-thrasher — or red mavis,  
as some love to call him — all the morning, glad  
of your society, that would find out another

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THE BEANFIELD 209  
  
farmer's field if yours were not here. While you  
are planting the seed, he cries,—‘Drop it,  
drop it, — cover it up, cover it up, — pull it up,  
pull it up, pull it up.” But this was not corn,  
and so it was safe from such enemies as he.  
You may wonder what his rigmarole, his ama-  
teur Paganini performances on one string or  
‘on twenty, have to do with your planting, and  
yet prefer it to leached ashes or plaster. It was  
a cheap sort of top dressing in which I had  
entire faith.  
  
As I drew a still fresher soil about the rows  
with my hoe, I disturbed the ashes of unchroni-  
cled nations who in primeval years lived under  
these heavens, and their small implements of  
war and hunting were brought to the light of  
this moder day. They lay mingled with other  
natural stones, some of which bore the marks  
of having been burned by Indian fires, and some  
by the sun, and also bits of pottery and glass  
brought hither by the recent cultivators of the  
soil. When my hoe tinkled against the stones,  
that music echoed to the woods and the sky, and  
was an accompaniment to my labor which  
yielded an instant and immeasurable crop. It  
was no longer beans that I hoed, nor I that hoed  
beans; and I remembered with as much pity  
as pride, if I remembered at all, my acquaint-  
ances who had gone to the city to attend the  
oratorios. The night-hawk circled overhead in

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210 WALDEN  
  
the sunny afternoons — for I sometimes made  
a day of it —like a mote in the eye, or in heav-  
en’s eye, falling from time to time with a swoop  
and » sound as if the heavens were rent, torn at  
last to very rags and tatters, and yet a seamless  
cope remained; small imps that fill the air and  
lay their eggs on the ground on bare sand or  
rocks on the tops of hills, where few have found  
them; graceful and slender, like ripples caught  
up from the pond, as leaves are raised by the  
wind to float in the heavens; such kindredship  
isin Nature. The hawk is aerial brother of the  
wave which he sails over and surveys, those his  
perfect air-inflated wings answering to the ele-  
mental unfledged pinions of the sea. Or some-  
times I watched a pair of hen-hawks circling  
high in the sky, alternately soaring and de-  
scending, approaching and leaving one another,  
as if they were the embodiment of my own  
thoughts. Or I was attracted by the passage of  
wild pigeons from this wood to that, with a  
slight quivering winnowing sound and carrier  
haste; or from under a rotten stump my hoe  
turned up a sluggish, portentous, and outlandish  
spotted salamander, a trace of Egypt and the  
Nile, yet our contemporary. When I paused to  
Jean on my hoe, these sounds and sights I heard  
and saw anywhere in the row, a part of the in-  
exhaustible entertainment which the country  
offers.

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THE BEANFIELD ail  
  
On gala days the town fires its great guns,  
which echo like popguns to these woods, and  
some waifs of martial music occasionally pene-  
trate thus far. To me, away there in my bean-  
field at the other end of the town, the big guns  
sounded as if a puff ball had burst; and when  
there was a military turnout of which I was  
ignorant, I have sometimes had a vague sense all  
the day of some sort of itching and disease in  
the horizon as if some eruption would break out  
there soon, either scarlatina or canker-rash, un-  
til at length some more favorable puff of wind,  
making haste over the fields and up the Way-  
land road, brought me information of the “train-  
ers.” It seemed by the distant hum as if  
somebody’s bees had swarmed, and that the  
neighbors, according to Virgil’s advice, by a  
faint tintinnabulum upon the most sonorous of  
their domestic utensils, were endeavoring to call  
them down into the hive again. And when the  
sound died quite away, and the hum had ceased,  
and the most favorable breezes told no tale, I  
knew that they had got the last drone of them  
all safely into the Middlesex hive, and that now  
their minds were bent on the honey with which  
it was smeared.  
  
I felt proud to know that the liberties of Mas-  
sachusetts and of our fatherland were in such  
safe keeping; and as I turned to my hoeing again  
I was filled with an inexpressible confidence,

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212 WALDEN  
  
and pursued my labor cheerfully with a calm  
trust in the future.  
  
When there were several bands of musicians,  
it sounded as if all the village was a vast bellows,  
and all the buildings expanded and collapsed  
alternately with a din. But sometimes it was a  
really noble and inspiring strain that reached  
these woods, and the trumpet that sings of fame,  
and I felt as if I could spit a Mexican with a  
good relish, — for why should we always stand  
for trifles?—and looked round for a wood-  
chuck or a skunk to exercise my chivalry upon.  
These martial strains seemed as far away as  
Palestine, and reminded me of a march of  
crusaders in the horizon, with a slight tan-  
tivy and tremulous motion of the elm-tree  
tops which overhang the village. This was one  
of the great days; though the sky had from  
my clearing only the same everlastingly great  
look that it wears daily, and I saw no differ-  
ence in it.  
  
It was a singular experience, that long ac-  
quaintance which I cultivated with beans, what  
with planting, and hoeing, and harvesting, and  
threshing, and picking over, and selling them, —  
the last was the hardest of all, —I might add  
eating, for I did taste. I was determined to  
know beans. When they were growing, I used  
to hoe from five o’clock in the morning till noon,  
and commonly spent the rest of the day about

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sania? s1201INg 14.5, — pusruer

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THE BEANFIELD a3  
  
other affairs. Consider the intimate and curi-  
ous acquaintance one makes with various kinds  
of weeds, —it will bear some iteration in the  
account, for there was no little iteration in the  
labor, — disturbing their delicate organizations  
so ruthlessly, and making such invidious dis-  
tinetions with his hoe, levelling whole ranks  
of one species, and sedulously cultivating an-  
other. That’s Roman wormwood, — that’s pig-  
weed,—that’s sorrel, — that ’s piper-grass, —  
have at him, chop him up, turn his roots up-  
ward to the sun, don’t let him have a fibre in the  
shade, if you do he'll turn himself t’other side  
up and be as green as a leek in two days. A  
long war, not with cranes, but with weeds, those  
‘Trojans who had sun and rain and dews on their  
side. Daily the beans saw me come to their  
rescue armed with a hoe, and thin the ranks of  
their enemies, filling up the trenches with weedy  
dead. Many a lusty crest-waving Hector, that  
towered .a whole foot above his crowding com-  
rades, fell before my weapon and rolled in the  
dust.  
  
‘Those summer days which some of my con-  
temporaries devoted to the fine arts in Boston  
and Rome, and others to contemplation in India,  
and others to trade in London or New York, I  
thus, with the other farmers of New England,  
devoted to husbandry. Not that I wanted beans  
to eat, for Iam by nature a Pythagorean, so far

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214 WALDEN  
  
as beans are concerned, whether they mean  
porridge or voting, and exchanged them for  
3 but, perchance, as some must work in  
fields if only for the sake of tropes and expres-  
sion, to serve a parable-maker one day. It was  
on the whole a rare amusement, which, con-  
tinued too long, might have become a dissipa-  
tion. Though I gave them no manure, and did  
not hoe them all once, I hoed them unusually  
well as far as I went, and was paid for it in the  
end, “there being in truth,” as Evelyn says, “‘no  
compost or lsetation whatsoever comparable to  
this continual motion, repastination, and turn-  
ing of the mould with the spade.” “The earth,”  
he adds elsewhere, “‘especially if fresh, has a  
certain magnetism in it, by which it attracts the  
salt, power, or virtue (call it either) which gives  
it life, and is the logic of all the labor and stir  
we keep about it, to sustain us; all dungings  
and other sordid temperings being but the  
vicars succedaneous to this improvement.”  
Moreover, this being one of those “worn-out  
and exhausted lay fields which enjoy their sab-  
bath,” had perchance, as Sir Kenelm Digby  
thinks likely, attracted “vital spirits” from the  
air. I harvested twelve bushels of beans.  
  
But to be more particular, for it is complained  
that Mr. Coleman has reported chiefly the ex-  
pensive experiments of gentlemen farmers, my  
outgoes were, —

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THE BEANFIELD 215  
  
   
  
   
  
Forshee... 00... eee 2054  
Ploughing, harrowing and frown 750 Too much  
Beans for seed. + 81h  
Potatoes“. = 2 18s  
Peas“ Fie. 040  
Turnip seed... |. ar wer secs 08  
White line for crow fence. - 1. 008  
Horse cultivator and boy three hours... 100  
Horse and cart to get crop... . 07  
  
Ina) 2.22 eS TR  
  
My income was (patrem familias vendacem,  
non emacem esse oportet), from  
  
‘Nine bushels and twelve quarts of beans sold . . . $1004  
Five “large potatoes 250  
Nine “ small“ 225  
Grass. . 100  
Stalks . 075  
  
Inall 923 44  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Leaving a pecuniary profit, as Ihave elsewhere said, of $8.71.  
  
This is the result of my experience in raising  
beans. Plant the common small white bush  
bean about the first of June, in rows three feet  
by eighteen inches apart, being careful to select  
fresh round and unmixed seed. First look out  
for worms, and supply vacancies by planting  
anew. Then look out for woodchucks, if it is  
an exposed place, for they will nibble off the  
earliest tender leaves almost clean as they go;  
and again, when the young tendrils make their  
appearance, they have notice of it, and will  
shear them off with both buds and young pods,

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216 WALDEN  
  
sitting erect like a squirrel. But above all,  
harvest as early as possible, if you would escape  
frosts and have a fair and salable crop; you  
may save much loss by this means.  
  
‘This further experience also I gained. I said  
to myself, I will not plant beans and corn with  
so much industry another summer, but such  
seeds, if the seed is not lost, as sincerity, truth,  
simplicity, faith, innocence, and the like, and  
see if they will not grow in this soil, even with  
less toil and manurance, and sustain me, for  
surely it has not been exhausted for these crops.  
Alas! I said this to myself; but now another  
summer is gone, and another, and another, and  
I am obliged to say to you, Reader, that the  
seeds which I planted, if indeed they were the  
seeds of those virtues, were wormeaten or had  
lost their vitality and so did not come up. Com-  
monly men will only be brave as their fathers  
were brave, or timid. This generation is very  
sure to plant corn and beans each new year  
precisely as the Indians did centuries ago, and  
taught the first settlers to do, as if there were a  
fate in it. I saw an old man the other day, to my  
astonishment, making the holes with a hoe for  
the seventieth time at least, and not for himself  
to lie down in! But why should not the New  
Englander try new adventures, and not lay so  
much stress on his grain, his potato and grass  
crop, and his orchards, — raise other crops

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THE BEANFIELD Qiz  
  
than these? Why concern ourselves so much  
about our beans for seed, and not be concerned  
at all about a new generation of men? We  
should really be fed and cheered if when we met  
@ man we were sure to see that some of the  
qualities which I have named, which we all  
prize more than those other productions, but  
which are for the most part broadcast and float-  
ing in the air, had taken root and grown in him.  
Here comes such a subtile and ineffable quality,  
for instance, as truth or justice, though the  
slightest amount or new variety of it, along the  
road. Our ambassadors should be instructed to  
send home such seeds as these, and Congress  
help to distribute them over all the land. We  
should never stand upon ceremony with sincerity.  
‘We should never cheat and insult and banish  
one another by our meanness, if there were  
present the kernel of worth and friendliness.  
‘We should not meet thus in haste. Most men  
I do not meet at all, for they seem not to have  
time; they are busy about their beans. We  
would not deal with a man thus plodding ever,  
leaning on a hoe or a spade as a staff between  
his work, not as a mushroom, but partially risen  
out of the earth, something more than erect,  
like swallows alighted and walking on the  
ground: —  
“And as he spake, his wings would now and then  
Spread, as be meant to fy, then close again,”

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218 WALDEN  
  
so that we should suspect that we might be con-  
versing with an angel. Bread may not always  
nourish us; but it always does us good, it even  
takes stiffness out of our joints, and makes us  
supple and buoyant, when we knew not what  
ailed us, to recognize any generosity in man or  
Nature, to share any unmixed and heroic joy.  
Ancient poetry and mythology suggest, at  
least, that husbandry was once a sacred art;  
but it is pursued with irreverent haste and heed-  
lessness by us, our object being to have large  
farms and large crops merely. We have no  
festival, nor procession, nor ceremony, not ex-  
cepting our Cattle-shows and so-called Thanks-  
givings, by which the farmer expresses a sense  
of the sacredness of his calling, or is reminded  
of its sacred origin. It is the premium and the  
feast which tempt him. He sacrifices not to  
Ceres and the Terrestrial Jove, but to the infernal  
Plutus rather. By avarice and selfishness, and  
a grovelling habit, from which none of us is free,  
of regarding the soil as property, or the means  
of acquiring property chiefly, the landscape is  
deformed, husbandry is degraded with us, and  
the farmer leads the meanest of lives. He  
knows Nature but as a robber. Cato says that  
the profits of agriculture are particularly pious  
or just (maxrimeque pius questus), and according  
to Varro, the old Romans “called the same  
earth Mother and Ceres, and thought that they

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THE BEANFIELD 219  
  
who cultivated it led a pious and useful life, and  
that they alone were left of the race of King  
Saturn.”  
  
We are wont to forget that the sun looks on  
our cultivated fields and on the prairies and  
forests without distinction. They all reflect and  
absorb his rays alike, and the former make but  
a small part of the glorious picture which he  
beholds in his daily course. In his view the earth  
is all equally cultivated like a garden. There-  
fore we should receive the benefit of his light  
and heat with a corresponding trust and mag-  
nanimity. What though I value the seed of  
these beans, and harvest that in the fall of the  
year? This broad field which I have looked  
at so long looks not to me as the principal culti-  
vator, but away from me to influences more  
genial to it, which water and make it green.  
‘These beans have results which are not harvested  
by me. Do they not grow for woodchucks  
partly? The ear of wheat (in Latin spica,  
obsoletely speca, from spe, hope) should not be  
the only hope of the husbandman; its kernel  
or grain (granum, from gerendo, bearing) is not  
all that it bears. How, then, can our harvest  
fail? Shall I not rejoice also at the abundance  
of the weeds whose seeds are the granary of the  
birds? It matters little comparatively whether  
the fields fill the farmer’s barns. The true  
husbandman will cease from anxiety, as the

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220 WALDEN  
  
squirrels manifest no concern whether the woods  
will bear chestnuts this year or not, and finish  
his labor with every day, relinquishing all claint  
to the produce of his fields, and sacrificing in his  
mind not only his first but his last fruits also.

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Vit.  
THE VILLAGE  
  
FTER hoeing, or perhaps reading and  
writing, in the forenoon, I usually bathed  
again in the pond, swimming across one  
  
of its coves for a stint, and washed the dust of  
labor from my person, or smoothed out the last  
wrinkle which study had made, and for the  
afternoon was absolutely free. Every day or  
two I strolled to the village to hear some of the  
gossip which is incessantly going on there,  
circulating either from mouth to mouth, or  
from newspaper to newspaper, and which, taken  
in homeeopathic doses, was really as refreshing  
in its way as the rustle of leaves and the peep-  
ing of frogs. As I walked in the woods to see  
the birds and squirrels, so I walked in the village  
to see the men and boys; instead of the wind  
among the pines I heard the carts rattle. In  
one direction from my house there was a colony  
of muskrats in the river meadows; under the  
grove of elms and buttonwoods in the other  
horizon was a village of busy men, as curious  
to me as if they had been prairie dogs, each  
sitting at the mouth of its burrow, or running

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222 WALDEN  
  
over to a neighbor's to gossip. I went there fre-  
quently to observe their habits. The village  
appeared to me a great news room; and on  
one side to support it, as once at Redding &  
Company’s on State Street, they kept nuts and  
raisins, or salt and meal and other groceries.  
Some have such a vast appetite for the former  
commodity, that is, the news, and such sound  
digestive organs, that they can sit forever in  
public avenues without stirring, and let it simmer  
and whisper through them like the Etesian winds,  
or as if inhaling ether, it only producing numb-  
ness and insensibility to pain, — otherwise it  
would be often painful to hear, — without affect-  
ing the consciousness. I hardly ever failed,  
when I rambled through the village, to see a  
row of such worthies, either sitting on a ladder  
sunning themselves, with their bodies inclined  
forward and their eyes glancing along the line  
this way and that, from time to time, with a  
voluptuous expression, or else leaning against  
a barn with their hands in their pockets, like  
caryatides, as if to prop it up. They, being  
commonly out of doors, heard whatever was in  
the wind. These are the coarsest mills, in  
which all gossip is first rudely digested or  
cracked up before it is emptied into finer and  
more delicate hoppers within doors. I observed  
that the vitals of the village were the grocery,  
the bar-room, the post-office, and the bank;

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THE VILLAGE 223  
  
and, as a necessary part of the machinery, they  
kept a bell, a big gun, and a fire-engine, at con-  
venient places; and the houses were so arranged  
as to make the most of mankind, in lanes and  
fronting one another, so that every traveller  
had to run the gantlet, and every man, woman,  
and child might get a lick at him. Of course,  
those who were stationed nearest to the head  
of the line, where they could most see and be  
seen, and have the first blow at him, paid the  
highest prices for their places; and the few  
straggling inhabitants in the outskirts, where  
long gaps in the line began to occur, and the  
traveller could get over walls or turn aside into  
cow paths, and so escape, paid a very slight  
ground or window tax. Signs were hung out  
on all sides to allure him; some to catch him  
by the appetite, as the tavern and victualling  
cellar; some by the fancy, as the dry goods  
store and the jeweller's; and others by the hair  
or the feet or the skirts, as the barber, the shoe-  
maker, or the tailor. Besides, there was a still  
more terrible standing invitation to call at  
every one of these houses, and company expected  
about these times. For the most part I escaped  
wonderfully from these dangers, either by pro-  
ceeding at once boldly and without deliberation  
to the goal, as is recommended to those who run  
the gantlet, or by keeping my thoughts on high  
things, like Orpheus, who, “loudly singing the

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224 WALDEN  
  
praises of the gods to his lyre, drowned the  
voices of the Sirens, and kept out of danger.”  
Sometimes I bolted suddenly, and nobody  
could tell my whereabouts, for I did not stand  
much about gracefulness, and never hesitated  
at a gap in the fence. I was even accustomed  
to make an irruption into some houses, where  
T was well entertained, and after learning the  
kernels and very last sieve-ful of news, what  
had subsided, the prospects of war and peace,  
and whether the world was likely to hold to-  
gether much longer, I was let out through the  
Tear avenues, and so escaped to the woods again.  
  
Tt was very pleasant, when I stayed late in  
town, to launch myself into the night, especially  
if it was dark and tempestuous, and set sail  
from some bright village parlor or lecture room,  
with a bag of rye or Indian meal upon my  
shoulder, for my snug harbor in the woods,  
having made all tight without and withdrawn  
under hatches with a merry crew of thoughts,  
leaving only my outer man at the helm, or even  
tying up the helm when it was plain sailing. I  
had many a genial thought by the cabin fire  
“as I sailed.” I was never cast away nor dis-  
tressed in any weather, though I encountered  
some severe storms. It is darker in the woods,  
even in common nights, than most suppose.  
I frequently had to look up at the opening be-  
tween the trees above the path in order to learn

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A winter road near Thoreau's cabin

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Google

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THE VILLAGE 225  
  
my route, and, where there was no cart-path,  
to feel with my feet the faint track which I had  
worn, or steer by the known relation of partic-  
ular trees which I felt with my hands, passing  
between two pines for instance, not more than  
eighteen inches apart, in the midst of the woods,  
invariably in the darkest night. Sometimes,  
after coming home thus late in a dark and  
muggy night, when my feet felt the path which  
my eyes could not see, dreaming and absent-  
minded all the way, until I was aroused by hav-  
ing to raise my hand to lift the latch, I have not  
been able to recall a single step of my walk, and  
I have thought that perhaps my body would  
find its way home if its master should forsake  
it, as the hand finds its way to the mouth with-  
out assistance. Several times, when a visitor  
chanced to stay into evening, and it proved a  
dark night, I was obliged to conduct him to the  
cart-path in the rear of the house, and then point  
out to him the direction he was to pursue, and  
in keeping which he was to be guided rather by  
his feet than his eyes. One very dark night I  
directed thus on their way two young men who  
had been fishing in the pond. They lived about  
a mile off through the woods, and were quite  
used to the route. A day or two after one of  
them told me that they wandered about the  
greater part of the night, close by their own  
premises, and did not get home till toward  
8

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226 WALDEN  
  
morning, by which time, as there had been  
several heavy showers in the meanwhile, and  
the leaves were very wet, they were drenched  
to their skins. I have heard of many going astray  
even in the village streets, when the darkness  
was so thick that you could cut it with a knife,  
as the saying is. Some who live in the out-  
skirts, having come to town a-shopping in their  
wagons, have been obliged to put up for the  
night; and gentlemen and ladies making a call  
have gone half a mile out of their way, feeling  
the sidewalk only with their feet, and not know-  
ing when they turned. It is a surprising and  
memorable, as well as valuable experience, to  
be lost in the woods any time. Often in a snow  
storm, even by day, one will come out upon a  
well-known road and yet find it impossible to  
tell which way leads to the village. Though he  
knows that he has travelled it a thousand times,  
he cannot recognize a feature in it, but it is as  
strange to him as if it were a road in Siberia.  
By night, of course, the perplexity is infinitely  
greater. In our most trivial walks, we are con-  
stantly, though unconsciously, steering like pilots  
by certain well-known beacons and head-lands,  
and if we go beyond our usual course we still  
carry in our minds the bearing of some neigh-  
boring cape; and not till we are completely lost,  
or turned round, — for a man needs only to he  
turned round once with his eyes shut in this

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THE VILLAGE 227  
  
world to be lost, —do we appreciate the vast-  
ness and strangeness of Nature. Every man  
has to learn the points of compass again as often  
as he awakes, whether from sleep or any abstrac-  
tion. Not till we are lost, in other words, not  
till we have lost the world, do we begin to find  
ourselves, and realize where we are and the  
infinite extent of our relations.  
  
One afternoon, near the end of the first  
summer, when I went to the village to get a shoe  
from the cobbler’s, I was seized and put into  
jail, because, as I have elsewhere related, I did  
not pay a tax to, or recognize the authority of,  
the state, which buys and sells men, women,  
and children, like cattle at the door of its senate-  
house. I had gone down to the woods for other  
purposes. But, wherever a man goes, men will  
pursue and paw him with their dirty institu-  
tions, and, if they can, constrain him to-belong  
to their desperate odd-fellow society. It is true,  
I might have resisted forcibly with more or less  
effect, might have run “amok” against society;  
but I preferred that society should run “amok”  
against me, it being the desperate party. How-  
ever, I was released the next day, obtained my  
mended shoe, and returned to the woods in  
season to get my dinner of huckleberries on Fair-  
Haven Hill. I was never molested by any  
person but those who represented the state.  
I had no lock nor bolt but for the desk which

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228 ‘WALDEN  
  
held my papers, not even a nail to put over my  
latch or windows. I never fastened my door  
night or day, though I was to be absent several  
days; not even when the next fall I spent a  
fortnight in the woods of Maine. And yet my  
house was more respected than if it had been  
surrounded by a file of soldiers. The tired  
rambler could rest and warm himself by my  
fire, the literary amuse himself with the few  
books on my table, or the curious, by opening  
my closet door, see what was left of my dinner,  
and what prospect I had of a supper. Yet,  
though many people of every class came this  
way to the pond, I suffered no serious incon-  
venience from these sources, and I never missed  
anything but one small book, a volume of Homer,  
which perhaps was improperly gilded, and this  
I trust a soldier of our camp has found by this  
time. I am convinced that if all men were to  
live as simply as I then did, thieving and rob-  
bery would be unknown. ‘These take place only  
in communities where some have got more than  
is sufficient while others have not enough. The  
Pope’s Homers would soon get properly dis-  
tributed. —  
  
“Nec bella fuerunt,  
| Faginus astabat dum scyphus ante dapes.””  
  
“Nor wars did men molest,  
When only beechen bowls were in request.”

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THE VILLAGE 229  
  
“You who govern public affairs, what need have  
you to employ punishments? Love virtue, and  
the people will be virtuous. The virtues of a  
superior man are like the wind; the virtues of a  
‘common man are like the grass; the grass, when  
the wind passes over it, bends.”

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Ix  
‘THE PONDS  
  
OMETIMES, having had a surfeit of hu-  
man society and gossip, and worn out  
all my village friends, I rambled still  
  
farther westward than I habitually dwell, into  
yet more unfrequented parts of the town, “to  
fresh woods and pastures new,” or, while the  
sun was setting, made my supper of huckle-  
berries and blueberries on Fair-Haven Hill, and  
laid up a store for several days. The fruits do  
not yield their true flavor to the purchaser of  
them, nor to him who raises them for the market.  
‘There is but one way to obtain it, yet few take  
that way. If you would know the flavor of  
huckleberries, ask the cow-boy or the partridge.  
It is a vulgar error to suppose that you have  
tasted huckleberries who never plucked them.  
‘A huckleberry never reaches Boston; they have  
not been known there since they grew on her  
three hills. The ambrosial’and essential part of  
the fruit is lost with the bloom which is rubbed off  
in the market cart, and they become mere prov-  
ender. As long as Eternal Justice reigns, not one

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Jn the woods near Fair-Haven Hill

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THE PONDS 231  
  
innocent huckleberry can be transported thither  
from the country’s hills.  
  
Occasionally, after my hoeing was done for the  
day, I joined some impatient companion who  
had been fishing on the pond since morning, as  
silent and motionless as a duck or a floating leaf,  
and, after practising various kinds of philosophy,  
had concluded commonly, by the time I arrived,  
that he belonged to the ancient sect of Coeno-  
bites. There was one older man, an excellent  
fisher and skilled in all kinds of woodcraft, who  
was pleased to look upon my house as a building  
erected for the convenience of fishermen; and I  
was equally pleased when he sat in my doorway  
to arrange his lines. Once in a while we sat to-  
gether on the pond, he at one end of the boat,  
and I at the other; but not many words passed  
between us, for he had grown deaf in his later  
years, but he occasionally hummed a psalm,  
which harmonized well enough with my philos-  
ophy. Our intercourse was thus altogether one  
of unbroken harmony, far more pleasing to re-  
member than if it had been carried on by speech.  
When, as was commonly the case, I had none to  
commune with, I used to raise the echoes by  
striking with a paddle on the side of my boat,  
filling the surrounding woods with circling and  
dilating sound, stirring them up as the keeper of  
a menagerie his wild beasts, until I elicited a  
growl from every wooded vale and hill side.

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232 WALDEN  
  
In warm evenings I frequently sat in the boat  
playing the flute, and saw the perch, which I  
seemed to have charmed, hovering around me,  
and the moon travelling over the ribbed bottom,  
which was strewed with the wrecks of the forest.  
Formerly I had come to this pond adventurously,  
from time to time, in dark summer nights, with a  
companion, and making a fre close to the water's  
edge, which we thought attracted the fishes, we  
caught pouts with a bunch of worms strung on a  
thread; and when we had done, far in the night,  
threw the burning brands high into the air like  
sky-rockets, which, coming down into the pond,  
were quenched with a loud hissing, and we were  
suddenly groping in total darkness. ‘Through  
this, whistling a tune, we'took our way to the  
haunts of men again. But now I had made my  
home by the shore.  
  
Sometimes, after staying in a village parlor  
till the family had all retired, I have returned to  
the woods, and, partly with a view to the next  
day’s dinner, spent the hours of midnight fishing  
from a boat by moonlight, serenaded by owls  
and foxes, and hearing, from time to time, the  
creaking note of some unknown bird close at  
hand. These experiences were very memorable  
and valuable to me, — anchored in forty feet of  
water, and twenty or thirty rods from the shore,  
surrounded sometimes by thousands of small  
perch and shiners, dimpling the surface with

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their tails in the moonlight, and communicating  
by a long flaxen line with mysterious nocturnal  
fishes which had their dwelling forty feet below,  
or sometimes dragging sixty feet of line about the  
pond as I drifted in the gentle night breeze, now  
and then feeling a slight vibration along it, in-  
dicative of some life prowling about its extrem-  
ity, of dull uncertain blundering purpose there,  
and slow to make up its mind. At length you  
slowly raise, pulling hand over hand, some horned  
pout squeaking and squirming to the upper  
air. It was very queer, especially in dark nights,  
when your thoughts had wandered to vast and  
cosmogonal themes in other spheres, to feel this  
faint jerk, which came to interrupt your dreams  
and link you to Nature again. It seemed as if I  
might next cast my line upward into the air, as  
well as downward into this element which was  
scarcely more dense. Thus I caught two fishes  
as it were with one hook.  
  
The scenery of Walden is on a humble scale,  
and, though very beautiful, does not approach to  
grandeur, nor can it much concern one who has  
not long frequented it, or lived by its shore; yet  
this pond is so remarkable for its depth and  
purity as to merit a particular description. It  
is a clear and deep green well, half a mile long  
and a mile and three quarters in circumference,  
and contains about sixty-one and a half acres:  
a perennial spring in the midst of pine and oak '

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234 WALDEN  
  
woods, without any visible inlet or outlet except  
  
‘ by the clouds and evaporation. The surrounding  
veo Ul  
  
lls rise abruptly from the water to the height  
of forty to eighty feet, though on the southeast  
and east they attain to about one hundred and  
one hundred and fifty feet respectively, within a  
quarter and a third of a mile. They are exclu-  
sively woodland. All our Concord waters have  
two colors at least, one when viewed at a dis-  
tance, and another, more proper, close at hand.  
‘The first depends more on the light, and follows  
the sky. In clear weather, in summer, they ap-  
pear blue at a little distance, especially if agitated,  
and ata great distance all appear alike. In stormy  
weather they are sometimes of a dark slate color.  
The sea, however, is said to be blue one day and  
green another without any perceptible change in  
the atmosphere. I have seen our river, when,  
the landscape being covered with snow, both  
water and ice were almost as green as grass.  
Some consider blue “to be the color of pure  
water, whether liquid or solid.” But, looking  
directly down into our waters from a boat, they  
are seen to be of very different colors. Walden is  
blue at one time and green at another, even from  
the same point of view. Lying between the earth  
and the heavens, it partakes of the color of bath.  
Viewed from a hill top it reflects the color of the  
sky, but near at hand it is of a yellowish tint  
next the shore where you can see the sand, then

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a;light green, which gradually deepens to a uni-  
form dark green in the body of the pond. In some  
lights, viewed even from a hill top, it is of a  
vivid green next the shore. Some have referred  
this to the reflection of the verdure; but it is  
equally green there against the railroad sand-  
bank, and in the spring, before the leaves are ex-  
panded, and it may be simply the result of the  
prevailing blue mixed with the yellow of the sand.  
Such is the color of its iris. ‘This is that portion,  
also, where in the spring, the ice being warmed  
by the heat of the sun reflected from the bottom,  
and also transmitted through the earth, melts  
first and forms a narrow canal about the still  
frozen middle. Like the rest of our waters, when  
much agitated, in clear weather, so that the  
surface of the waves may reflect the sky at the  
right angle, or because there is more light mixed  
with it, it appears at a little distance of a darker  
blue than the sky itself; and at such a time, being  
on its surface, and looking with divided vision,  
so as to see the reflection, I have discerned a  
matchless and indescribable light blue, such as  
watered or changeable silks and sword blades  
suggest, more cerulean than the sky itself, alter-  
nating with the original dark green on the oppo-  
site sides of the waves, which last appeared but  
muddy in comparison. It is a vitreous greenish  
blue, as I remember it, like those patches of the  
winter sky seen through cloud vistas in the west

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before sundown. Yet a single glass of its water  
held up to the light is as colorless as an equal  
quantity of air. It is well-known that a large  
plate of glass will have a green tint, owing, as  
the makers say, to its “body,” but a small piece  
of the same will be colorless. How large a body  
of Walden water would be required to reflect a  
green tint I have never proved. The water of  
our river is black or a very dark brown to one  
looking directly down on it, and like that of most  
ponds, imparts to the body of one bathing in it  
a yellowish tinge; but this water is of such  
crystalline purity that the body of the bather  
appears of an alabaster whiteness, still more un-  
natural, which, as the limbs are magnified and  
distorted withal, produces a monstrous effect,  
making fit studies for a Michael Angelo.  
  
‘The water is so transparent that the bottom  
can easily be discerned at the depth of twenty-  
five or thirty feet. Paddling over it, you may see  
many feet beneath the surface the schools of  
perch and shiners, perhaps only an inch long,  
yet the former easily distinguished by their  
transverse bars, and you think that they must  
be ascetic fish that find a subsistence there.  
‘Once, in the winter, many years ago, when I had  
been cutting holes through the ice in order to  
catch pickerel, as I stepped ashore I tossed my  
axe back on to the ice, but, as if some evil genius  
had directed it, it slid four or five rods directly

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THE PONDS 37  
  
into one of the holes, where the water was twenty-  
five feet deep. Out of curiosity, I lay down on the  
ice and looked through the hole, until I saw the  
axe a little on one side, standing on its head, with  
its helve erect and gently swaying to and fro with  
the pulse of the pond; and there it might have  
stood erect and swaying till in the course of time  
the handle rotted off, if I had not disturbed it.  
  
ing another hole directly over it with an ice  
chisel which I had, and cutting down the longest  
birch which I could find in the neighborhood  
with my knife, I made a slip-noose, which I  
attached to its end, and, letting it down care-  
fully, passed it over the knob of the handle, and  
drew it by a line along the birch, and so pulled  
the axe out again.  
  
The shore is composed of a belt of smooth  
rounded white stones like paving stones, except-  
ing one or two short sand beaches, and is so steep  
that in many places a single leap will carry you  
into water over your head; and were it not for its  
remarkable transparency, that would be the last  
to be seen of its bottom till it rose on the oppo-  
site side. Some think it is bottomless. It is no-  
where muddy, and a casual observer would say  
that there were no weeds at all in it; and of notice-  
able plants, except in the little meadows recently  
overflowed, which do not properly belong to it,  
a closer scrutiny does not detect a flag nor a bul-  
rush, nor even a lily, yellow or white, but only a

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few small heart-leaves and potamogetons, and  
perhaps a water-target or two; all which however  
a bather might not perceive; and these plants are  
clean and bright like the element they grow in.  
‘The stones extend a rod or two into the water,  
and then the bottom is pure sand, except in the  
deepest parts, where there is usually a little  
sediment, probably from the decay of the leaves,  
which have been wafted on to it so many succes-  
sive falls, and a bright green weed is brought up  
on anchors even in midwinter.  
  
We have one other pond just like this, White  
Pond in Nine Acre Corner, about two and a half  
miles westerly; but, though I am acquainted  
with most of the ponds within a dozen miles of  
this centre, I do not know a third of this pure  
and well-like character. Successive nations per-  
chance have drunk at, admired, and fathomed  
it, and passed away, and still its water is green  
and pellucid as ever. Not an intermitting  
spring! Perhaps on that spring morning when  
Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden Walden  
Pond was already in existence, and even then  
breaking up in a gentle spring rain accompanied  
with mist and a southerly wind, and covered  
with myriads of ducks and geese, which had not  
heard of the fall, when still such pure lakes suf-  
fied them. Even then it had commenced to  
rise and fall, and had clarified its waters, and  
colored them of the hue they now wear, and ob-

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donuyen us wary paorueg 245,

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THE PONDS 239  
  
tained a patent of heaven to be the only Walden  
Pond in the world and distiller of celestial dews.  
‘Who knows in how many unremembered na-  
tions’ literatures this has been the Castalian  
Fountain? or what nymphs presided over it in  
the Golden Age? It is a gem of the first water  
which Concord wears in her coronet.  
  
Yet perchance the first who came to this well  
have left some trace of their footsteps. I have  
been surprised to detect encircling the pond,  
even where a thick wood has just been cut down  
on the shore, a narrow shelf-like path in the steep  
hill side, alternately rising and falling, approach-  
ing and receding from the water’s edge, as old  
probably as the race of man here, worn by the  
feet of aboriginal hunters, and still from time to  
time unwittingly trodden by the present occu-  
pants of the land. This is particularly distinct  
to one standing on the middle of the pond in  
winter, just after a light snow has fallen, appear-  
ing as a clear undulating white line, unobscured  
by weeds and twigs, and very obvious a quarter  
of a mile off in many places where in summer it is  
hardly distinguishable close at hand. The snow  
reprints it, as it were, in clear white type alto-  
relievo. The ornamented grounds of villas which  
will one day be built here may still preserve some  
trace of this.  
  
‘The pond rises and falls, but whether regularly  
or not, and within what period, nobody knows,

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though, as usual, many pretend to‘know. It is  
commonly higher in the winter and lower in the  
summer, though not corresponding to the gen-  
eral wet and dryness. I can remember when it  
was a foot or two lower, and also when it was at  
least five feet higher, than when I lived by it.  
‘There is a narrow sand-bar running into it, very  
deep water on one side, on which I helped boil  
a kettle of chowder, some six rods from the main  
shore, about the year 1824, which it has not been  
possible to do for twenty-five years; and on the  
other hand, my friends used to listen with incre-  
dulity when I told them that a few years later I  
was accustomed to fish from a boat in a secluded  
cove in the woods, fifteen rods from the only  
shore they knew, which place was long since  
converted into a meadow. But the pond has  
risen steadily for two years, and now, in the  
summer of '62, is just five feet higher than when  
I lived there, or as high as it was thirty years  
ago, and fishing goes on again in the meadow.  
This makes a difference of level, at the outside,  
of six or seven feet; and yet the water shed by  
the surrounding hills is insignificant in amount,  
and this overflow must be referred to causes  
which affect the deep springs. This same sum-  
mer the pond has begun to fall again. It is  
remarkable that this fluctuation, whether period-  
ical or not, appears thus to require many years  
for its accomplishment. I have observed one

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THE PONDS R41  
  
rise and a part of two falls, and I expect that a  
dozen or fifteen years hence the water will again  
be as low as I have ever known it. Flint’s Pond,  
a mile eastward, allowing for the disturbance oc-  
casioned by its inlets and outlets, and the smaller  
intermediate ponds also, sympathize with Walden,  
and recently attained their greatest height at  
the same time with the latter. ‘The same is true,  
as far as my observation goes, of White Pond.  
  
This rise and fall of Walden at long intervals  
serves this use at least: the water standing at  
this great height for a year or more, though it  
makes it difficult to walk round it, kills the  
shrubs and trees which have sprung up about  
its edge since the last rise, pitch-pines, birches,  
alders, aspens, and others, and, falling again,  
leaves an unobstructed shore; for, unlike many  
ponds, and all waters which are subject to a  
daily tide, its shore is cleanest when the water is  
lowest. On the side of the pond next my house,  
a row of pitch-pines fifteen feet high has been  
killed and tipped over as if by a lever, and thus  
a stop put to their encroachments; and their  
size indicates how many years have elapsed  
since the last rise to this height. By this fuctu-  
ation the pond asserts its title to a shore, and  
thus the shore is shorn, and the trees cannot hold  
it by right of possession. These are the lips of  
the lake on which no beard-grows. It licks its  
chaps from time to time. When the water is at

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242 WALDEN  
  
its height, the alders, willows, and maples send  
forth a mass of fibrous red roots several feet long  
from all sides of their stems in the water, and to  
the height of three or four feet from the ground,  
in the effort to maintain themselves; and I have  
known the high blueberry bushes about the  
shore, which commonly produce no fruit, bear  
an abundant crop under these circumstances.  
Some have been puzzled to tell how the shore  
became so regularly paved. My townsmen have  
all heard the tradition, the oldest people tell me  
that they heard it in their youth, that anciently  
the Indians were holding a pow-wow upon a  
hill here, which rose as high into the heavens as  
the pond now sinks deep into the earth, and they  
used much profanity, as the story goes, though  
this vice is one of which the Indians were never  
guilty, and while they were thus engaged the  
hill shook and suddenly sank, and only one old  
squaw, named Walden, escaped, and from her  
the pond was named. It has been conjectured  
that when the hill shook these stones rolled  
down its side and became the present shore. It  
is very certain, at any rate, that once there was  
no pond here, and now there is one; and this  
Indian fable does not in any respect conflict with  
the account of that ancient settler whom I have  
mentioned, who remembers so well when he  
first came here with his divining-rod, saw a thin  
vapor rising from the sward, and the hazel

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The stony shore

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THE PONDS 23  
  
pointed steadily downward, and he concluded  
to dig a well here. As for the stones, many still  
think that they are hardly to be accounted for  
by the action of the waves on these hills; but I  
observe that the surrounding hills are remark-  
ably full of the same kind of stones, so that they  
have been obliged to pile them up in walls on  
both sides of the railroad cut nearest the pond;  
and, moreover, there are most stones where the  
shore is most abrupt; so that, unfortunately, it  
is no longer a mystery to me. I detect the paver.  
If the name was not derived from that of some  
English locality, —Saffron Walden, for in-  
stance, — one might suppose that it was called,  
originally, Walled-in Pond.  
  
‘The pond was my well ready dug. For four  
months in the year its water is as cold as it is  
pure at all times; and I think that it is then as  
good as any, if not the best, in the town. In the  
winter, all water which is exposed to the air is  
colder than springs and wells which are pro-  
tected from it. The temperature of the pond  
water which had stood in the room where I sat  
from five o’clock in the afternoon till noon the  
next day, the sixth of March, 1846, the ther-  
mometer having been up to 65° or 70° some of  
the time, owing partly to the sun on the roof,  
was 42°, or one degree colder than the water of  
one of the coldest wells in the village just drawn.  
‘The temperature of the Boiling Spring the same

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244 WALDEN  
  
day was 45°, or the warmest of any water tried,  
though it is the coldest that I know of in summer,  
when, besides, shallow and stagnant surface  
water is not mingled with it. Moreover, in  
summer, Walden never becomes so warm as  
most water which is exposed to the sun, on ac-  
count of its depth. In the warmest weather I  
usually placed a pailful in my cellar, where it  
became cool in the night, and remained so dur-  
ing the day; though I also resorted to a spring  
in the neighborhood. It was as good when a  
week old as the day it was dipped, and had no  
taste of the pump. Whoever camps for a week  
in summer by the shore of a pond, needs only  
bury a pail of water a few feet deep in the shade  
of his camp to be independent of the luxury of  
ice.  
  
‘There have been caught in Walden, pickerel,  
one weighing seven pounds, to say nothing of  
another which carried off a reel with great veloc-  
ity, which the fisherman safely set down at eight  
pounds because he did not see him, perch and  
pouts, some of each weighing over two pounds,  
shiners, chivins or roach (Leuciscus pulchellus),  
a very few breams, and a couple of eels, one  
weighing four pounds, —I am thus particular  
because the weight of a fish is commonly its  
only title to fame, and these are the only eels I  
have heard of here; — also, I have a faint recol-  
lection of a little fish some five inches long, with

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THE PONDS 245  
  
silvery sides and a greenish back, somewhat  
dace-like in its character, which I mention here  
chiefly to link my facts to fable. Nevertheless,  
this pond is not very fertile in fish. Its pickerel,  
though not abundant, are its chief boast. I have  
seen at one time lying on the ice pickerel of at  
least three different kinds: a long and shallow  
one, steel-colored, most like those caught in the  
river; a bright golden kind, with greenish re-  
flections and remarkably deep, which is the most  
common here; and another, golden-colored,  
and shaped like the last, but peppered on the  
sides with small dark brown or black spots, in-  
termixed with a few faint blood-red ones very  
much like a trout. The specific name reticu-  
latus would not apply to this; it should be  
gulatus rather. These are all very firm fish,  
and weigh more than their size promises. The  
shiners, pouts, and perch, also, and indeed afl  
the fishes which inhabit this pond, are much  
cleaner, handsomer, and firmer fleshed than  
those in the river and most other ponds, as the  
water is purer, and they can easily be distin-  
guished from them. Probably many ichthyolo-  
gists would make new varieties of some of them.  
‘There are also a clean race of frogs and tortoises,  
and a few mussels in it; muskrats and minks  
leave their traces about and occasionally a  
travelling mud-turtle visits it. Sometimes, when  
I pushed off my boat in the morning, I disturbed

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246 WALDEN  
  
a great mud-turtle which had secreted himself  
under the boat in the night. Ducks and geese  
frequent it in the spring and fall, the white-  
bellied swallows (Hirundo bicolor) skim over it,  
and the peetweets (Totanus macularius) “teter”  
along its stony shores all summer. I have some-  
times disturbed a fishhawk sitting on a white-  
pine over the water; but I doubt if it is ever  
profaned by the wing of a gull, like Fair-Haven.  
At most, it tolerates one annual loon. These  
are all the animals of consequence which fre-  
quent it now.  
  
You may see from a boat, in calm weather,  
near the sandy eastern shore, where the water  
is eight or ten feet deep, and also in some other  
parts of the pond, some circular heaps half a  
dozen feet in diameter by a foot in height, con-  
sisting of small stones less than a hen’s egg in  
size, where all around is bare sand. At first you  
wonder if the Indians could have formed them  
on the ice for any purpose, and so, when the  
ice melted, they sank to the bottom; but they  
are too regular and some of them plainly too  
fresh for that. They are similar to those found  
in rivers; but as there are no suckers nor lam-  
preys here, I know not by what fish they could be  
made. Perhaps they are the nests of the chivin.  
These lend a pleasing mystery to the bottom.  
  
‘The shore is irregular enough not to be mo-  
notonous. I have in my mind’s eye the western

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THE PONDS aay  
  
indented with deep bays, the bolder northern,  
and the beautifully scalloped southern shore,  
where successive capes overlap each other and  
suggest unexplored coves between. The forest  
has never so good a setting, nor is so distinctly  
beautiful, as when seen from the middle of a  
small lake amid hills which rise from the water's  
edge; for the water in which it is reflected not  
only makes the best foreground in such a case,  
but, with its winding shore, the most natural  
and agreeable boundary to it. There is no raw-  
ness nor imperfection in its edge there, as where  
the axe has cleared a part, or a cultivated field  
abuts on it. ‘The trees have ample room to ex-  
pand on the water side, and each sends forth its  
most vigorous branch in that direction. There  
Nature has woven a natural selvage, and the  
eye rises by just gradations from the low shrubs  
of the shore to the highest trees. ‘There are few  
traces of man’s hand to be seen. The water  
laves the shore as it did a thousand years ago.  
  
A lake is the landscape’s most beautiful and  
expressive feature. It is earth’s eye; looking  
into which the beholder measures the depth of  
his own nature, The fluviatile trees next the  
shore are the slender eyelashes which fringe it,  
and the wooded hills and cliffs around are its  
overhanging brows.  
  
Standing on the smooth sandy beach at the  
east end of the pond, in a calm September after-

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248 WALDEN  
  
noon, when a slight haze makes the opposite  
shore line indistinct, I have seen whence came  
the expression, “the glassy surface of a lake.”  
When you invert your head, it looks like a  
thread of finest gossamer stretched across the  
valley, and gleaming against the distant pine  
woods, separating one stratum of the atmos-  
phere from another. You would think that you  
could walk dry under it to the opposite hills, and  
that the swallows which skim over might perch  
on it. Indeed, they sometimes dive below the  
line, as it were by mistake, and are undeceived.  
‘As you look over the pond westward you are  
obliged to employ both your hands to defend  
your eyes against the reflected as well as the true  
sun, for they are equally bright; and if, between  
the two, you survey its surface critically, it is  
literally as smooth as glass, except where the  
skater insects, at equal intervals scattered over  
its whole extent, by their motions in the sun pro-  
duce the finest imaginable sparkle on it, or, per-  
chance, a duck plumes itself, or, as I have said,  
a swallow skims so low as to touch it. It may be  
that in the distance a fish describes an arc of  
three or four feet in the air, and there is one  
bright flash where it emerges, and another  
where it strikes the water; sometimes the whole  
silvery arc is revealed; or here and there, per-  
haps, is a thistle-down floating on its surface,  
which the fishes dart at and so dimple it again.

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THE PONDS 249  
  
It is like molten glass cooled but not congealed,  
and the few motes in it are pure and beautiful  
like the imperfections in glass. You may often  
detect a yet smoother and darker water, sep-  
arated from the rest as if by an invisible cobweb,  
boom of the water nymphs, resting on it. From  
a hill top you can see a fish leap in almost any  
part; for not a pickerel or shiner picks an insect  
from this smooth surface but it manifestly dis-  
turbs the equilibrium of the whole lake. It is  
wonderful with what elaborateness this simple  
fact is advertised, — this piscine murder will  
out, — and from my distant perch I distinguish  
the circling undulations when they are half a  
dozen rods in diameter. You can even detect a  
water-bug (Gyrinus) ceaselessly progressing over  
the smooth surface a quarter of a mile off; for  
they furrow the water slightly, making a con-  
spicuous ripple bounded by two diverging lines,  
but the skaters glide over it without rippling it  
perceptibly. When the surface is considerably  
itated there are no skaters nor water-bugs on  
it, but apparently, in calm days, they leave their  
havens and adventurously glide forth from the  
shore by short impulses till they completely  
cover it. It is a soothing employment, on one  
of those fine days in the fall when all the warmth  
of the sun is fully appreciated, to sit on a stump  
on such a height as this, overlooking the pond,  
and study the dimpling circles which are inces-

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250 WALDEN  
  
santly inscribed on its otherwise invisible sur-  
face amid the reflected skies and trees. Over  
this great expanse there is no disturbance but it  
is thus at once gently smoothed away and as-  
suaged, as, when a vase of water is jarred, the  
trembling circles seek the shore and all is smooth  
again. Not a fish can leap or an insect fall on  
the pond but it is thus reported in circling  
dimples, in lines of beauty, as it were the con-  
stant welling up of its fountain, the gentle pulsing  
of its life, the heaving of its breast. ‘The thrills  
of joy and thrills of pain are undistinguishable.  
How peaceful the phenomena of the lake!  
Again the works of man shine as in the spring.  
Ay, every leaf and twig and stone and cobweb  
sparkles now at mid-afternoon as when covered  
with dew in a spring morning. Every motion  
of an oar or an insect produces a flash of light;  
and if an oar falls, how sweet the echo!  
  
In such a day in September or October, Wal-  
den is a perfect forest mirror, set round with  
stones as precious to my eye as if fewer or rarer.  
Nothing so fair, so pure, and at the same time  
so large, as a lake, perchance, lies on the sur-  
face of the earth. Sky water. It needs no fence.  
Nations come and go without defiling it. It is  
a mirror which no stone can crack, whose  
quicksilver will never wear off, whose gilding  
Nature continually repairs; no storms, no dust,  
can dim its surface ever fresh;—a mirror in

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THE PONDS 251  
  
which all impurity presented to it sinks, swept  
and dusted by the sun’s hazy brush, — this the  
light dust-cloth, —which retains no breath that  
is breathed on it, but sends its own to float as  
clouds high above its surface, and be reflected  
in its bosom still.  
  
A field of water betrays the spirit that is in  
the air. It is continually receiving new life  
and motion from above. It is intermediate in  
its nature between land and sky. On land only  
the grass and trees wave, but the water itself is  
rippled by the wind. I see where the breeze  
dashes across it by the streaks or flakes of light.  
It is remarkable that we can look down on its  
surface. We shall, perhaps, look down thus on  
the surface of air at length, and mark where a  
still subtler spirit sweeps over it.  
  
‘The skaters and water-bugs finally disappear  
in the latter part of October, when the severe  
frosts have come; and then and in November,  
usually, in a calm day, there is absolutely noth-  
ing to ripple the surface. One November after-  
noon, in the calm at the end of a rain storm of  
several days’ duration, when the sky was still  
completely overcast and the air was full of mist,  
T observed that the pond was remarkably smooth,  
so that it was difficult to distinguish its surface;  
though it no longer reflected the bright tints of  
October, but the sombre November colors of  
the surrounding hills. Though I passed over it

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252 WALDEN  
  
as gently as possible, the slight undulations pro-  
duced by my boat extended almost as far as I  
could see, and gave a ribbed appearance to the  
reflections. But, as I was looking over the sur-  
face, I saw here and there at a distance a faint  
glimmer, as if some skater insects which had  
escaped the frosts might be collected there, or,  
perchance, the surface, being so smooth, be-  
trayed where a spring welled up from the bot-  
tom. Paddling gently to one of these places, I  
was surprised to find myself surrounded by  
myriads of small perch, about five inches long,  
of a rich bronze color in the green water, sport-  
ing there and constantly rising to the surface  
and dimpling it, sometimes leaving bubbles on  
it. In such transparent and seemingly bottom-  
less water, reflecting the clouds, I seemed to be  
fioating through the air as in a balloon, and  
their swimming impressed me as a kind of flight  
or hovering, as if they were a compact flock of  
birds passing just beneath my level on the right  
or left, their fins, like sails, set all around them.  
‘There were many such schools in the pond, ap-  
parently improving the short season before  
winter would draw an icy shutter over their  
broad skylight, sometimes giving to the surface  
an appearance as if a slight breeze struck it, or  
a few rain-drops fell there. When I approached  
carelessly and alarmed them, they made a sud-  
den plash and rippling with their tails, as if one

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THE PONDS 258  
  
had struck the water with a brushy bough, and  
instantly took refuge in the depths. At length  
the wind rose, the mist increased, and the waves  
began to run, and the perch leaped much higher  
than before, half out of water, a hundred black  
points, three inches long, at once above the sur-  
face. Even as late as the fifth of December, one  
year, I saw some dimples on the surface, and  
thinking it was going to rain hard immediately,  
the air being full of mist, I made haste to take  
my place at the oars and row homeward; al-  
ready the rain seemed rapidly increasing, though  
I felt none on my cheek, and I anticipated a  
thorough soaking. But suddenly the dimples  
ceased, for they were produced by the perch,  
which the noise of my oars had scared into the  
depths, and I saw their schools dimly disap-  
pearing; so I spent a dry afternoon after all.  
‘An old man who used to frequent this pond  
nearly sixty years ago, when it was dark with  
surrounding forests, tells me that in those days  
he sometimes saw it all alive with ducks and  
other water fowl, and that there were many eagles  
about it. He came here a-fishing, and used an  
old log canoe which he found on the shore. It  
was made of two white-pine logs dug out and  
pinned together, and was cut off square at the  
ends. It was very clumsy, but lasted = great  
many years before it became water-logged and  
perhaps sank to the bottom. He did not know

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254 WALDEN  
  
whose it was; it belonged to the pond. He used  
to make a cable for his anchor of strips of hick-  
ory bark tied together. An old man, a potter,  
who lived by the pond before the Revolution,  
told him once that there was an iron chest at  
the bottom, and that he had seen it. Some-  
times it would come floating up to the shore;  
but when you went toward it, it would go back  
into deep water and disappear. I was pleased  
to hear of the old log canoe, which took the place  
of an Indian one of the same material but more  
graceful construction, which perchance had first  
been a tree on the bank, and then, as it were,  
fell into the water, to float there for a genera-  
tion, the most proper vessel for the lake. I re-  
member that when I first looked into these  
depths there were many large trunks to be seen  
indistinctly lying on the bottom, which had  
either been blown over formerly, or left on the  
ice at the last cutting, when wood was cheaper  
but now they have mostly disappeared.  
  
When I first paddled a boat on Walden, it was  
completely surrounded by thick and lofty pine  
and oak woods, and in some of its coves grape  
vines had run over the trees next the water and  
formed bowers under which a boat could pass.  
The hills which form its shores are so steep, and  
the woods on them were then so high, that, as  
you looked down from the west end, it had the  
‘appearance of an amphitheatre for some kind

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THE PONDS 255  
  
of sylvan spectacle. I have spent many an hour,  
when I was younger, floating over its surface as  
the zephyr willed, having paddled my boat to  
the middle, and lying on my back across the  
seats, in a summer forenoon, dreaming awake,  
until I was aroused by the boat touching the  
sand, and I arose to see what shore my fates  
had impelled me to; days when idleness was  
the most attractive and productive industry.  
Many a forenoon have I stolen away, preferring  
to spend thus the most valued part of the day;  
for I was rich, if not in money, in sunny hours  
and summer days, and spent them lavishly;  
nor do I regret that I did not waste more of  
them in the workshop or the teacher's desk.  
But since I left those shores the wood-choppers  
have still further laid them waste, and now for  
many a year there will be no more rambling  
through the aisles of the wood, with occasional  
vistas through which you see the water. My  
‘Muse may be excused if she is silent henceforth.  
How can you expect the birds to sing when  
their groves are cut down?  
  
Now the trunks of trees on the bottom, and  
the old log canoe, and the dark surrounding  
woods, are gone, and the villagers, who scarcely  
know where it lies, instead of going to the pond  
to bathe or drink, are thinking to bring its water,  
which should be as sacred as the Ganges at  
least, to the village in a pipe, to wash their

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256 WALDEN  
  
dishes with!—to earn their Walden by the  
turning of a cock or drawing of a plug! That  
devilish Iron Horse, whose ear-rending neigh  
is heard throughout the town, has muddied the  
Boiling Spring with his foot, and he it is that  
has browsed off all the woods on Walden shore;  
that Trojan horse, with a thousand men in his  
belly, introduced by mercenary Greeks! Where  
is the country’s champion, the Moore of Moore  
Hall, to meet him at the Deep Cut and thrust  
an avenging lance between the ribs of the bloated  
pest.  
Nevertheless, of all the characters I have  
known, perhaps Walden wears best, and best  
preserves its purity. Many men have been  
likened to it, but few deserve that honor. |  
Though the wood-choppers have laid bare first  
this shore and then that, and the Irish have  
built their sties by it, and the railroad hes in-  
fringed on its border, and the ice-men have  
skimmed it once, it is itself unchanged, the same  
water which my youthful eyes fell on; all the  
change is in me. It has not acquired one per-  
manent wrinkle after all its ripples. It is peren-  
nially young, and I may stand and see a swallow  
dip apparently to pick an insect from its sur-  
face as of yore. It struck me again to-night,  
as if I had not seen it almost daily for more  
than twenty years,— Why, here is Walden,  
the same woodland lake that I discovered so

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THE PONDS 257  
  
many years ago; where a forest was cut down  
last winter another is springing up by its shore  
as lustily as ever; the same thought is welling  
up to its surface that was then; it is the same  
liquid joy and happiness to itself and its Maker,  
ay, and it may be to me. It is the work of a  
brave man, surely, in whom there was no guile!  
He rounded this water with his hand, deepened  
and clarified it in his thought, and in his will  
bequeathed it to Concord. I see by its face  
that it is visited by the same reflection; and I  
can almost say, Walden, is it you?  
  
It is no dream of mine,  
  
To ornament a line;  
  
I cannot come nearer to God and Heaven  
‘Than I live to Walden even.  
  
Tam its stony shore,  
  
‘And the breeze that passes o'er  
  
In the hollow of my hand  
  
Are its water and its sand,  
  
‘And its deepest resort  
  
Lies high in my thought.  
  
The cars never pause to look at it; yet I  
fancy that the engineers and firemen and brake-  
men, and those passengers who have a season  
ticket and see it often, are better men for  
the sight. The engineer does not forget at  
night, or his nature does not, that he has be-  
held this vision of serenity and purity once at  
least during the day. Though seen but once, it  
helps to wash out State-street and the engine’s  
  
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258 WALDEN  
  
soot, One proposes that it be called “God’s  
Drop.”  
  
T have said that Walden has no visible inlet  
nor outlet, but it is on the one hand distantly  
and indirectly related to Flint’s Pond, which is  
more elevated, by a chain of small ponds com-  
ing from that quarter, and on the other directly  
and manifestly to Concord River, which is  
lower, by a similar chain of ponds through  
which in some other geological period it may  
have flowed, and by a little digging, which God  
forbid, it can be made to flow thither again. If  
by living thus reserved and austere, like a hermit  
in the woods, so long, it has acquired such  
wonderful purity, who would not regret that  
the comparatively impure waters of Flint’s  
Pond should be mingled with it, or itself  
should ever go to waste its sweetness in the  
ocean wave?  
  
Flint’s or Sandy Pond, in Lincoln, our great-  
est lake and inland sea, lies about a mile east  
of Walden. It is much larger, being said to  
contain one hundred and ninety-seven acres,  
and is more fertile in fish; but it is comparatively  
shallow, and not remarkably pure. A walk  
through the woods thither was often my recrea-  
tion. It was worth the while, if only to feel  
the wind blow on your cheek freely, and see the  
waves run, and remember the life of mariners.

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‘THE PONDS 250  
  
I went a-chestnutting there in the fall, on windy  
days, when the nuts were dropping into the  
water and were washed to my feet; and one  
day, as I crept along its sedgy shore, the fresh  
spray blowing in my face, I came upon the  
mouldering wreck of a boat, the sides gone, and  
hardly more than the impression of its flat  
bottom left amid the rushes; yet its model was  
sharply defined, as if it were a large decayed  
pad, with its veins. It was as impressive a  
wreck as one could imagine on the sea-shore,  
and had as good a moral. It is by this time  
mere vegetable mould and undistinguishable  
pond shore, through which rushes and flags  
have pushed up. I used to admire the ripple  
marks on the sandy bottom, at the north end  
of this pond, made firm and hard to the feet of  
the wader by the pressure of the water, and the  
rushes which grew in Indian file, in waving  
lines, corresponding to these marks, rank be-  
hind rank, as if the waves had planted them.  
‘There also I have found, in considerable quan-  
tities, curious balls, composed apparently of  
fine grass or roots, of pipewort perhaps, from  
half an inch to four inches in diameter, and per-  
fectly spherical. These wash back and forth in  
shallow water on a sandy bottom, and are  
sometimes cast on the shore. They are either  
solid grass, or have a little sand in the middle.  
At first you would say that they were formed by

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260 WALDEN  
  
the action of the waves, like a pebble; yet the  
smallest are made of equally coarse materials,  
half an inch long, and they are produced only  
at one season of the year. Moreover, the waves,  
I suspect, do not so much construct as wear  
down a material which has already acquired  
consistency. They preserve their form when  
dry for an indefinite period.  
  
Flinf’s Pond! Such is the poverty of our  
nomenclature. What right had the unclean and  
stupid farmer, whose farm abutted on this sky  
water, whose shores he has ruthlessly laid bare,  
to give his name to it? Some skin-flint, who  
loved better the reflecting surface of a dollar,  
or a bright cent, in which he could see his own  
brazen face; who regarded even the wild ducks  
which settled in it as trespassers; his fingers  
grown into crooked and horny talons from the  
long habit of grasping harpy-like;—so it is  
not named for me. I go not there to see him  
nor to hear of him; who never saw it, who  
never bathed in it, who never loved it, who  
never protected it, who never spoke a good  
word for it, nor thanked God that He had  
made it. Rather let it be named from the fishes  
that swim in it, the wild fowl or quadrupeds  
which frequent it, the wild flowers which grow  
by its shores, or some wild man or child the  
thread of whose history is interwoven with its  
own; not from him who could show no title

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THE PONDS 261  
  
to it but the deed which a like-minded neighbor  
or legislature gave him, —him who thought  
only of its money value; whose presence per-  
chance cursed all the shore; who exhausted the  
land around it, and would fain have exhausted  
the waters within it; who regretted only that  
it was not English hay or cranberry meadow, —  
there was nothing to redeem it, forsooth, in his  
eyes, — and would have drained and sold it for  
the mud at its bottom. It did not turn his mill,  
and it was no privilege to him to behold it. I  
respect not his labors, his farm where every-  
thing has its price; who would carry the land-  
scape, who would carry his God to market if  
he could get anything for Him; who goes to  
market for his god as it is; on whose farm  
nothing grows free, whose fields bear no crops,  
whose meadows no flowers, whose trees no  
fruits, but dollars; who loves not the beauty of  
his fruits, whose fruits are not ripe for him till  
they are tuned to dollars. Give me the poverty  
that enjoys true wealth. Farmers are respect-  
able and interesting to me in proportion as they  
are poor,— poor farmers. A model farm!  
where the house stands like a fungus in a muck-  
heap, chambers for men, horses, oxen, and  
swine, cleansed and uncleansed, all contiguous  
to one another! Stocked with men! A great  
  
pot, redolent of manures and butter-  
milk! Under a high state of cultivation, being

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262 WALDEN  
  
manured with the hearts and brains of men!  
‘As if you were to raise your potatoes in the  
churchyard! Such is a model farm.  
  
No, no; if the fairest features of the land-  
scape are to be named after men, let them be  
the noblest and worthiest men alone, Let our  
lakes receive as true names at least as the  
Icarian Sea, where “still the shore” a “brave  
attempt resounds.””  
  
Goose Pond, of small extent, is on my way  
to Flint’s; Fair-Haven, an expansion of Con-  
cord River, said to contain some seventy acres,  
is a mile southwest; and White Pond, of about  
forty acres, is a mile and a half beyond Fair-  
Haven. This is my lake country. ‘These, with  
Concord River, are my water privileges; and  
night and day, year in and year out, they grind  
such grist as I carry to them.  
  
Since the wood-cutters, and the railroad, and  
I myself have profaned Walden, perhaps the  
most attractive, if not the most beautiful, of all  
our lakes, the gem of the woods, is White Pond;  
—a poor name from its commonness, whether  
derived from the remarkable purity of its waters  
or the color of its sands. In these as in other  
respects, however, it is a lesser twin of Walden.  
"They are so much alike that you would say they  
must be connected under ground. It has the  
same stony shore, and its waters are of the same

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THE PONDS 268  
  
hue. As at Walden, in sultry dog-day weather,  
looking down through the woods on some of its  
bays which are not so deep but that the reflee-  
tion from the bottom tinges them, its waters are  
of a misty bluish green or glaucous color. Many  
years since I used to go there to collect the sand  
by cart-loads, to make sand-paper with, and I  
have continued to visit it ever since. One who  
frequents it proposes to call it Virid Lake. Per-  
haps it might be called Yellow-Pine Lake, from  
the following circumstance. About fifteen years  
ago you could see the top of a pitch-pine of the  
kind called yellow-pine hereabouts, though it is  
not a distinct species, projecting above the sur-  
face in deep water, many rods from the shore.  
It was even supposed by some that the pond  
had sunk, and this was one of the primitive  
forest that formerly stood there. I find that  
even so long ago as 1792, in a “Topographical  
Description of the Town of Concord,” by one  
of its citizens, in the Collections of the Massa-  
chusetts Historical Society, the author, after  
speaking of Walden and White Ponds, adds:  
“In the middle of the latter may be seen, when  
the water is very low, a tree which appears as  
if it grew in the place where it now stands,  
although the roots are fifty feet below the sur-  
face of the water; the top of this tree is broken  
off, and at that place measures fourteen inches  
in diameter.” In the spring of ’49 I talked with

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264 WALDEN  
  
the man who lives nearest the pond in Sudbury,  
who told me that it was he who got out this tree  
ten or fifteen years before. As near as he could  
remember, it stood twelve or fifteen rods from  
the shore, where the water was thirty or forty  
feet deep. It was in the winter, and he had  
been getting out ice in the forenoon, and had  
resolved that in the afternoon, with the aid of  
his neighbors, he would take out the old yellow  
pine. He sawed a channel in the ice toward the  
shore, and hauled it over and along and out on  
to the ice with oxen; but, before he had gone  
far in his work, he was surprised to find that it  
was wrong end upward, with the stumps of the  
branches pointing down, and the small end firmly  
fastened in the sandy bottom. It was about a  
foot in diameter at the big end, and he had ex-  
pected to get a good saw-log, but it was so rotten  
as to be fit only for fuel, if for that. He had  
some of it in his shed then. There were marks  
of an axe and of woodpeckers on the but. He  
thought that it might have been a dead tree on  
the shore, but was finally blown over into the  
pond, and after the top had become water-  
logged, while the but-end was still dry and  
light, had drifted out and sunk wrong end  
up. His father, eighty years old, could not  
remember when it was not there. Several pretty  
large logs may still be seen lying on the bot-  
tom, where, owing to the undulation of the

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THE PONDS 265  
  
surface, they look like huge water snakes in  
motion.  
  
‘This pond has rarely been profaned by a boat,  
for there is little in it to tempt e fisherman.  
Instead of the white lily, which requires mud, or  
the common sweet flag, the blue flag (Iris  
versicolor) grows thinly in the pure water, ris-  
ing from the stony bottom all around the shore,  
where it is visited by humming birds in June,  
and the color both of its bluish blades and its  
flowers, and especially their reflections, are in  
singular harmony with the glaucous water.  
  
White Pond and Walden are great crystals  
on the surface of the earth, Lakes of Light. If  
they were permanently congealed, and small  
enough to be clutched, they would, perchance,  
be carried off by slaves, like precious stones, to  
adom the heads of emperors; but being liquid,  
and ample, and secured to us and our succes-  
sors forever, we disregard them, and run after  
the diamond of Kohinoor. They are too pure  
to have a market value; they contain no muck.  
How much more beautiful than our lives, how  
much more transparent than our characters,  
are they! We never learned meanness of them.  
How much fairer than the pool before the farm-  
er’s door, in which his ducks swim! Hither the  
clean wild ducks come. Nature has no human  
inhabitant who appreciates her. The birds  
with their plumage and their notes are in har-

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268 WALDEN  
  
mony with the flowers, but what youth or maiden  
conspires with the wild luxuriant beauty of  
Nature? She flourishes most alone, far from  
the towns where they reside. Talk of heaven!  
ye disgrace earth.

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x  
BAKER FARM  
  
OMETIMES I rambled to pine groves,  
standing like temples, or like fleets at sea,  
full-rigged, with wavy boughs, and rippling  
  
with light, so soft and green and shady that the  
Druids would have forsaken their oaks to wor-  
ship in them; or to the cedar wood beyond  
Flint’s Pond, where the trees, covered with hoary  
blue berries, spiring higher and higher, are fit to  
stand before Valhalla, and the creeping juniper  
covers the ground with wreaths full of fruit; or  
to swamps where the usnea lichen hangs in fes-  
toons from the white-spruce trees, and toad-  
stools, round tables of the swamp gods, cover the  
ground, and more beautiful fungi adorn the  
stumps,like butterfliesor shells, vegetable winkles ;  
where the swamp-pink and dogwood grow, the red  
alder-berry glows like eyes of imps, the waxwork  
grooves and crushes the hardest woods in its  
folds, and the wild-holly berries make the be-  
holder forget his home with their beauty, and he  
is dazzled and tempted by nameless other wild  
forbidden fruits, too fair for mortal taste. In-

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268 WALDEN  
  
stead of calling on some scholar, I paid many a  
visit to particular trees, of kinds which are rare  
in this neighborhood, standing far away in the  
middle of some pasture, or in the depths of a  
wood or swamp, or on a hill top: such as the  
black-birch, of which we have some handsome  
specimens two feet in diameter; its cousin the  
yellow-birch, with its loose golden vest, per-  
fumed like the first; the beech, which has so neat  
a bole and beautifully lichen-painted, perfect in  
all its details, of which, excepting scattered speci-  
mens, I know but one small grove of sizable trees  
left in the township, supposed by some to have  
been planted by the pigeons that were once  
baited with beech nuts near by; it is worth the  
while to see the silver grain sparkle when you  
split this wood; the bass; the hornbeam; the  
celtis occidentalis, or false elm, of which we have  
but one well-grown; some taller mast of a pine,  
a shingle tree, or a more perfect hemlock than  
usual, standing like a pagoda in the midst of  
the woods; and many others I could mention.  
These were the shrines I visited both summer  
and winter.  
  
Once it chanced that I stood in the very abut-  
ment of a rainbow’s arch, which filled the lower  
stratum of the atmosphere, tingeing the grass and  
leaves around, and dazzling me as if I looked  
through colored crystal. It was a lake of rain-  
bow light, in which, for a short while, I lived like

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BAKER FARM 269  
  
adolphin. If it had lasted longer it might have  
tinged my employments and life.- As I walked  
on the railroad causeway, I used to wonder at  
the halo of light around my shadow, and would  
fain fancy myself one of the elect. One who  
visited me declared that the shadows of some  
Irishmen before him had no halo about them,  
that it was only natives that were so distinguished.  
Benvenuto Cellini tells us in his memoits, that,  
after a certain terrible dream or vision which he  
had during his confinement in the castle of St.  
Angelo, a resplendent light appeared over the  
shadow of his head at morning and evening,  
whether he was in Italy or France, and it was par  
ticularly conspicuous when the grass was moist  
with dew, This was probably the same phenom-  
enon to which I have referred, which is especially  
observed in the morning, but also at other times,  
and even by moonlight. Though a constant one,  
it is not commonly noticed, and, in the case of  
an excitable imagination like Cellini’s, it would  
be basis enough for superstition. Besides, he  
tells us that he showed it to very few. But are  
they not indeed distinguished who are conscious  
that they are regarded at all?  
  
I set out one afternoon to go a-fishing to Fair-  
Haven, through the woods, to eke out my scanty  
fare of vegetables. My way led through Pleasant  
Meadow, an adjunct of the Baker Farm, that

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270 WALDEN  
retreat of which a poet has since sung, begin-  
ning, —  
“Thy entry is a pleasant field,  
Which some mossy fruit trees yield  
Partly to a ruddy brook,  
By gliding musquash undertook,  
  
And mercurial trout,  
Darting about.”  
  
I thought of living there before I went to Walden.  
I “hooked” the apples, leaped the brook, and  
scared the musquash and the trout. It was one  
of those afternoons which seem indefinitely long  
before one, in which many events may happen, a  
large portion of our natural life, though it was  
already half spent when I started. By the way  
there came up a shower, which compelled me  
to stand half an hour under a pine, piling  
boughs over my head, and wearing my hand-  
kerchief for a shed; and when at length I had  
made one cast over the pickerel-weed, standing  
up to my middle in water, I found myself sud-  
denly in the shadow of a cloud, and the thunder  
began to rumble with such emphasis that I  
could do no more than listen to it. The gods  
must be proud, thought I, with such forked  
flashes to rout a poor unarmed fisherman. So  
I made haste for shelter to the nearest hut, which  
stood half a mile from any road, but so much the  
nearer to the pond, and had long been unin-  
habited : —

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BAKER FARM 271  
  
“And here a poet builded,  
  
In the completed years,  
  
For behold a trivial cabin  
‘That to destruction steers.”  
  
So the Muse fables. But therein, as I found,  
dwelt now John Field, an Irishman, and his  
wife, and several children, from the broad-  
faced boy who assisted his father at his work,  
and now came running by his side from the bog  
to escape the rain, to the wrinkled, sibyl-like,  
cone-headed infant that sat upon its father’s  
knee as in the palaces of nobles, and looked out  
from its home in the midst of wet and hunger in-  
quisitively upon the stranger, with the privilege  
of infancy, not knowing but it was the last of a  
noble line, and the hope and cynosure of the  
world, instead of John Field’s poor starveling  
brat. There we sat together under that part of  
the roof which leaked the least, while it showered  
and thundered without. I had sat there many  
times of old before the ship was built that  
floated this family to America. An honest, hard-  
working, but shiftless man plainly was John  
Field; and his wife, she too was brave to cook  
so many successive dinners in the recesses of  
that lofty stove; with round greasy face and bare  
breast, still thinking to improve her condition  
one day; with the never absent mop in one hand,  
and yet no effects of it visible anywhere. The  
chickens, which had also taken shelter here from

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azz WALDEN  
  
the rain, stalked about the room like members of  
the family, too humanized methought to roast  
well. They stood and looked in my eye or pecked  
at my shoe significantly. Meanwhile my host  
told me his story, how hard he worked “bog-  
ging” for neighboring farmer, turning up a  
meadow with # spade or bog hoe at the rate of  
ten dollars an acre and the use of the land with  
manure for one year, and his little broad-faced  
son worked cheerfully at his father’s side the  
while, not knowing how poor a bargain the  
latter had made. I tried to help him with my  
experience, telling him that he was one of my  
nearest neighbors, and that I too, who came  
a-fishing here, and looked like a loafer, was  
getting my living like himself; that I lived in a  
tight, light, and clean house, which hardly cost  
more than the annual rent of such a ruin as his  
commonly amounts to; and how, if he chose, he  
might in a month or two build himself a palace  
of his own; that I did not use tea, nor coffee, nor  
butter, nor milk, nor fresh meat, and so did not  
have to work to get them; again, as I did not  
work hard, I did not have to eat hard, and it  
cost me but a trifle for my food; but as he began  
with tea, and coffee, end butter, and milk, and  
beef, he had to work hard to pay for them, and  
when he had worked hard he had to eat hard  
again to repair the waste of his system, — and  
so it was as broad as it was long, indeed it was

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BAKER FARM 273  
  
broader than it was long, for he was discon-  
tented and wasted his life into the bargain; and  
yet he had rated it as a gain, in coming to Amer-  
ica, that here you could get tea, and coffee, and  
meat every day. But the only true America is  
that country where you are at liberty to pursue  
such a mode of life as may enable you to do with-  
out these, and where the state does not endeavor  
to compel you to sustain the slavery and war and  
other superfluous expenses which directly or in-  
directly result from the use of such things. For  
I purposely talked to him as if he were a philoso-  
pher, or desired to be one. I should be glad if all  
the meadows on the earth were left in a wild  
state, if that were the consequence of men’s be-  
ginning to redeem themselves. A man will not  
need to study history to find out what is best for  
his own culture. But alas! the culture of an  
Trishman is an enterprise to be undertaken with  
8 sort of moral bog hoe. I told him, that as he  
worked so hard at bogging, he required thick  
boots and stout clothing, which yet were soon  
soiled and worn out, but I wore light shoes and  
thin clothing, which cost not half so much,  
though he might think that I was dressed like a  
gentleman (which, however, was not the case),  
and in an hour or two, without labor, but as a  
recreation, I could, if I wished, catch as many  
fish as I should want for two days, or earn  
enough money to support me a week. If he and

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274 WALDEN  
  
his family would live simply, they might all go  
a-huckleberrying in the summer for their amuse-  
ment. John heaved a sigh at this, and his wife  
stared with arms akimbo, and both appeared to  
be wondering if they had capital enough to begin  
such a course with, or arithmetic enough to  
  
; carry it through. It was sailing by dead reck-  
  
; oning to them, and they saw not clearly how to  
make their port so; therefore I suppose they still  
take life bravely, after their fashion, face to face,  
giving it tooth and nail, not having skill to split its  
massive columns with any fine entering wedge,  
and rout it in detail; — thinking to deal with it  
roughly, as one should handle a thistle. But  
they fight at an overwhelming disadvantage, —  
living, John Field, alas! without arithmetic,  
and failing so.  
  
“Do you ever fish?” I asked. “Ob, yes, I  
catch a mess now and then when I am lying by;  
good perch I catch.” “What ’s your bait?” “I  
catch shiners with fish-worms, and bait the perch  
with them.” “You'd better go now, John,”  
said his wife, with glistening and hopeful face;  
but John demurred.  
  
‘The shower was now over, and a rainbow  
above the eastern woods promised a fair even-  
ing; so I took my departure. When I had got  
without I asked for a dish, hoping to get a sight  
of the well bottom, to complete my survey of  
the premises; but there, alas! are shallows and

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BAKER FARM 275  
  
quicksands, and rope broken withal, and bucket  
irrecoverable. Meanwhile the right culinary  
vessel was selected, water was seemingly dis-  
tilled, and after consultation and long delay  
passed out to the thirsty one, — not yet suffered  
to cool, not yet to settle. Such gruel sustains  
life here, I thought; so, shutting my eyes, and  
excluding the motes by a skilfully directed under-  
current, I drank to genuine hospitality the  
heartiest draught I could. I am not squeamish  
in such cases when manners are concerned.  
As I was leaving the Irishman’s roof after the  
rain, bending my steps again to the pond, my  
haste to catch pickerel, wading in retired mead-  
‘ows, in sloughs and bog-holes, in forlorn and  
savage places, appeared for an instant trivial to  
me who had been sent to school and college;  
but as I ran down the hill toward the reddening  
west, with the rainbow over my shoulder, and  
some faint tinkling sounds borne to my ear  
through the cleansed air, from I know not what  
quarter, my Good Genius seemed to say, — Go  
fish and hunt far and wide day by day, — far-  
ther and wider, — and rest thee by many brooks  
and hearth-sides without misgiving. Remember  
thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Rise free  
from care before the dawn, and seek adventures.  
Let the noon find thee by other lakes, and the  
night overtake thee everywhere at home. There  
are no larger fields than these, no worthier games

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276 WALDEN  
  
than may here be played. Grow wild according  
to thy nature, like these sedges and brakes,  
which will never become English hay. Let the  
thunder rumble; what if it threaten ruin to  
farmers’ crops? that is not its errand to thee.  
Take shelter under the cloud, while they flee to  
carts and sheds. Let not to get a living be thy  
trade, but thy sport. Enjoy the land, but own it  
not. Through want of enterprise and faith men  
are where they are, buying and selling, and  
spending their lives like serfs.  
O Baker Farm!  
  
“Landscape where the richest element  
Is a little sunshine innocent.” . . «  
  
“No one runs to revel  
(On thy rilfenced lea”...  
  
“Debate with no man hast thou,  
‘With questions art never perplexed,  
‘As tame at the first sight as now,  
In thy plain russet gabardine dressed.”  
  
   
  
“Come ye who love,  
‘And ye who hate,  
Children of the Holy Dove,  
‘And Guy Faux of the state,  
And hang co  
From the tough rafters of the trees!"  
  
‘Men come tamely home at night only from the  
next field or street, where their household echoes  
haunt, and their life pines because it breathes its

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Fair-Haven Pond

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BAKER FARM aq7  
  
own breath over again; their shadows morning  
and evening reach farther than their daily steps.  
‘We should come home from far, from adventures,  
and perils, and discoveries every day, with new  
experience and character.  
  
Before I had reached the pond some fresh  
impulse had brought out John Field, with al-  
tered mind, letting go “‘bogging” ere this sunset.  
But he, poor man, disturbed only a couple of fins  
while I was catching a fair string, and he said it  
was his luck; but when he changed seats in the  
boat luck changed seats too. Poor John Field!  
—I trust he does not read this, unless he will  
improve by it, — thinking to live by some de-  
rivative old country mode in this primitive new  
country, —to catch perch with shiners. It is  
good bait sometimes, I allow. With his horizon  
all his own, yet he a poor man, born to be poor,  
with his inherited Irish poverty or poor life, his  
Adam’s grandmother and boggy ways, not to  
rise in this world, he nor his posterity, till their  
wading, webbed, bog-trotting feet get talaria to  
their heels.

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xI  
HIGHER LAWS  
  
SI came home through the woods with my  
string of fish, trailing my pole, it being  
  
now quite dark, I caught a glimpse of a  
woodchuck stealing across my path, and felt a  
strange thrill of savage delight, and was strongly  
tempted to seize and devour him raw; not that I  
was hungry then, except for that wildness which  
he represented. Once or twice, however, while  
I lived at the pond, I found myself ranging the  
woods, like a half-starved hound, with a strange  
abandonment, seeking some kind of venison  
which I might devour, and no morsel could have  
been too savage for me. The wildest scenes had  
become unaccountably familiar. I found in my-  
self, and still find, an instinct toward a higher, or,  
as it is named, spiritual life, as do most men,  
and another toward a primitive rank and savage  
one, and I reverence them both. I love the wild  
not less than the good. The wildness and ad-  
venture that are in fishing still recommended it  
tome. I like sometimes to take rank hold on life  
and spend my dsy more as the animals do.

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HIGHER LAWS 279  
  
Perhaps I have owed to this employment and to  
hunting, when quite young, my closest acquaint-  
ance with Nature. They early introduce us to  
and detain us in scenery with which otherwise,  
at that age, we should have little acquaintance.  
Fishermen, hunters, wood-choppers, and others,  
spending their lives in the fields and woods, in a  
peculiar sense a part of Nature themselves, are  
often in a more favorable mood for observing  
her, in the intervals of their pursuits, than phil-  
osophers or poets even, who approach her with  
expectation. She is not afraid to exhibit herself  
tothem. The traveller on the prairie is naturally  
a hunter, on the head waters of the Missouri and  
Columbia a trapper, and at the Falls of St.  
Mary a fisherman. He who is only a traveller  
learns things at second-hand and by the halves,  
and is poor authority. We are most interested  
when science reports what those men already  
know practically or instinctively, for that alone  
is a true humanity, or account of human expe-  
rience.  
  
They mistake who assert that the Yankee  
has few amusements, because he has not so  
many public holidays, and men and boys do not  
play so many games as they do in England, for  
here the more primitive but solitary amuse-  
ments of hunting, fishing, and the like have not  
yet given place to the former. Almost every  
New England boy among my contemporaries

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280 WALDEN  
  
shouldered a fowling-piece between the ages of  
ten and fourteen; and his hunting and fishing  
grounds were not limited like the preserves of  
an English nobleman, but were more boundless  
even than those of a savage. No wonder, then,  
that he did not oftener stay to play on the com-  
mon. But already a change is taking place,  
owing, not to an increased humanity, but to an  
increased scarcity of game, for perhaps the  
hunter is the greatest friend of the animals  
hunted, not excepting the Humane Society.  
Moreover, when at the pond, I wished some-  
times to add fish to my fare for variety. I have  
actually fished from the same kind of necessity  
that the first fishers did. Whatever humanity I  
might conjure up against it was all factitious,  
and concerned my philosophy more than my  
feelings. I speak of fishing only now, for I had  
long felt differently about fowling, and sold my  
gun before I went to the woods. Not that I am  
less humane than others, but I did not perceive  
that my feelings were much affected. I did not  
pity the fishes nor the worms. This was habit.  
As for fowling, during the last years that I car-  
ried a gun my excuse was that I was studying  
ornithology, and sought only new or rare birds.  
But I confess that I am now inclined to think  
that there is a finer way of studying ornithology  
than this. It requires so much closer attention  
to the habits of the birds, that, if for that reason

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HIGHER LAWS 281  
  
only, I have been willing to omit the gun. Yet  
notwithstanding the objection on the score of  
humanity, I am compelled to doubt if equally  
valuable sports are ever substituted for these;  
and when some of my friends have asked me  
anxiously about their boys, whether they should  
let them hunt, I have answered, yes, — remem-  
bering that it was one of the best parts of my  
education, — make them hunters, though sports-  
men only at first, if possible, mighty hunters at  
last, so that they shall not find game large  
enough for them in this or any vegetable wilder-  
ness, — hunters as well as fishers of men. Thus  
far I am of the opinion of Chaucer’s nun, who  
  
““yave not of the text a pulled hen  
‘That saith that hunters ben not holy men.”  
  
‘There is a period in the history of the individual,  
as of the race, when the hunters are the “best  
men,” as the Algonquins called them. We can-  
not but pity the boy who has never fired a gun;  
he is no more humane, while his education has  
been sadly neglected. This was my answer with  
respect to those youths who were bent on this  
pursuit, trusting that they would soon outgrow  
it. No humane being, past the thoughtless age  
of boyhood, will wantonly murder any creature  
which holds its life by the same tenure that he  
does. The hare in its extremity cries like a  
child. I warn you, mothers, that my sympathies

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282 WALDEN  
  
do not always make the usual philanthropic  
distinctions.  
  
Such is oftenest the young man’s introduction  
to the forest, and the most original part of him-  
self. He goes thither at first as a hunter and  
fisher, until at last, if he has the seeds of a better  
life in him, he disti es his proper objects,  
as a poet or naturalist it may be, and leaves the  
gun and fish-pole behind. The mass of men are  
still and always young in this respect. In some  
countries a hunting parson is no uncommon  
sight. Such a one might make a good shep-  
herd’s dog, but is far from being the Good Shep-  
herd. I have been surprised to consider that  
the only obvious employment, except wood-  
chopping, ice-cutting, or the like business, which  
ever to my knowledge detained at Walden Pond  
for a whole half day any of my fellow-citizens,  
whether fathers or children of the town, with  
just one exception, was fishing. Commonly  
they did not think that they were lucky, or well  
paid for their time, unless they got a long string  
of fish, though they had the opportunity of see-  
ing the pond all the while. They might go  
there a thousand times before the sediment of  
fishing would sink to the bottom and leave their  
purpose pure; but no doubt such a clarifying  
process would be going on all the while. The  
governor and his council faintly remember the  
pond, for they went a-fishing there when they

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HIGHER LAWS 283  
  
were boys; but now they are too old and dig-  
nified to go a-fishing, and so they know it no  
more forever. Yet even they expect to go to  
heaven at last. If the legislature regards it,  
it is chiefly to regulate the number of hooks to  
be used there; but they know nothing about  
the hook of hooks with which to angle for the  
pond itself, empaling the legislature for a bait.  
"Thus, even in civilized communities, the em-  
bryo man passes through the hunter stage of  
development.  
  
I have found repeatedly, of late years, that I  
cannot fish without falling a little in self-respect.  
T have tried it again and again. I have skill at  
it, and, like many of my fellows, a certain in-  
stinct for it, which revives from time to time;  
but always when I have done I feel that it would  
have been better if I had not fished. I think  
that I do not mistake. It is a faint intimation,  
yet so are the first streaks of morning. There is  
unquestionably this instinct in me which be-  
longs to the lower orders of creation; yet with  
every year I am less a fisherman, though with-  
out more humanity or even wisdom; at present  
Iam no fisherman at all. But I see that if I were  
to live in a wilderness I should again be tempted  
to become a fisher and hunter in earnest. Be-  
sides, there is something essentially unclean  
about this diet, and all flesh, and I began to see  
where housework commences, and whence the

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284 WALDEN  
  
endeavor, which costs so much, to wear a tidy  
and respectable appearance, each day, to keep  
the house sweet and free from all ill odors and  
sights. Having been my own butcher and scul-  
lion and cook, as well as the gentleman for whom  
the dishes were served up, I can speak from an  
unusually complete experience. The practical  
objection to animal food in my case was its un-  
cleanness; and, besides, when I had caught  
and cleaned and cooked and eaten my fish, they  
seemed not to have fed me essentially. It was  
insignificant and unnecessary, and cost more  
then it came to. A little bread or a few potatoes  
would have done as well, with less trouble and  
filth. Like many of my contemporaries, I had  
rarely for many years used animal food, or tea,  
or coffee, &c.; not so much because of any ill  
effects which I had traced to them, as because  
they were not agreeable to my imagination. The  
repugnance to animal food is not the effect of  
experience, but is an instinct. It appeared more  
beautiful to live low and fare hard in many re-  
spects; and though I never did so, I went far  
enough to please my imagination. I believe  
that every man who has ever been earnest to  
preserve his higher or poetic faculties in the best  
condition has been particularly inclined to ab-  
stain from animal food, and from much food of  
any kind. It is a significant fact, stated by en-  
tomologists, I find it in Kirby and Spence, that

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HIGHER LAWS 285  
  
“some insects in their perfect state, though  
furnished with organs of feeding, make no use  
of them;” and they lay it down as “‘a general  
tule, that almost all insects in this state eat much  
less than in that of larve. The voracious cater-  
pillar when transformed into a butterfly,” . . .  
“and the gluttonous maggot when become a  
fly,” content themselves with a drop or two of  
honey or some other sweet liquid. The abdo-  
men under the wings of the butterfly still repre-  
sents the larva. This is the tidbit which tempts  
his insectivorous fate. The gross feeder is a  
man in the larva state; and there are whole  
nations in that condition, nations without fancy  
or imagination, whose vast abdomens betray  
them.  
  
It is hard to provide and cook so simple and  
clean a diet as will not offend the imagination;  
but this, I think, is to be fed when we feed the  
body; they should both sit down at the same  
table. Yet perhaps this may be done. The  
fruits eaten temperately need not make us  
ashamed of our appetites, nor interrupt the  
worthiest pursuits. But put an extra condi-  
ment into your dish, and it will poison you. It  
is not worth the while to live by rich cookery.  
‘Most men would feel shame if caught preparing  
with their own hands precisely such a dinner,  
whether of animal or vegetable food, as is every  
day prepared for them by others. Yet till this

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286 WALDEN  
  
is otherwise we are not civilized, and, if gentle-  
men and ladies, are not true men and women.  
This certainly suggests what change is to be .  
made. It may be vain to ask why the imagina-  
tion will not be reconciled to flesh and fat. I  
am. satisfied that it is not. Is it not a reproach  
that man is a carnivorous animal? True, he  
can and does live, in a great measure, by prey-  
ing on other animals; but this is a miserable  
way, —as any one who will go to snaring rab-  
bits, or slaughtering lambs, may learn, — and  
he will be regarded as a benefactor of his race  
who shall teach man to confine himself to a  
more innocent and wholesome diet. Whatever  
my own practice may be, I have no doubt that  
it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in  
its gradual improvement, to leave off eating ani-  
mals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off  
eating each other when they came in contact  
with the more civilized.  
  
If one listens to the faintest but constant sug-  
gestions of his genius, which are certainly true,  
he sees not to what extremes, or even insanity,  
it may lead him; and yet that way, as he grows  
more resolute and faithful, his road lies. The  
faintest assured objection which one healthy  
man feels will at length prevail over the argu-  
ments and customs of mankind. No man ever  
followed his genius till it misled him. Though  
the result were bodily weakness, yet perhaps no

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HIGHER LAWS 287  
  
one can say that the consequences were to be re-  
gretted, for these were a life in conformity to  
higher principles. If the day and the night are  
such that you greet them with joy, and life emits  
a fragrance like flowers and sweet-scented  
herbs, is more elastic, more starry, more im-  
mortal, — that our success. All nature is  
your congratulation, and you have cause mo-  
mentarily to bless yourself. The greatest gains  
and values are farthest from being appreciated.  
We easily come to doubt if they exist. We  
soon forget them. They are the highest reality.  
Perhaps the facts most astounding and most  
real are never communicated by man to man.  
‘The true harvest of my daily life is some-  
what as intangible and indescribable as the  
tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-  
dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I  
have clutched.  
  
Yet, for my part, I was never unusually  
squeamish; I could sometimes eat a fried rat  
with a good relish, if it were necessary. I am  
glad to have drunk water so long, for the same  
reason that I prefer the natural sky to an opium-  
eater’s heaven. I would fain keep sober always;  
and there are infinite degrees of drunkenness.  
I believe that water is the only drink for a wise  
man; wine is not so noble a liquor; and think  
of dashing the hopes of a morning with a cup  
of warm coffee, or of an evening with a dish of

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288 WALDEN  
  
tea! Ah, how low I fall when I am tempted by  
them! Even music may be intoxicating. Such  
apparently slight causes destroyed Greece and  
Rome, and will destroy England and America.  
OF alll ebriosity, who does not prefer to be in-  
toxicated by the air he breathes? I have found  
it to be the most serious objection to coarse  
labors long continued, that they compelled me  
to eat and drink coarsely also. But to tell the  
truth, I find myself at present somewhat less  
particular in these respects. I carry less religion  
to the table, ask no blessing; not because I am  
wiser than I was, but, I am obliged to confess,  
because, however much it is to be regretted,  
with years I have grown more coarse and in-  
different. Perhaps these questions are enter-  
tained only in youth, as most believe of poetry.  
My practice is “nowhere,” my opinion is here.  
Nevertheless I am far from regarding myself as  
one of those privileged ones to whom the Ved  
refers when it says that “he who has true faith  
in the Omnipresent Supreme Being may eat all  
that exists,” that is, is not bound to inquire what  
is his food, or who prepares it; and even in their  
case it is to be observed, as a Hindoo commen-  
tator has remarked, that the Vedant limits this  
privilege to “the time of distress.  
  
Who has not sometimes derived an inexpress-  
ible satisfaction from his food in which appetite  
had no share? I have been thrilled to think

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HIGHER LAWS 289  
  
that I owed a mental perception to the com-  
monly gross sense of taste, that I have been in-  
spired through the palate, that some berries  
which I had eaten on a hillside had fed my  
genius. “The soul not being mistress of her-  
self,” says Thseng-tseu, “‘one looks, and one  
does not see; one listens, and one does not hear;  
one eats, and one does not know the savor of  
food.” He who distinguishes the true savor of  
his food can never be a glutton; he who does not  
cannot be otherwise. A puritan may go to his  
brown-bread crust with as gross an appetite as  
ever an alderman to his turtle. Not that food  
which entereth into the mouth defileth a man,  
but the appetite with which it is eaten. It is  
neither the quality nor the quantity, but the de-  
votion to sensual savors; when that which is  
eaten is not a viand to sustain our animal, or in-  
spire our spiritual life, but food for the worms  
that possess us. If the hunter has a taste for  
mud-turtles, muskrats, and other such savage  
tidbits, the fine lady indulges a taste for jelly  
made of a calf’s foot, or for sardines from over  
the sea, and they are even. He goes to the mill-  
pond, she to her preserve-pot. ‘The wonder is  
how they, how you and I, can live this slimy  
beastly life, eating and drinking.  
  
Our whole life is startlingly moral. There is  
never an instant’s truce between virtue and  
vice. Goodness is the only investment that never  
  
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290 WALDEN  
  
fails. In the music of the harp which trembles  
round the world it is the insisting on this which  
thrills us. ‘The harp is the travelling patterer  
for the Universe’s Insurance Company, recom-  
mending its laws, and our little goodness is all  
the assessment that we pay. Though the youth  
at last grows indifferent, the laws of the universe  
are not indifferent, but are forever on the side  
of the most sensitive. Listen to every zephyr  
for some reproof, for it is surely there, and  
he is unfortunate who does not hear it. We  
cannot touch a string or move a stop but the  
charming moral transfixes us. Many an irk-  
some noise, go a long way off, is heard as  
music, a proud sweet satire on the meanness  
of our lives.  
  
We are conscious of an animal in us, which  
awakens in proportion as our higher nature  
slumbers. It is reptile and sensual, and perhaps  
cannot be wholly expelled; like the worms  
which, even in life and health, occupy our bod-  
ies. Possibly we may withdraw from it, but  
never change its nature. I fear that it may en-  
joy a certain health of its own; that we may be  
well, yet not pure. The other day I picked up  
the lower jaw of a hog, with white and sound  
teeth and tusks, which suggested that there  
was an animal health and vigor distinct from  
the spiritual. ‘This creature succeeded by other  
means than temperance and purity. ‘That in

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HIGHER LAWS 291  
  
which men differ from brute beasts,” says Men-  
cius, “‘is a thing very inconsiderable; the com-  
mon herd lose it very soon; superior men  
preserve it carefully.” Who knows what sort of  
life would result if we had attained to purity?  
If I knew so wise a man as could teach me purity  
I would go to seek him forthwith. “A command  
over our passions, and over the external senses  
of the body, and good acts, are declared by the  
Ved to be indispensable in the mind’s approxi-  
mation to God.” Yet the spirit can for the time  
pervade and control every member and function  
of the body, and transmute what in form is the  
grossest sensuality into purity and devotion.  
‘The generative energy, which, when we are loose,  
dissipates and makes us unclean, when we are  
continent invigorates and inspires us. Chastity  
is the flowering of man; and what are called  
Genius, Heroism, Holiness, and the like, are  
but various fruits which succeed it. Man flows  
at once to God when the channel of purity is  
open. By turns our purity inspires and our im-  
purity casts us down. He is blessed who is as-  
sured that the animal is dying out in him day  
by day, and the divine being established. Per-  
haps there is none but has cause for shame on  
account of the inferior and brutish nature to  
which he is allied. I fear that we are such gods  
or demigods only as fauns and satyrs, the divine  
allied to beasts, the creatures of appetite, and

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292 WALDEN  
  
that, to some extent, our very life is our dis:  
grace. —  
  
“How happy’s he who bath due place assigned  
‘To his beasts and dissforested his mind!  
  
ahs Mg lean oe ba  
And ia not ass himself to all the rest!  
  
Else man not only is the herd of swine,  
  
But he's those devils too which did incline  
  
‘Them to a headlong rage, and made them worse.”  
  
All sensuality is one, though it takes many  
forms; all purity is one. It is the same whether  
a man eat, or drink, or cohabit, or sleep sensu-  
ally. They are but one appetite, and we only  
need to see a person do any one of these things  
to know how great a sensualist he is. The  
impure can neither stand nor sit with purity.  
When the reptile is attacked at one mouth of  
his burrow, he shows himself at another. If  
you would be chaste, you must be temperate.  
What is chastity? How shall a man know if he  
is chaste? He shall not know it. We have  
heard of this virtue, but we know not what it is.  
We speak conformably to the rumor which we  
have heard. From exertion come wisdom and  
purity; from sloth ignorance and sensuality.  
In the student sensuality is a sluggish habit of  
mind. An unclean person is universally a sloth-  
ful one, one who sits by a stove, whom the sun  
shines on prostrate, who reposes without being

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HIGHER LAWS 293  
  
fatigued. If you would avoid uncleanness and  
all the sins, work earnestly, though it be at clean-  
ing a stable. Nature is hard to be overcome,  
but she must be overcome. What avails it that  
you are Christian, if you are not purer than the  
heathen, if you deny yourself no more, if you  
are not more religious? I know of many systems  
of religion esteemed heathenish whose precepts  
fill the reader with shame, and provoke him to  
new endeavors, though it be to the performance  
of rites merely.  
  
I hesitate to say these things, but it is not  
because of the subject, — I care not how obscene  
my words are,— but because I cannot speak  
of them without betraying my impurity. We  
discourse freely without shame of one form of  
sensuality, and are silent about another. We  
are so degraded that we cannot speak simply of  
the necessary functions of human nature. In  
earlier ages, in some countries, every function  
was reverently spoken of and regulated by law.  
Nothing was too trivial for the Hindoo law-  
giver, however offensive it may be to modern  
taste. He teaches how to eat, drink, cohabit,  
void excrement and urine, and the like, elevating  
what is mean, and does not falsely excuse him-  
self by calling these things trifles.  
  
Every man is the builder of a temple, called  
his body, to the god he worships, after # style  
purely his own, nor can he get off by hammering

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294 WALDEN  
  
marble instead. We are all sculptors and paint-  
ers, and our material is our own flesh and blood \*  
and bones. Any nobleness begins at once to  
refine a man’s features, any meanness or sensu-  
ality to imbrute them.  
  
John Farmer sat at his door one September  
evening, after a hard day’s work, his mind still  
running on his labor more or less. Having  
  
- bathed he sat down to recreate his intellectual  
man. It was a rather cool evening, and some  
of his neighbors were apprehending a frost... He  
had not attended to the train of his thoughts  
long when he heard some one playing on a flute,  
and that sound harmonized with his mood.  
Still he thought of his work; but the burden of  
his thought was that though this kept running  
in his head, and he found himself planning and  
contriving it against his will, yet it concerned  
him very little. It was no more than the scurf  
of his skin, which was constantly shuffled off.  
But the notes of the flute came home to his ears  
out of a different sphere from that he worked in,  
and suggested work for certain faculties which  
slumbered in him. They gently did away with  
the street, and the village, and the state in which  
he lived. A voice said to him, — Why do you  
stay here and live this mean moiling life, when  
a glorious existence is possible for you? ‘Those  
same stars twinkle over other fields than  
these. — But how to come out of this condi-

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HIGHER LAWS 295  
  
tion and actually migrate thither? All that he  
could think of was to practise some new auster-  
ity, to let his mind descend into his body and  
redeem it, and treat himself with ever increasing  
respect.

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x  
BRUTE NEIGHBORS  
  
OMETIMES I had a companion in my  
  
fishing, who came through the village to  
  
my house from the other side of the town,  
and the catching of the dinner was as much a  
social exercise as the eating of it.  
  
Hermit. I wonder what the world is doing  
now. I have not heard so much as a locust over  
the sweet-fern these three hours. The pigeons  
are all asleep upon their roosts, —no flutter  
from them. Was that a farmer’s noon horn  
which sounded from beyond the woods just now ?  
The hands are coming in to boiled salt beef and  
cider and Indian bread. Why will men worry  
themselves so? He that does not eat need not  
work. I wonder how much they have reaped.  
Who would live there where a body can never  
think for the barking of Bose? And oh, the  
housekeeping! to keep bright the devil’s door-  
knobs, and scour his tubs this bright day!  
Better not keep a house. Say, some hollow  
tree; and then for morning calls and dinner-  
parties! Only a wood-pecker tapping. Oh,  
they swarm; the sun is too warm there: they

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 297  
  
are born too far into life for me. I have water  
from the spring, and a loaf of brown bread on  
the shelf.— Hark! I hear a rustling of the  
leaves. Is it some ill-fed village hound yielding  
to the instinct of the chase? or the lost pig  
which is said to be in these woods, whose tracks  
I saw after the rain? It comes on apace; my  
sumachs and sweet-briers tremble. — Eh, Mr.  
Poet, is it you? How do you like the world to-  
day?  
  
Poet. See those clouds; how they hang!  
‘That’s the greatest thing I have seen to-day.  
‘There’s nothing like it in old paintings, nothing  
like it in foreign lands, — unless when we were  
off the coast of Spain. That’s a true Mediter-  
ranean sky. I thought, as I have my living to  
get, and have not eaten to-day, that I might go  
a-fishing. That’s the true industry for poets.  
It is the only trade I have learned. Come,  
let’s along.  
  
Hermit. 1 cannot resist. My brown bread  
will soon be gone. I will go with you gladly soon,  
but I am just concluding serious meditation.  
I think that I am near the end of it. Leave me  
alone, then, for a while. But that we may not  
be delayed, you shall be digging the bait mean-  
while. Angle-worms are rarely to be met with  
in these parts, where the soil was never fattened  
with manure; the race is nearly extinct. The  
sport of digging the bait is nearly equal to that

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298 WALDEN  
  
of catching the fish, when one’s appetite is not  
too keen; and this you may have all to yourself  
to-day. I would advise you to set in the spade  
down yonder among the ground-nuts, where  
you see the johnswort waving. I think that I  
may warrant you one worm to every three sods  
you turn up, if you look well in among the roots  
of the grass, as if you were weeding. Or, if  
you choose to go farther, it will not be unwise,  
for I have found the increase of fair bait to be  
very nearly as the squares of the distances.  
Hermit alone. Let me see, where was I?  
Methinks I was nearly in this frame of mind;  
the world lay about at this angle. Shall I go to  
heaven or a-fishing? If I should soon bring  
this meditation to an end, would another so  
sweet occasion be likely to offer? I was as near  
being resolved into the essence of things as ever I  
wasin my life. I fear my thoughts will not come  
back to me. If it would do any good, I would  
whistle for them. When they make us an offer,  
isit wise to say, We will think of it? My thoughts  
have left no track, and I cannot find the path  
again. What was it that I was thinking of?  
It was a very hazy day. I will just try these  
three sentences of Con-fut-see; they may fetch  
that state about again. I know not whether it  
was the dumps or a budding ecstasy. Mem.  
‘There never is but one opportunity of a kind.  
Poet. How now, Hermit, is it too soon? I

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 209  
  
have got just thirteen whole ones, besides several  
which are imperfect or undersized; but they  
will do for the smaller fry; they do not cover  
up the hook so much. Those village worms are  
quite too large; a shiner may make a meal off  
one without finding the skewer.  
  
Hermit. Well, then, let’s be off. Shall we  
to the Concord? There’s good sport there if  
the water be not too high.  
  
Why do precisely these objects which we be-  
hold make a world? Why has man just these  
species of animals for his neighbors; as if noth-  
ing but a mouse could have filled this crevice ?  
I suspect that Pilpay & Co. have put animals  
to their best use, for they are all beasts of burden,  
in a sense, made to carry some portion of our  
thoughts.  
  
‘The mice which haunted my house were not  
the common ones, which are said to have been  
introduced into the country, but a wild native  
kind not found in the village. I sent one to a  
distinguished naturalist, and it interested him  
much. When I was building, one of these had its  
nest underneath the house, and before I had  
laid the second floor, and swept out the shavings,  
would come out regularly at lunch time and pick  
up the crumbs at my feet. It probably had  
never seen a man before; and it soon became  
quite familiar, and would run over my shoes and

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300 WALDEN  
  
up my clothes. It could readily ascend the  
sides of the room by short impulses, like a  
squirrel, which it resembled in its motions. At  
length, as I leaned with my elbow on the bench  
one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my  
sleeve, and round and round the paper which  
held my dinner, while I kept the latter close,  
and dodged and played at bo-peep with it  
and when at last I held still a piece of cheese  
between my thumb and finger, it came and nib-  
bled it, sitting in my hand, and afterward  
cleaned its face and paws, like a fly, and walked  
away.  
  
A phoebe soon built in my shed, and a robin  
for protection in a pine which grew against the  
house. In June the partridge (Tetrao umbellus),  
which is so shy a bird, led her brood past my  
windows, from the woods in the rear to the front  
of my house, clucking and calling to them like  
a hen, and in all her behavior proving herself  
the hen of the woods. The young suddenly  
disperse on your approach, at a signal from the  
mother, as if a whirlwind had swept them away,  
and they so exactly resemble the dried leaves  
and twigs that many a traveller has placed his  
foot in the midst of a brood, and heard the whir  
of the old bird as she flew off, and her anxious  
calls and mewing, or seen her trail her wings  
to attract his attention, without suspecting their  
neighborhood. The parent will sometimes roll

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 301  
  
and spin round before you in such a dishabille,  
that you cannot, for a few moments, detect what  
kind of creature it is. The young squat still  
and flat, often running their heads under a leaf, .  
and mind only their mother’s directions given  
from a distance, nor will your approach make  
them run again and betray themselves. You  
may even tread on them, or have your eyes on  
them for a minute, without discovering them. I  
have held them in my open hand at such a time,  
and still their only care, obedient to their mother  
and their instinct, was to squat there without  
fear or trembling. So perfect is this instinct,  
that once, when I had laid them on the leaves  
again, and one accidentally fell on its side, it  
was found with the rest in exactly the same  
position ten minutes afterward. They are not  
callow like the young of most birds, but more  
perfectly developed and precocious even than  
chickens. The remarkably adult yet innocent  
expression of their open and serene eyes is very  
memorable. All intelligence seems reflected in  
them. They suggest not merely the purity of  
infancy, but a wisdom clarified by experience.  
Such an eye was not born when the bird was,  
but is coeval with the sky it reflects. The woods  
do not yield another such gem. The traveller  
does not often look into such a limpid well. The  
ignorant or reckless sportsman often shoots the  
parent at such a time, and leaves these inno-

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302: WALDEN  
  
cents to fall a prey to some prowling beast or  
bird, or gradually mingle with the decaying  
leaves which they so much resemble. It is  
said that when hatched by a hen they will di-  
rectly disperse on some alarm, and so are lost,  
for they never hear the mother’s call which  
gathers them again. These were my hens and  
chickens.  
  
It is remarkable how many creatures live  
wild and free though secret in the woods, and  
still sustain themselves in the neighborhood of.  
towns, suspected by hunters only. How retired  
the otter manages to live here! He grows to  
be four feet long, as big as a small boy, perhaps  
without any human being getting a glimpse of.  
him. I formerly saw the raccoon in the woods  
behind where my house is built, and prob-  
ably still heard their whinnering at night. Com-  
monly I rested an hour or two in the shade at  
noon, after planting, and ate my lunch, and  
read a little by a spring which was the source of  
a swamp and of a brook, oozing from under  
Brister’s Hill, half a mile from my field. The  
approach to this was through a succession of  
descending grassy hollows, full of young pitch-  
pines, into a larger wood about the swamp.  
There, in a very secluded and shaded spot, under  
a spreading white-pine, there was yet a clean  
firm sward to sit on. I had dug out the spring  
and made a well of clear gray water, where I

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Brister's Spring

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 303  
  
could dip up a pailful without roiling it, and  
thither I went for this purpose almost every  
day in midsummer, when the pond was warmest.  
‘Thither too the wood-cock led her brood, to  
probe the mud for worms, flying but a foot above  
them down the bank, while they ran in a troop  
beneath; but at last, spying me, she would  
leave her young and circle round and round me,  
nearer and nearer till within four or five feet,  
pretending broken wings and legs, to attract my  
attention, and get off her young, who would  
already have taken up their march, with faint  
wiry peep, single file through the swamp, as she  
directed. Or I heard the peep of the young  
when I could not see the parent bird. There  
too the turtle-doves sat over the spring, or  
fluttered from bough to bough of the soft white-  
pines over my head; or the red squirrel, cours-  
ing down the nearest bough, was particularly  
familiar and inquisitive. You only need sit still  
long enough in some attractive spot in the woods  
that all its inhabitants may exhibit themselves  
to you by turns.  
  
I was witness to events of a less peaceful  
character. One day when I went out to my  
wood-pile, or rather my pile of stumps, I ob-  
served two large ants, the one red, the other  
much larger, nearly half an inch long, and black,  
fiercely contending with one another. Having  
once got hold they never let go, but struggled

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304 WALDEN  
  
and wrestled and rolled on the chips incessantly.  
Looking farther, I wes surprised to find that the  
chips were covered with such combatants, that  
it was not a duellum, but a bellum, a war between  
two races of ants, the red always pitted against  
the black, and frequently two red ones to one  
black. The legions of these Myrmidons cov-  
ered all the hills and vales in my wood-yard,  
and the ground was already strewn with the  
dead and dying, both red and black. It was  
the only battle which I have ever witnessed, the  
only battle-field I ever trod while the battle was  
raging; internecine war; the red republicans  
on the one hand, and the black imperialists on  
the other. On every side they were engaged in  
deadly combat, yet without any noise that I  
could hear, and human soldiers never fought s0  
resolutely. I watched a couple that were fast  
locked in each other’s embraces, in a little sunny  
valley amid the chips, now at noonday prepared  
to fight till the sun went down, or life went out.  
The smaller red champion had fastened himself  
like a vice to his adversary’s front, and through  
all the tumblings on that field never for an in-  
stant ceased to gnaw at one of his feelers near  
the root, having already caused the other to go  
by the board; while the stronger black one  
dashed him from side to side, and, as I saw on  
looking nearer, had already divested him of  
several of his members. ‘They fought with more

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 805  
  
pertinacity than bull-dogs. Neither manifested  
the least disposition to retreat. It was evident  
that their battle-cry was Conquer or die. In the  
meanwhile there came along a single red ant on  
the hill side of this valley, evidently full of ex-  
citement, who either had despatched his foe,  
or had not yet taken part in the battle; prob-  
ably the latter, for he had lost none of his limbs;  
whose mother had charged him to return with  
his shield or upon it. Or perchance he was  
some Achilles, who had nourished his wrath  
apart, and had now come to avenge or rescue  
his Patroclus. He saw this unequal combat  
from afar, —for the blacks were nearly twice  
the size of the red, — he drew near with rapid  
pace till he stood on his guard within half an  
inch of the combatants; then, watching his op-  
portunity, he sprang upon the black warrior,  
and commenced his operations near the root  
of his right fore-leg, leaving the foe to select  
among his own members; and so there were  
three united for life, as if a new kind of attrac-  
tion had been invented which put all other locks  
and cements to shame. I should not have  
wondered by this time to find that they had their  
respective musical bands stationed on some  
eminent chip, and playing their national airs  
the while, to excite the slow and cheer the dying  
combatants. I was myself excited somewhat  
even as if they had been men. The more you

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$06 WALDEN  
  
think of it, the less the difference. And cer  
tainly there is not the fight recorded in Con-  
cord history, at least, if in the history of America,  
that will bear a moment’s comparison with this,  
whether for the numbers engaged in it, or for  
the patriotism and heroism displayed. For  
numbers and for carnage it was an Austerlitz  
or Dresden. Concord Fight! ‘Two killed on  
the patriots’ side, and Luther Blanchard  
wounded! Why, here every ant was a But-  
trick, — “Fire! for God’s sake fire!” — and  
thousands shared the fate of Davis and Hosmer.  
‘There was not one hireling there. I have no  
doubt that it was a principle they fought for, as  
much as our ancestors, and not to avoid a three-  
penny tax on their tea; and the results of this  
battle will be as important and memorable to  
those whom it concerns as those of the battle of  
Bunker Hill, at least.  
  
I took up the chip on which the three I have  
particularly described were struggling, carried  
it into my house, and placed it under a tumbler  
on my window-sill, in order to see the issue.  
Holding © microscope to the first-mentioned  
red ant, I saw that, though he was assiduously  
gnawing at the near fore-leg of his enemy, hav-  
ing severed his remaining feeler, his own breast  
was all torn away, exposing what vitals he had  
there to the jaws of the black warrior, whose  
breastplate was apparently too thick for him to

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 807  
  
pierce; and the dark carbuncles of the sufferer’s  
eyes shone with ferocity such as war only could  
excite. They struggled half an hour longer  
under the tumbler, and when I looked again  
the black soldier had severed the heads of his  
foes from their bodies, and the still living heads  
were hanging on either side of him like ghastly  
trophies at his saddle-bow, still apparently as  
firmly fastened as ever, and he was endeavor-  
ing with feeble struggles, being without feelers  
and with only the remnant of a leg, and I know  
not how many other wounds, to divest himself  
of them; which at length, after half an hour  
more, he accomplished. I raised the glass, and  
he went off over the window-sill in that crippled  
state. Whether he finally survived that com-  
bat, and spent the remainder of his days in some  
Hétel des Invalides, I do not know; but I  
thought that his industry would not be worth  
much thereafter. I never learned which party  
was victorious, nor the cause of the war; but I  
felt for the rest of that day as if I had had my  
feelings excited and harrowed by witnessing  
the struggle, the ferocity and carnage, of a hu-  
man battle before my door.  
  
Kirby and Spence tell us that the battles of  
ants have long been celebrated and the date of  
them recorded, though they say that Huber is  
the only modem author who appears to have  
witnessed them. ‘‘Aineas Sylvius,” say they,

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308 WALDEN  
  
“after giving a very circumstantial account of  
one contested with great obstinacy by a great  
and small species on the trunk of a pear tree,”  
adds that “‘‘This action was fought in the pontifi-  
cate of Eugenius the Fourth, in the presence of  
Nicholas Pistoriensis, an eminent lawyer, who  
related the whole history of the battle with the  
greatest fidelity.’ A similar engagement be-  
tween great and small ants is recorded by Olaus  
Magnus, in which the small ones, being victori-  
ous, are said to have buried the bodies of their  
own soldiers, but left those of their giant ene-  
mies a prey to the birds. This event happened  
previous to the expulsion of the tyrant Christiern  
the Second from Sweden.” The battle which I  
witnessed took place in the Presidency of Polk,  
five years before the passage of Webster's Fugi-  
tive-Slave Bill.  
  
Many a village Bose, fit only to course a mud-  
turtle in a victualling cellar, sported his heavy  
quarters in the woods, without the knowledge  
of his master, and ineffectually smelled at old  
fox burrows and woodchucks’ holes; led per-  
chance by some slight cur which nimbly threaded  
the wood, and might still inspire a natural ter-  
ror in its denizens; now far behind his guide,  
barking like a canine bull toward some small  
squirrel which had treed itself for scrutiny, then,  
cantering off, bending the bushes with his  
weight, imagining that he is on the track of

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 309  
  
some stray member of the jerbilla family. Once  
I was surprised to see a cat walking along the  
stony shore of the pond, for they rarely wander  
so far from home. The surprise was mutual.  
Nevertheless the most domestic cat, which has  
lain on a rug all her days, appears quite at home  
in the woods, and, by her sly and stealthy be-  
havior, proves herself more native there than  
the regular inhabitants. Once, when berrying,  
I met with a cat with young kittens in the woods,  
quite wild, and they all, like their mother, had  
their backs up and were fiercely spitting at me.  
A few years before I lived in the woods there  
was what was called a “winged cat” in one of  
the farm-houses in Lincoln nearest the pond,  
Mr. Gilian Baker’s. When I called to see her in  
June, 1842, she was gone a-hunting in the woods,  
as was her wont (I am not sure whether it was @  
male or female, and so use the more common  
pronoun), but her mistress told me that she came  
into the neighborhood a little more than a year  
before, in April, and was finally taken into their  
house; that she was of a dark brownish gray  
color, with a white spot on her throat, and white  
feet, and had a large bushy tail like a fox; that  
in the winter the fur grew thick and flatted out  
along her sides, forming strips ten or twelve  
inches long by two and a half wide, and under  
her chin like a muff, the upper side loose, the  
under matted like felt, and in the spring these

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310 WALDEN  
  
appendages dropped off. They gave me a pair  
of her “wings,” which I keep still. There is no  
appearance of a membrane about them. Some  
thought it was part flying squirrel or some other  
wild animal, which is not impossible, for, ac-  
cording to naturalists, prolific hybrids have been  
produced by the union of the marten and do-  
mestic cat. This would have been the right kind  
of cat for me to keep, if I had kept any; for why  
should not a poet’s cat be winged as well as his  
horse?  
  
In the fall the loon (Colymbus glacialis) came,  
as usual, to moult and bathe in the pond, mak-  
ing the woods ring with his wild laughter be-  
fore I had risen. At rumor of his arrival all the  
Mill-dam sportsmen are on the alert, in gigs and  
on foot, two by two and three by three, with  
patent rifles and conical balls and spy-glasses.  
They come rustling through the woods like au-  
tumn leaves, at least ten men to one loon. Some  
station themselves on this side of the pond,  
some on that, for the poor bird cannot be om-  
nipresent; if he dive here he must come up  
there. But now the kind October wind rises,  
rustling the leaves and rippling the surface of  
the water, so that no loon can be heard or seen,  
though his foes sweep the pond with spy-glasses,  
and make the woods resound with their dis-  
charges. The waves generously rise and dash  
angrily, taking sides with all water-fowl, and our

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 811  
  
sportsmen must beat a retreat to town and shop  
and unfinished jobs. But they were too often  
successful. When I went to get a pail of water  
early in the morning I frequently saw this  
stately bird sailing out of my cove within a few  
rods. If I endeavored to overtake him in a boat,  
in order to see how he would manceuvre, he  
would dive and be completely lost, so that I did  
not discover him again, sometimes, till the latter  
part of the day. But I was more than a match  
for him on the surface. He commonly went off  
ina rain.  
  
‘As I was paddling along the north shore one  
very calm October afternoon, for such days es-  
pecially they settle on to the lakes, like the milk-  
weed down, having looked in vain over the pond  
for a loon, suddenly one, sailing out from the  
shore toward the middle a few rods in front of  
me, set up his wild laugh and betrayed himself.  
I pursued with a paddle and he dived, but when  
he came up I was nearer than before. He dived  
  
ain, but I miscalculated the direction he  
would take, and we were fifty rods apart when  
he came to the surface this time, for I had helped  
to widen the interval; and again he laughed  
long and loud, and with more reason than be-  
fore. He manceuvred so cunningly that I could  
not get within half a dozen rods of him. Each  
time, when he came to the surface, turning his  
head this way and that, he coolly surveyed the

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312 WALDEN  
  
water and the land, and apparently chose his  
course so that he might come up where there was  
the widest expanse of water and at the greatest  
distance from the boat. It was surprising how  
quickly he made up his mind and put his re-  
solve into execution. He led me at once to the  
widest part of the pond, and could not be driven  
from it. While he was thinking one thing in  
his brain, I was endeavoring to divine his  
thought in mine. It was a pretty game, played  
on the smooth surface of the pond, a man against  
aloon. Suddenly your adversary’s checker dis-  
appears beneath the board, and the problem is  
to place yours nearest to where his will appear  
again. Sometimes he would come up unex-  
pectedly on the opposite side of me, having  
apparently passed directly under the boat. So  
long-winded was he and so unweariable, that  
when he had swum farthest he would immedi-  
ately plunge again, nevertheless; and then no  
wit could divine where in the deep pond, be-  
neath the smooth surface, he might be speed-  
ing his way like a fish, for he had time and ability  
to visit the bottom of the pond in its deepest  
part. It is said that loons have been caught in  
the New York lakes eighty feet beneath the sur-  
face, with hooks set for trout, — though Walden  
is deeper than that. How surprised must the  
fishes be to see this ungainly visitor from an-  
other sphere speeding his way amid their schools !

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 318  
  
Yet he appeared to know his course as surely  
under water as on the surface, and swam much  
faster there. Once or twice I saw a ripple where  
he approached the surface, just put his head out  
to reconnoitre, and instantly dived again. I  
found that it was as well for me to rest on my  
  
\_ oars and wait his reappearing as to endeavor to  
calculate where he would rise; for again and  
again, when I was straining my eyes over the  
surface one way, I would suddenly be startled  
by his unearthly laugh behind me. But why,  
after displaying so much cunning, did he in-  
variably betray himself the moment he came up  
by that loud laugh? Did not his white breast  
enough betray him? He was indeed a silly loon,  
I thought. I could commonly hear the plash of  
the water when he came up, and so also de-  
tected him. But after an hour he seemed as  
fresh as ever, dived as willingly and swam yet  
farther than at first. It was surprising to see  
how serenely he sailed off with unruffied breast  
when he came to the surface, doing all the  
work with his webbed feet beneath. His usual  
note was this demoniac laughter, yet somewhat  
like that of a water-fowl; but occasionally,  
when he had balked me most successfully and  
come up a long way off, he uttered a long-drawn  
unearthly howl, probably more like that of a  
wolf than any bird; as when a beast puts his  
muzzle to the ground and deliberately howls.

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814 WALDEN  
  
‘This was his looning,— perhaps the wildest  
sound that is ever heard here, making the woods  
ring far and wide. I concluded that he laughed  
in derision of my efforts, confident of his own re-  
sources. Though the sky was by this time over-  
cast, the pond was so smooth that I could see  
where he broke the surface when I did not hear  
him. His white breast, the stillness of the air,  
and the smoothness of the water were all against  
him. At length, having come up fifty rods off,  
he uttered one of those prolonged howls, as if  
calling on the god of loons to aid him, and im-  
mediately there came a wind from the east and  
rippled the surface, and filled the whole air  
with misty rain, and I was impressed as if it  
were the prayer of the loon answered, and  
his god was angry with me; and so I left him  
disappearing far away on the tumultuous sur-  
face.  
  
For hours, in fall days, I watched the ducks  
cunningly tack and veer and hold the middle of  
the pond, far from the sportsman; tricks which  
they will have less need to practice in Louisiana  
bayous. When compelled to rise they would  
sometimes circle round and round and over the  
pond at a considerable height, from which they  
could easily see to other ponds and the river,  
like black motes in the sky; and when I thought  
they had gone off thither long since, they would  
settle down by a slanting fight of a quarter

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BRUTE NEIGHBORS 315  
  
of a mile on to a distant part which was left  
free; but what besides safety they got by sail-  
ing in the middle of Walden I do not know,  
unless they love its water for the same reason  
that I do.

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xu  
HOUSE-WARMING  
  
'N October I went a-graping to the river  
meadows, and loaded myself with clusters  
more precious for their beauty and fragrance  
  
than for food. ‘There too I admired, though I  
  
did not gather, the cranberries, small waxen  
  
gems, pendants of the meadow grass, pearly  
  
and red, which the farmer plucks with am ugly  
rake, leaving the smooth meadow in a snarl,  
heedlessly measuring them by the bushel and  
the dollar only, and sells the spoils of the meads  
to Boston and New York; destined to be  
jammed, to satisfy the tastes of lovers of Nature  
there. So butchers rake the tongues of bison  
out of the prairie grass, regardless of the torn  
and drooping plant. The barberry’s brilliant  
fruit was likewise food for my eyes merely; but  
I collected a small store of wild apples for cod-  
dling, which the proprietors and travellers had  
overlooked. When chestnuts were ripe I laid  
up half a bushel for winter. It was very exciting  
at that season to roam the then boundless chest-  
nut woods of Lincoln, — they now sleep their  
long sleep under the railroad, — with » bag on

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smoponu sary

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HOUSE-WARMING 817  
  
my shoulder, and a stick to open burrs with in  
my hand, for I did not always wait for the frost,  
amid the rustling of leaves and the loud re-  
proofs of the red-squirrels and the jays, whose  
half-consumed nuts I sometimes stole, for the  
burrs which they had selected were sure to con-  
tain sound ones. Occasionally I climbed and  
shook the trees. They grew also behind my  
house, and one large tree which almost over-  
shadowed it was, when in flower, a bouquet  
which scented the whole neighborhood, but the  
squirrels and the jays got most of its fruit; the  
last coming in flocks early in the morning and  
picking the nuts out of the burrs before they fell.  
I relinquished these trees to them and visited  
the more distant woods composed wholly of  
chestnut. These nuts, as far as they went, were  
a good substitute for bread. Many other sub-  
stitutes might, perhaps, be found. Digging one  
day for fish-worms I discovered the ground-nut  
(Apios tuberosa) on its string, the potato of the  
aborigines, a sort of fabulous fruit, which I had  
begun to doubt if I had ever dug and eaten in  
childhood, as I had told, and had not dreamed  
it. I had often since seen its crimpled red vel-  
vety blossom supported by the stems of other  
plants without knowing it to be the same. Cul-  
tivation has well-nigh exterminated it. It has  
a sweetish taste, much like that of a frostbitten  
potato, and I found it better boiled than roasted.

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318 WALDEN  
  
‘This tuber seemed like a faint promise of Nature  
to rear her own children and feed them simply  
here at some future period. In these days of  
fated cattle and waving grain-fields, this hum-  
ble root, which was once the totem of an Indian  
tribe, is quite forgotten, or known only by its  
flowering vine; but let wild Nature reign here  
once more, and the tender and luxurious English  
grains will probably disappear before a myriad  
of foes, and without the care of man the crow  
may carry back even the last seed of corn to the  
great cornfield of the Indian’s God in the south-  
west, whence he is said to have brought it; but  
the now almost exterminated ground-nut will  
perhaps revive and flourish in spite of frosts and  
wildness, prove itself indigenous, and resume  
its ancient importance and dignity as the diet  
of the hunter tribe. Some Indian Ceres or Mi-  
nerva must have been the inventor and bestower  
of it; and when the reign of poetry commences  
here, its leaves and string of nuts may be repre-  
sented on our works of art.  
  
Already, by the first of September, I had seen  
two or three small maples turned scarlet across  
the pond, beneath where the white stems of  
three aspens diverged, at the point of a prom-  
ontory, next the water. Ah, many a tale their  
color told! And gradually from week to week  
the character of each tree came out, and it ad-  
mired itself reflected in the smooth mirror of

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HOUSE-WARMING 319  
  
the lake. Each morning the manager of this  
gallery substituted some new picture, distin-  
guished by more brilliant or harmonious color-  
ing, for the old upon the walls.  
  
‘The wasps came by thousands to my lodge in  
October, as to winter quarters, and settled on  
my windows within and on the walls overhead,  
sometimes deterring visitors from entering. Each  
morning, when they were numbed with cold, I  
swept some of them out, but I did not trouble  
myself much to get rid of them; I even felt com-  
plimented by their regarding my house as a  
desirable shelter. ‘They never molested me seri-  
ously, though they bedded with me; and they  
gradually disappeared, into what crevices I do  
not know, avoiding winter and unspeakable  
cold.  
  
Like the wasps, before I finally went into  
winter quarters in November, I used to resort  
to the northeast side of Walden, which the sun,  
reflected from the pitch-pine woods and the  
stony shore, made the fireside of the pond; it is  
so much pleasanter and wholesomer to be  
warmed by the sun while you can be, than by  
an artificial fire. I thus warmed myself by the  
still glowing embers which the summer, like  
departed hunter, had left.  
  
When I came to build my chimney I studied  
masonry. My bricks being second-hand ones

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320 ‘WALDEN  
  
required to be cleaned with a trowel, so that I  
learned more than usual of the qualities of  
bricks and trowels. The mortar on them was  
fifty years old, and was said to be still growing  
harder; but this is one of those sayings which  
men love to repeat whether they are true or not.  
Such sayings themselves grow harder and ad-  
here more firmly with age, and it would take  
many blows with a trowel to clean an old wise-  
acre of them. Many of the villages of Mesopo-  
tamia are built of second-hand bricks of a very  
good quality, obtained from the ruins of Baby-  
lon, and the cement on them is older and prob-  
ably harder still. However that may be, I was  
struck by the peculiar toughness of the steel  
which bore so many violent blows without being  
worn out. As my bricks had been in a chimney  
before, though I did not read the name of Neb-  
uchadnezzar on them, I picked out as many  
fireplace bricks as I could find, to save work and  
waste, and I filled the spaces between the bricks  
about the fireplace with stones from the pond  
shore, and also made my mortar with the white  
sand from the same place. I lingered most  
about the fireplace, as the most vital part of the  
house. Indeed, I worked so deliberately, that  
though I commenced at the ground in the morn-  
ing, a course of bricks raised a few inches above  
the floor served for my pillow at night; yet I did  
not get a stiff neck for it that I remember; my

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HOUSE-WARMING 821  
  
stiff neck is of older date. I took a poet to  
board for a fortnight about those times, which  
caused me to be put to it for room. He brought  
his own knife, though I had two, and we used to  
scour them by thrusting them into the earth.  
He shared with me the labors of cooking. I was  
pleased to see my work rising so square and  
solid by degrees, and reflected that, if it pro-  
ceeded slowly, it was calculated to endure a  
long time. The chimney is to some extent an  
independent structure, standing on the ground  
and rising through the house to the heavens;  
even after the house is burned it still stands  
sometimes, and its importance and independ-  
ence are apparent. This was toward the end  
of summer. It was now November.  
  
‘The north wind had already begun to cool the  
pond, though it took many weeks of steady  
blowing to accomplish it, it is so deep. When I  
began to have a fire at evening, before I plas-  
tered my house, the chimney carried smoke  
particularly well, because of the numerous chinks  
between the boards. Yet I passed some cheerful  
evenings in that cool and airy apartment, sur-  
rounded by the rough brown boards full of  
knots, and rafters with the bark on high over-  
head. My house never pleased my eye so much  
after it was plastered, though I was obliged to  
confess that it was more comfortable. Should  
  
n

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822 WALDEN  
  
not every apartment in which man dwells be  
lofty enough to create some obscurity over-  
head, where flickering shadows may play at  
evening about the rafters? These forms are  
more agreeable to the fancy and imagination  
than fresco paintings or other the most expen-  
sive furniture. I now first began to inhabit my  
house, I may say, when I began to use it for  
warmth as well as shelter. I had got a couple of  
old fire-dogs to keep the wood from the hearth,  
and it did me good to see the soot form on the  
back of the chimney which I had built, and I  
poked the fire with more right and more satis-  
faction than usual. My dwelling was small,  
and I could hardly entertain an echo in it; but  
it seemed larger for being a single apartment  
and remote from neighbors. All the attractions  
of a house were concentrated in one room; it  
was kitchen, chamber, parlor, and keeping-  
room; and whatever satisfaction parent or  
child, master or servant, derive from living in a  
house, I enjoyed it all. Cato says, the master  
of a family (patremfamilias) must have in his  
rustic villa “‘cellam oleariam, vinariam, dolia  
multa, uti lubeat caritatem expectare, et rei,  
et virtuti, et glorie erit,” that is, “an oil and wine  
cellar, many casks, so that it may be pleasant  
to expect hard times; it will be for his advan-  
tage, and virtue, and glory.” I had in my cellar  
a firkin of potatoes, about two quarts of peas

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HOUSE-WARMING 328  
  
with the weevil in them, and on my shelf a little  
rice, a jug of molasses, and of rye and Indian  
meal a peck each.  
  
I sometimes dream of a larger and more popu-  
lous house, standing in a golden age, of enduring  
materials, and without gingerbread-work, which  
shall still consist of only one room, a vast, rude,  
substantial, primitive hall, without ceiling or  
plastering, with bare rafters and purlins sup-  
porting a sort of lower heaven over one’s head,  
— useful to keep off rain and snow; where the \*  
king and queen posts stand out to receive your  
homage, when you have done reverence to the  
prostrate Saturn of an older dynasty on stepping  
over the sill; @ cavernous house, wherein you  
must reach up a torch upon a pole to see the  
roof; where some may live in the fireplace,  
some in the recess of a window, and some on  
settles, some at one end of the hall, some at  
another, and some aloft on rafters with the  
spiders, if they choose; a house which you have  
got into when you have opened the outside  
door, and the ceremony is over; where the  
weary traveller may wash, and eat, and con-  
verse, and sleep, without further journey; such  
a shelter as you would be glad to reach in a  
tempestuous night, containing all the essentials  
of a house, and nothing for house-keeping, where  
you can sce all the treasures of the house at  
  
one view, and everything hangs upon its peg

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32 WALDEN  
  
that a man should use; at once kitchen, pantry,  
parlor, chamber, store-house, and garret; where  
you can see so necessary a thing as a barrel or a  
ladder, so convenient a thing as a cupboard,  
and hear the pot boil, and pay your respects to  
the fire that cooks your dinner and the oven  
that bakes your bread, and the necessary furni-  
ture and utensils are the chief ornaments; where  
the washing is not put out, nor the fire, nor the  
mistress, and perhaps you are sometimes re-  
quested to move from off the trap-door, when  
the cook would descend into the cellar, and so  
learn whether the ground is solid or hollow  
beneath you without stamping’ A house whose  
inside is as open and manifest as a bird’s nest,  
and you cannot go in at the front door and out  
at the back without seeing some of its inhabit-  
ants; where to be a guest is to be presented with  
the freedom of the house, and not to be care-  
fully excluded from seven eighths of it, shut up  
in a particular cell, and told to make yourself  
at home there, — in solitary confinement. Now-  
adays the host does not admit you to his hearth,  
but has got the mason to build one for yourself  
somewhere in his alley, and hospitality is the  
art of keeping you at the greatest distance. ‘There  
is as much secrecy about the cooking as if he had  
‘a design to poison you. I am aware that I have  
been on many a man’s premises, and might  
have been legally ordered off, but I am not aware

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HOUSE-WARMING $25  
  
that I have been in many men’s houses. I  
might visit in my old clothes a king and queen  
who lived simply in such a house as I have  
described, if I were going their way; but back-  
ing out of a modern palace will be all that I  
shall desire to learn, if ever I am caught in one.  
  
It would seem as if the very language of our  
parlors would lose all its nerve and degenerate  
into parlaver wholly, our lives pass at such  
remoteness from its symbols, and its metaphors  
and tropes are necessarily so far fetched, through  
slides and dumb-waiters, as it were; in other  
words, the parlor is so far from the kitchen and  
workshop. The dinner even is only the parable  
of a dinner, commonly. As if only the savage  
dwelt near enough to Nature and Truth to  
borrow a trope from them. How can the  
scholar, who dwells away in the North West  
Territory or the Isle of Man, tell what is parlia-  
mentary in the kitchen?  
  
However, only one or two of my guests were  
ever bold enough to stay and eat a hasty-pudding  
with me; but when they saw that crisis ap-  
proaching they beat a hasty retreat rather, as  
if it would shake the house to its foundations.  
Nevertheless, it stood through a great many  
hasty-puddings.  
  
I did not plaster till it was freezing weather.  
I brought over some whiter and cleaner sand  
for this purpose from the opposite shore of the

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826 ‘WALDEN  
  
pond in a boat, a sort of conveyance which  
would have tempted me to go much farther if  
necessary. My house had in the meanwhile  
been shingled down to the ground on every  
side. In lathing I was pleased to be able to  
send home each nail with a single blow of the  
hammer, and it was my ambition to transfer the  
plaster from the board to the wall neatly and  
rapidly. I remembered the story of a conceited  
fellow, who, in fine clothes, was wont to lounge  
about the village once, giving advice to work-  
men. Venturing one day to substitute deeds for  
words, he turned up his cuffs, seized a plaster-  
er’s board, and having loaded his trowel with-  
out mishap, with a complacent look toward the  
lathing overhead, made a bold gesture thither-  
ward; and straightway, to his complete dis-  
comfiture, received the whole contents in his  
ruffled bosom. I admired anew the economy  
and convenience of plastering, which so effectu-  
ally shuts out the cold and takes a handsome  
finish, and I learned the various casualties to  
which the plasterer is liable. I was surprised  
to see how thirsty the bricks were, which drank  
up all the moisture in my plaster before I had  
smoothed it, and how many pailfuls of water  
it takes to christen a new hearth. I had the  
previous winter made a small quantity of lime  
by burning the shells of the Unio fluviatilis,  
which our river affords, for the sake of the ex-

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HOUSE-WARMING a7  
  
petiment; so that I knew where my materials  
came from. I might have got good limestone  
within a mile or two and burned it myself, if I  
had cared to do so.  
  
The pond had in the meanwhile skimmed  
over in the shadiest and shallowest coves, some  
days or even weeks before the general freezing.  
‘The first ice is especially interesting and per-  
feet, being hard, dark, and tramspavent, and  
affords the best oppoztunity that ever offers for  
examining the bottom where ut is shallow; for  
you can lie at your length om ire only an inck  
thick, like a skater insect om the susface of the  
water, and study the bottom at your leiause,.  
only two or three inches distant, like a picture  
behind o gtoss, and the water is necessarily  
always smooth then. There ave msny furrows,  
in the sand where some creature has travelled  
about and doubled on its tracks; and, for wreeks,  
it is strewn with the cases of caddis worms made  
of minute grains of white quartz. Perhaps these  
have creased it, for you find: some of their cases  
in the furrows, though they ave deep and broad.  
for them to make. But the ice itself is the object.  
of most interest, though you must. improve the  
earliest opportunity to study it Hf you examine  
it closely the morning after it freezes;, you find  
that the greater part of the bubbles, which at  
first appeared to be within it, are. against. its  
under surface, and that more. are continually

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828 WALDEN  
  
rising from the bottom; while the ice is as yet  
comparatively solid and dark, that is, you see  
the water through it. These bubbles are from  
an eightieth to an eighth of an inch in diameter,  
very clear and beautiful, and you see your face  
reflected in them through the ice. There may  
be thirty or forty of them to a square inch.  
There are also already within the ice narrow  
oblong perpendicular bubbles about half an  
inch long, sharp cones with the apex upward;  
or oftener, if the ice is quite fresh, minute spheri-  
cal bubbles, one directly above another, like a  
string of beads. But these within the ice are  
not so numerous nor obvious as those beneath.  
I sometimes used to cast on stones to try the  
strength of the ice, and those which broke  
through carried in air with them, which formed  
very large and conspicuous white bubbles be-  
neath. One day when I came to the same place  
forty-eight hours afterward, I found that those  
large bubbles were still perfect, though an inch  
more of ice had formed, as I could see distinctly  
by the seam in the edge of a cake. But as the  
last two days had been very warm, like an Indian  
summer, the ice was not now transparent, show-  
ing the dark green color of the water, and the  
bottom, but opaque and whitish or gray, and  
though twice as thick was hardly stronger than  
before, for the air bubbles had greatly expanded  
under this heat and run together, and lost their

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HOUSE-WARMING 329  
  
regularity; they were no longer one directly  
over another, but often like silvery coins poured  
from a bag, one overlapping another, or in thin  
flakes, as if occupying slight cleavages. ‘The  
beauty of the ice was gone, and it was too late  
to study the bottom. Being curious to know  
what position my great bubbles occupied with  
regard to the new ice, I broke out a cake con-  
taining a middling-sized one, and turned it bot-  
tom upward. The new ice had formed around  
and under the bubble, so that it was included  
between the two ices. It was wholly in the  
lower ice, but close against the upper, and was  
flattish, or perhaps slightly lenticular, with a  
rounded edge, a quarter of an inch deep by four  
inches in diameter; and I was surprised to find  
that directly under the bubble the ice was  
melted with great regularity in the form of a  
saucer reversed, to the height of five-eighths of  
an inch in the middle, leaving a thin partition  
there between the water and the bubble, hardly  
an eighth of an inch thick; and in many places  
the small bubbles in this partition had burst  
out downward, and probably there was no ice  
at all under the largest bubbles, which were a  
foot in diameter. I inferred that the infinite  
number of minute bubbles which I had first  
seen against the under surface of the ice were  
now frozen in likewise, and that each, in its  
degree, had operated like @ burning-glass on

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the ice beneath to melt and rot it. These are  
the little air guns which contribute to make the  
ice crack and whoop.  
  
At length the winter set in in good eamest,  
just as I had finished plastering, and the wind  
began to howl around the house as if it had not  
had permission to do so till then. Night after  
night the geese came lumbering in in the dark  
with a clangor and a whistling of wings, even  
after the ground was covered with snow, some  
to alight in Walden, and same flying low aver  
the woods toward Fair-Haven, bound for Mex-  
ico. Several times, when returning from the  
village at ten or eleven o'clock at night, I heard  
the tread of a flock of geese, or else ducks, on  
the dry leaves in the woods by a pond-hole  
behind my dwelling, where they had come up  
to feed, and the faint honk or quack of their  
leader as they hurried off. In 1845 Walden  
froze entirely over for the first time on the night  
of the 22d of December, Flint’s and other  
shallower ponds and the river having been frozen  
ten days or more; in '46, the 16th; in ’49, about  
the Sist; and in '50, about the 27th of Decem-  
ber; in ’62, the Sth of January; in ’S8, the  
Sist of December. The snow had already  
covered the ground since the 25th of November,  
and surrounded me suddenly with the scenery  
of winter. I withdrew yet farther into my sheli,

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HOUSE-WARMING $31  
  
and endeavored to keep a bright fire both within  
my house and within my breast. My employ-  
ment out of doors now was to collect the dead  
wood in the forest, bringing it in my hands or on  
my shoulders, or sometimes trailing @ dead pine  
tree under each arm to my shed. An old forest  
fence which had geen its best days was a great  
haul for me. I sacrificed it to Vulcan, for it waa  
past serving the god Terminus, How much  
more interesting an event ia that man’s supper  
who has just been forth in the snow to hunt,  
nay, you may say, steal, the fuel to cook it with {  
His bread and meat are sweet. There are  
enough fagots and waste wood of all kinds in  
the forests of most of aur towns to support many  
fires, but which at present warm none, and,  
some think, hinder the growth of the young  
wood. There was also the drift-wood of the  
pond. In the course of the summer I had dis-  
covered a raft of pitch-pine logs with the bark  
on, pinned together by the Irish when the rail-  
road was built. This I hauled up partly on the  
shore. After soaking two years and then lying  
high six months it was perfectly sound, though  
waterlogged past drying. I amused myself one  
winter day with sliding this piece-meal across  
the pond, nearly half a mile, skating behing  
with one end of a log fifteen feet long on my  
shoulder, and the other on the ice; or I tied  
several logs together with a birch withe, and

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then, with a longer birch or alder which had a  
hook at the end, dragged them across. Though  
completely waterlogged and almost as heavy  
as lead, they not only burned long, but made  
a very hot fire; nay, I thought that they burned  
better for the soaking, as if the pitch, being  
confined by the water, burned longer as in a  
lamp.  
  
Gilpin, in his account of the forest borderers  
of England, says that “‘the encroachments of  
trespassers, and the houses and fences thus raised  
on the borders of the forest,” were “‘considered  
as great nuisances by the old forest law, and  
were severely punished under the name of pur-  
prestures, as tending ad terrorem ferarum — ad  
nocumentum foreste, &c.,” to the frightening of  
the game and the detriment of the forest. But  
I was interested in the preservation of the veni-  
son and the vert more than the hunters or wood-  
choppers, and as much as though I had been  
the Lord Warden himself; and if any part was  
burned, though I burned it myself by accident,  
I grieved with a grief that lasted longer and  
was more inconsolable than that of the proprie-  
tors; nay, I grieved when it was cut down by  
the proprietors themselves. I would that our  
farmers when they cut down a forest felt some  
of that awe which the old Romans did when  
they came to thin, or let in the light to, a conse-  
crated grove (lucum conlucare), that is, would

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HOUSE-WARMING 833  
  
believe that it is sacred to some god. The  
Roman made an expiatory offering, and prayed,  
Whatever god or goddess thou art to whom this  
grove is sacred, be propitious to me, my family,  
and children, &.  
  
It is remarkable what a value is still put upon  
wood even in this age and in this new country,  
a value more permanent and universal than that  
of gold. After all our discoveries and inventions  
no man will go by a pile of wood. It is as pre-  
cious to us as it was to our Saxon and Norman  
ancestors. If they made their bows of it, we  
make our gun-stocks of it. Michaux, more than  
thirty years ago, says that the price of wood for  
fuel in New York and Philadelphia “nearly  
equals, and sometimes exceeds, that of the best  
wood in Paris, though this immense capital an-  
nually requires more than three hundred thou-  
sand cords, and is surrounded to the distance  
of three hundred miles by cultivated plains.”  
In this town the price of wood rises almost  
steadily, and the only question is, how much  
higher it is to be this year than it was the last.  
Mechanics and tradesmen who come in person  
to the forest on no other errand, are sure to  
attend the wood auction, and even pay » high  
price for the privilege of gleaning after the wood-  
chopper. It is now many years that men have  
resorted to the forest for fuel and the materials  
of the arts; the New Englander and the New

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334 WALDEN  
  
Hollander, the Parisian and the Celt, the farmer  
and Robinhood, Goody Blake and Harry Gill,  
in most parts of the world the prince and the  
peasant, the scholar and the savage, equally  
require still a few sticks from the forest to warm  
them and cook their food, Neither could I do  
without them.  
  
Every man looks at his wood-pile with a kind  
of affection. I loved to have mine before my  
window, and the more chips the better to remind  
me of my pleasing work. I had an old axe which  
nobody claimed, with whieh by spells in winter  
days, on the sunay side of the house, I played  
about the stumps which I had got out of my:  
beanfield. As my driver prophesied when I was  
ploughing, they warmed me twice, once while I  
was splitting them, and again when they were  
on the fire, so that no fuel could give out more  
heat. As for the axe, I was advised to get the  
village blacksmith to “jump” it; but I jumped  
him, and, putting a hickory belve from the  
woods into it, made it do. If it was dull, it was.  
at least hung true.  
  
A few pieces of fat pine were a great treasure.  
It is interesting to remember how much of this  
food for fire is still concealed in the bowels of  
the earth. In previous years I had often gone  
“prospecting” over some bare hill side, where  
a pitch-pine wood had formerly stood, and got  
out the fat pine roots. ‘Fhey are almost inde-

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HOUSE-WARMING 835  
  
structible. Stumps thirty or forty years old, at  
least, will still be sound at the core, though the  
sapwood has all become vegetable mould, as  
appears by the scales of the thick bark forming  
a ring level with the earth four or five inches dis-  
tant from the heart. With axe and shovel you  
explore this mine, and follow the marrowy  
store, yellow as beef tallow, or as if you had  
struck on a vein of gold, deep into the earth.  
But commonly I kindled my fire with the dry  
leaves of the forest, which I had stored up in  
my shed before the snow came. Green hickory  
finely split makes the wood-chopper’s kind-  
lings, when he has a camp in the woods. Once  
in a while I got a little of this. When the vil-  
lagers were lighting their fires beyond the hori-  
ton, I too gave notice to the various wild inhabi-  
tants of Walden vale, by a smoky streamer from  
my chimney, that I was awake. —  
  
‘Light-winged Smoke, Tearian bird,  
  
‘Melting thy pinions in thy upward flight,  
  
‘Lark without song, and messenger of dawn,  
  
Circling above the hamlets as thy nest;  
  
Or else, departing dream, and shadowy form  
  
‘Of midnight vision, gathering up thy skirts;  
  
By night star-veiling, and by day  
  
Darkening the light and blotting out the sun;  
  
Go thou my incense upward from this hearth,  
  
‘And ask the gods to pardon this clear flame.  
  
Hard green wood just cut, though I used but  
  
little of that, answered my purpose better than

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336 WALDEN  
  
any other. I sometimes left a good fire when I  
went to take a walk in a winter afternoon; and  
when I returned, three or four hours afterward,  
it would be still alive and glowing. My house  
was not empty though I was gone. It was as if  
I had left a cheerful housekeeper behind. It  
was I and Fire that lived there; and commonly  
my housekeeper proved trustworthy. One day,  
however, as I was splitting wood, I thought that  
I would just look in at the window and see if the  
louse was not on fire; it was the only time I re-  
member to have been particularly anxious on  
this score; so I looked and saw that a spark had  
caught my bed, and I went in and extinguished  
it when it had burned a place as big as my hand.  
But my house occupied so sunny and sheltered  
@ position, and its roof was so low, that I could  
afford to let the fire go out in the middle of al-  
most any winter day.  
  
‘The moles nested in my cellar, nibbling every  
third potato, and making a snug bed even there  
of some hair left after plastering and of brown  
paper; for even the wildest animals love com-  
fort and warmth as well as man, and they sur-  
vive the winter only because they are so careful  
to secure them. Some of my friends spoke as  
if I was coming to the woods on purpose to  
freeze myself. The animal merely makes a bed,  
which he warms with his body in a sheltered  
place; but man, having discovered fire, boxes

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HOUSE-WARMING 837  
  
up some air in a spacious apartment, and warms  
that, instead of robbing himself, makes that his  
bed, in which he can move about divested of  
more cumbrous clothing, maintain » kind of  
summer in the midst of winter, and by means of  
windows even admit the light, and with a lamp  
lengthen out the day. ‘Thus he goes a step or  
two beyond instinct, and saves a little time for  
the fine arts, Though, when I had been ex-  
posed to the rudest blasts a long time, my whole  
body began to grow torpid, when I reached the  
genial atmosphere of my house I soon recovered  
my faculties and prolonged my life. But the  
most luxuriously housed has little to boast of in  
this respect, nor need we trouble ourselves to  
speculate how the human race may be at last  
destroyed. It would be easy to cut their threads  
any time with a little sharper blast from the  
north. We go on dating from Cold Fridays and  
Great Snows; but a little colder Friday, or  
greater snow, would put a period to man’s ex-  
istence on the globe.  
  
‘The next winter I used a small cooking-stove  
for economy, since I did not own the forest; but  
it did not keep fire so well as the open fire-place.  
Cooking was then, for the most part, no longer  
a poetic, but merely a chemic process. It will  
soon be forgotten, in these days of stoves, that  
we used to roast potatoes in the ashes, after the  
Indian feshion. The stove not only took up

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838 WALDEN  
  
room and scented the house, but it concealed  
the fire, and I felt as if I had lost a companion.  
You can always see a face in the fire. The la-  
borer, looking into it at evening, purifies his  
thoughts of the dross and earthiness which they  
have accumulated during the day. But I could  
no longer sit and look into the fire, and the perti-  
nent words of @ poet recurted to me with new  
force.  
  
“Never, bright flame, may be denied to me  
"Thy dear, life imaging, close sympathy.  
‘What but my hopes shot upward e'et #0 bright?  
‘What but my fortunes sunk so low in night ?  
  
“Why art thou banished from our bearth and hall,  
‘Thou who art welcomed and beloved by all?  
  
Was thy existence ten too fanciful  
  
For our life's common light, who ate ao dull?  
  
Did thy bright gleam mysterious converse hold  
  
‘With our congenial souls? secrets too bold ?  
  
‘Well, we are safe and strong, for now we sit  
Beside & hearth where no dim shadows fit,  
  
‘Where nothing cheets nor saddens, but a fre  
  
‘Warms feet and hands — nor dots to more aspire;  
  
By whove compact utilitarian heap  
  
‘The present may sit down and go to sleep,  
  
Nor fear the ghosts who from the dim past walked,  
  
‘And with us by the unequal light of the old wood fre talked.”

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xIV  
FORMER INHABITANTS; AND WINTER VISITORS  
  
WEATHERED some merry snow-storms,  
  
and spent some cheerful winter evenings by  
  
my fire-side, while the snow whirled wildly  
without, and even the hooting of the owl was  
hushed. For many weeks I met no one in my  
walks but those who came occasionally to cut  
wood and sled it to the village. ‘The elements,  
however, abetted me in making a path through  
the deepest snow in the woods, for when I had  
once gone through the wind blew the oak leaves  
into my tracks, where they lodged, and by ab-  
sorbing the rays of the sun melted the snow,  
and so not only made a dry bed for my feet, but  
in the night their dark line was my guide. For  
human society I was obliged to conjure up the  
former occupants of these woods. Within the  
memory of many of my townsmen the road near  
which my house stands resounded with the  
laugh and gossip of inhabitants, and the woods  
which border it were notched and dotted here  
and there with their little gardens and dwellings,  
though it was then much more shut in by the  
forest than now. In some places, within my

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340 WALDEN  
  
own remembrance, the pines would scrape  
both sides of a chaise at once, and women and  
children who were compelled to go this way to  
Lincoln alone and on foot did it with fear, and  
often ran a good part of the distance. Though  
mainly but a humble route to neighboring vil-  
lages, or for the woodman’s team, it once  
amused the traveller more than now by its vari-  
ety, and lingered longer in his memory. Where  
now firm open fields stretch from the village to  
the woods, it then ran through a maple swamp  
on a foundation of logs, the remnants of which,  
doubtless, still underlie the present dusty high-  
way, from the Straten, now the Alms House,  
Farm, to Brister’s Hill.  
  
East of my beanfield, across the road, lived  
Cato Ingraham, slave of Duncan Ingraham,  
Esquire, gentleman of Concord village; who  
built his slave a house, and gave him permission  
to live in Walden Woods;— Cato, not Uticen-  
sis, but Concordiensis. Some say that he was a  
Guinea Negro. There are a few who remember  
his little patch among the walnuts, which he let  
grow up till he should be old and need them;  
but a younger and whiter speculator got them  
at last. He too, however, occupies an equally  
narrow house at present. Cato’s half-obliter-  
ated cellar hole still remains, though known to  
few, being concealed from the traveller by a  
fringe of pines. It is now filled with the smooth

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FORMER INHABITANTS 841  
  
sumach (Rhus glabra), and one of the earliest  
species of goldenrod (Solidago stricta) grows  
there luxuriantly.  
  
Here, by the very corner of my field, still  
nearer to town, Zilpha, colored woman, had  
her little house, where she spun linen for the  
townsfolk, making the Walden Woods ring with  
her shrill singing, for she had a loud and nota-  
ble voice. At length, in the war of 1812, her  
dwelling was set on fire by English soldiers,  
prisoners on parole, when she was away, and her  
cat and dog and hens were all burned up to-  
gether. She led a hard life, and somewhat in-  
humane. One old frequenter of these woods  
remembers that as he passed her house one noon  
he heard her muttering to herself over her gur-  
gling pot, —“‘Ye are all bones, bones!” I have  
seen bricks amid the oak copse there.  
  
Down the road, on the right hand, on Bris-  
ter’s Hill, lived Brister Freeman, ‘‘a handy  
Negro,” slave of Squire Cummings once, —  
there where grow still the apple trees which  
Brister planted and tended; large old trees now,  
but their fruit still wild and ciderish to my taste.  
Not long since I read his epitaph in the old  
Lincoln burying-ground, a little on one side,  
near the unmarked graves of some British gren-  
adiers who fell in the retreat from Concord, —  
where he is styled “‘Sippio Brister,” — Scipio  
Africanus he had some title to be called, — “a

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342 WALDEN  
  
man of color,” as if he were discolored. It also  
told me, with staring emphasis, when he died;  
which was but an indirect way of informing me  
that he ever lived. With him dwelt Fenda,  
his hospitable wife, who told fortunes, yet  
pleasantly, — large, round, and black, blacker  
than any of the children of night, such a  
dusky orb as never rose on Concord before or  
since.  
  
Farther down the hill, on the left, on the old  
road in the woods, are marks of some home-  
stead of the Stratten family; whose orchard  
once covered all the slope of Brister’s Hill,  
but was long since killed out by pitch-pines,  
excepting a few stumps, whose old roots furnish  
still the wild stocks of many a thrifty village  
tree.  
  
Nearer yet to town, you come to Breed’s loca-  
tion, on the other side of the way, just on the  
edge of the wood; ground famous for the pranks  
of a demon not distinctly named in old mythol-  
ogy, who has acted a prominent and astounding  
part in our New England life, and deserves, as  
much as any mythological character, to have  
his biography written one day; who first comes  
in the guise of a friend or hired man, and then  
robs and murders the whole family, —New  
England Rum. But history must not yet tell  
the tragedies enacted here; let time intervene in  
some measure to assuage and lend an azure

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FORMER INHABITANTS 343  
  
tint to them. Here the most indistinct and du-  
bious tradition says that once a tavern stood;  
the well the same, which tempered the traveller’s  
beverage and refreshed his steed. Here then  
men saluted one another, and heard and told the  
news, and went their ways again.  
  
Breed’s hut was standing only a dozen years  
ago, though it had long been unoccupied. It  
was about the size of mine. It was set on fire  
by mischievous boys, one Election night, if I  
do not mistake. I lived on the edge of the vil-  
lage then, and had just lost myself over Dave-  
nant’s Gondibert, that winter that I labored  
with a lethargy, — which, by the way, I never  
knew whether to regard as a family complaint,  
having an uncle who goes to sleep shaving him-  
self, and is obliged to sprout potatoes in a cellar  
Sundays, in order to keep awake and keep the  
Sabbath, or as the consequence of my attempt  
to read Chalmers’ collection of English poetry  
without skipping. It fairly overcame my Nervii.  
T had just sunk my head on this when the bells  
rang fire, and in hot haste the engines rolled  
that way, led by a straggling troop of men and  
boys, and I among the foremost, for I had leaped  
the brook. We thought it was far south over  
the woods, — we who had run to fires before, —  
barn, shop, or dwelling-house, or all together.  
“It’s Baker’s barn,” cried one. “It is the Cod-  
man Place,” affirmed another. And then fresh

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344 WALDEN  
  
sparks went up above the wood, as if the roof  
fell in, and we all shouted “Concord to the  
rescue!” Wagons shot past with furious speed  
and crushing loads, bearing, perchance, among  
the rest, the agent of the Insurance Company,  
who was bound to go however far; and ever  
and anon the engine bell tinkled behind, more  
slow and sure, and rearmost of all, as it was  
afterward whispered, came they who set the  
fire and gave the alarm. Thus we kept on like  
true idealists, rejecting the evidence of our  
senses, until at a turn in the road we heard the  
crackling and actually felt the heat of the fire  
from over the wall, and realized, alas! that we  
were there. The very nearness of the fire but  
cooled our ardor. At first we thought to throw  
a frog-pond on to it; but concluded to let it  
burn, it was so far gone and so worthless. So  
we stood round our engine, jostled one another,  
expressed our sentiments through speaking trum-  
pets, or in lower tone referred to the great  
conflagrations which the world has witnessed,  
including Bascom’s shop, and, between our-  
selves, we thought that, were we there in season  
with our “tub” and a full frog-pond by, we could  
turn that threatened last and universal one into  
another flood. We finally retreated without  
doing any mischief, — returned to sleep and  
Gondibert. But as for Gondibert, I would ex-  
cept that passage in the preface about wit being

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FORMER INHABITANTS 345  
  
the soul’s powder, — ‘but most of mankind  
are strangers to wit, as Indians are to pow-  
der.”  
  
It chanced that I walked that way across the  
fields the following night, about the same hour,  
and hearing a low moaning at this spot, I drew  
  
near in the dark, and discovered the only sur-  
vivor of the family that I know, the heir of both  
its virtues and its vices, who alone was interested  
in this burning, lying on his stomach and look-  
ing over the cellar wall at the still smouldering  
cinders beneath, muttering to himself, as is his  
wont. He had been working far off in the river  
meadow all day, and had improved the first  
moments that he could call his own to visit the  
home of his fathers and his youth. He gazed  
into the cellar from all sides and points of view  
by turns, always lying down to it, as if there was  
some treasure, which he remembered, con-  
cealed between the stones, where there was ab-  
solutely nothing but a heap of bricks and ashes.  
The house being gone, he looked at what there  
was left. He was soothed by the sympathy  
which my mere presence implied, and showed  
me, as well as the darkness permitted, where the  
well was covered up; which, thank Heaven,  
could never be burned; and he groped long  
about the wall to find the well-sweep which his  
father had cut and mounted, feeling for the iron  
hook or staple by which a burden had been

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846 WALDEN  
  
fastened to the heavy end, — all that he could  
now cling to, — to convince me that it was no  
common “rider.” I felt it, and still remark it  
almost daily in my walks, for by it hangs the  
history of a family.  
  
Once more, on the left, where are seen the  
well and lilac bushes by the wall, in the now  
open field, lived Nutting and Le Grosse. But  
to return toward Lincoln.  
  
Farther in the woods than any of these, where  
the road approaches nearest to the pond, Wy-  
man the potter squatted, and furnished his  
townsmen with earthen ware, and left descend-  
ants to succeed him. Neither were they rich in  
worldly goods, holding the land by sufferance  
while they lived; and there often the sheriff  
came in vain to collect the taxes, and “attached  
@ chip,” for form’s sake, as I have read in his  
accounts, there being nothing else that he could  
lay his hands on. One day in midsummer,  
when I was hoeing, a man who was carrying a  
load of pottery to market stopped his horse  
against my field and inquired concerning Wy-  
man the younger. He had long ago bought a  
potter’s wheel of him, and wished to know what  
had become of him. I had read of the potter’s  
clay and wheel in Scripture, but it had never  
occurred to me that the pots we use were not  
such as had come down unbroken from those  
days, or grown on trees like gourds somewhere,

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FORMER INHABITANTS 347  
  
and I was pleased to hear that so fictile an art  
was ever practised in my neighborhood.  
  
The last inhabitant of these woods before me  
was an Irishman, Hugh Quoil (if I have spelt  
his name with coil enough), who occupied Wy-  
man’s tenement, — Col. Quoil, he was called.  
Rumor said that he had been a soldier at Water-  
loo. If he had lived I should have made him  
fight his battles over again. His trade here was  
that of a ditcher. Napoleon went to St. Helena;  
Quoil came to Walden Woods. All I know of  
him is tragic. He was a man of manners, like  
one who had seen the world, and was capable  
of more civil speech than you could well attend  
to. He wore a great coat in midsummer, being  
affected with the trembling delirium, and his  
face was the color of carmine. He died in the  
road at the foot of Brister’s Hill shortly after I  
came to the woods, so that I have not remem-  
bered him as a neighbor. Before his house was  
pulled down, when his comrades avoided it as  
“an unlucky castle,” I visited it. There lay his  
old clothes curled up by use, as if they were  
himself, upon his raised plank bed. His pipe  
lay broken on the hearth, instead of a bowl  
broken at the fountain. The last could never  
have been the symbol of his death, for he con-  
fessed to me that, though he had heard of Bris-  
ter’s Spring, he had never seen it; and soiled  
cards, kings of diamonds, spades, and hearts,

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348 WALDEN  
  
were scattered over the floor. One black chicken  
which the administrator could not catch, black  
as night and as silent, not even croaking, await-  
ing Reynard, still went to roost in the next apart-  
ment. In the rear there was the dim outline of a  
a garden, which had been planted but had never  
received its first hoeing, owing to those terrible  
shaking fits, though it was now harvest time.  
It was overrun with Roman wormwood and  
beggar-ticks, which last stuck to my clothes for  
all fruit. The skin of a woodchuck was freshly  
stretched upon the back of the house, a trophy  
of his last Waterloo; but no warm cap or mit-  
tens would he want more.  
  
Now only a dent in the earth marks the site  
of these dwellings, with buried cellar stones, and  
strawberries, raspberries, thimble-berries, hazel  
bushes, and sumachs growing in the sunny sward  
there; some pitch-pine or gnarled oak occupies  
what was the chimney nook, and a sweet-scented  
black-birch, perhaps, waves where the door-  
stone was. Sometimes the well dent is visible,  
where once a spring oozed; now dry and tear-  
less grass; or it was covered deep, — not to be  
discovered till some late day, — with a flat stone  
under the sod, when the last of the race departed.  
What a sorrowful act must that be, — the cov-  
ering up of wells! coincident with the opening  
of wells of tears. ‘These cellar dents, like de-  
serted fox burrows, old holes, are all that is left

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FORMER INHABITANTS 349  
  
where once were the stir and bustle of human  
life, and “fate, free-will, foreknowledge abso-  
lute,” in some form and dialect or other were by  
turns discussed. But all I can learn of their con-  
clusions amounts to just this, that “Cato and  
Brister pulled wool;” which is about as edify-  
ing as the history of more famous schools of  
philosophy.  
  
Still grows the vivacious lilac a generation  
after the door and lintel and the sill are gone,  
unfolding its sweet-scented flowers each spring,  
to be plucked by the musing traveller; planted  
and tended once by children’s hands, in front-  
yard plots, — now standing by wall-sides in re-  
tired pastures, and giving place to new-rising  
forests; — the last of that stirp, sole survivor of  
that family. Little did the dusky children think  
that the puny slip with its two eyes only, which  
they stuck in the ground in the shadow of the  
house and daily watered, would root itself so,  
and outlive them, and house itself in the rear  
that shaded it, and grow man’s garden and  
orchard, and tell their story faintly to the lone  
wanderer a half century alter they had grown  
up and died, — blossoming as fair, and smelling  
as sweet, as in that first spring. I mark its still  
tender, civil, cheerful, lilac colors.  
  
But this small village, germ of something more,  
why did it fail while Concord keeps its ground ?  
Were there no natural advantages, —no water

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360 WALDEN  
  
privileges, forsooth? Ay, the deep Walden Pond  
and cool Brister’s Spring, — privilege to drink  
long and healthy draughts at these, all unim-  
proved by these men but to dilute their glass.  
They were universally a thirsty race. Might  
not the basket, stable-broom, mat-making, corn-  
parching, linen-spinning, and pottery business  
have thrived here, making the wilderness to  
blossom like the rose, and a numerous posterity  
have inherited the land of their fathers? The  
sterile soil would at least have been proof against  
a low-land degeneracy. Alas! how little does  
the memory of these human inhabitants enhance  
the beauty of the landscape! Again, perhaps,  
Nature will try, with me for a first settler, and  
my house raised last spring to be the oldest in  
the hamlet.  
  
I am not aware that any man has ever built on  
the spot which I occupy. Deliver me from a  
city built on the site of a more ancient city, whose  
materials are ruins, whose gardens cemeteries.  
The soil is blanched and accursed there, and  
before that becomes necessary the earth itself  
will be destroyed. With such reminiscences I  
repeopled the woods and lulled myself asleep.  
  
At this season I seldom had a visitor. When  
the snow lay deepest no wanderer ventured near  
my house for a week or a fortnight at a time, but  
there I lived as snug as a meadow mouse, or as

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FORMER INHABITANTS $51  
  
cattle and poultry which are said to have sur-  
vived for a long time buried in drifts, even without  
food; or like that early settler’s family in the  
town of Sutton, in this state, whose cottage was  
completely covered by the great snow of 1717  
when he was absent, and an Indian found it only  
by the hole which the chimney’s breath made in  
the drift, and so relieved the family. But no  
friendly Indian concerned himself about me; nor  
needed he, for the master of the house was at  
home. The Great Snow! How cheerful it is  
to hear of! When the farmers could not get to  
the woods and swamps with their teams, and  
were obliged to cut down the shade trees before  
their houses, and when the crust was harder cut  
off the trees in the swamps ten feet from the  
ground, as it appeared the next spring.  
  
In the deepest snows, the path which I used  
from the highway to my house, about half a  
mile long, might have been represented by a  
meandering dotted line, with wide intervals be-  
tween the dots. For a week of even weather I  
took exactly the same number of steps, and of  
the same length, coming and going, stepping de-  
liberately and with the precision of a pair of  
dividers in my own deep tracks, — to such rou-  
tine the winter reduces us,—yet often they  
were filled with heaven’s own blue. But no  
weather interfered fatally with my walks, or  
rather my going abroad, for I frequently tramped

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352 WALDEN  
  
eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to  
keep an appointment with a beech tree, or a  
yellow-birch, or an old acquaintance among the  
pines; when the ice and snow, causing their  
limbs to droop, and so sharpening their tops,  
had changed the pines into fir trees; wading to  
the tops of the highest hills when the snow was  
nearly two feet deep on a level, and shaking  
down another snow-storm on my head at every  
step; or sometimes creeping and floundering  
thither on my hands and knees, when the hunt-  
ers had gone into winter quarters. One after-  
noon I amused myself by watching a barred owl  
(Strix: nebulosa) sitting on one of the lower dead  
limbs of a white-pine, close to the trunk, in broad  
daylight, I standing within a rod of him. He  
could hear me when I moved and cronched the  
snow with my feet, but could not plainly see me.  
When I made most noise he would stretch out his  
neck, and erect his neck feathers, and open his  
eyes wide; but their lids soon fell again, and he  
began to nod. I too felt a slumberous influence  
after watching him half an hour, as he sat  
thus with his eyes half open, like a cat, winged  
brother of the cat. There was only a narrow slit  
between their lids, by which he preserved a  
peninsular relation to me; thus, with half-shut  
eyes, looking out from the land of dreams, and  
endeavoring to realize me, vague object or mote  
that interrupted his visions. At length, on some

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The icy trees

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FORMER INHABITANTS 353  
  
louder noise or my nearer approach, he would  
grow uneasy and sluggishly turn about on his  
perch, as if impatient at having his dreams dis-  
turbed; and when he launched himself off and  
flapped through the pines, spreading his wings  
to unexpected breadth, I could not hear the  
slightest sound from them. ‘Thus, guided amid  
the pine boughs rather by a delicate sense of their  
neighborhood than by sight, feeling his twilight  
way as it were with his sensitive pinions, he found  
a new perch, where he might in peace await the  
dawning of his day.  
  
As I walked over the long causeway made for  
the railroad through the meadows, I encountered  
many a blustering and nipping wind, for no-  
where has it freer play; and when the frost had  
smitten me on one cheek, heathen as I was, I  
turned to it the other also. Nor was it much bet-  
ter by the carriage road from Brister’s Hill.  
For I came to town still, like a friendly Indian,  
when the contents of the broad open fields were  
all piled up between the walls of the Walden  
road, and half an hour sufficed to obliterate the  
tracks of the last traveller. And when I returned  
new drifts would have formed through which I  
floundered, where the busy northwest wind had  
been depositing the powdery snow round a  
sharp angle in the road, and not a rabbit’s track,  
nor even the fine print, the small type, of a  
  
meadow mouse was to be seen. Yet I rarely  
1

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354 WALDEN  
  
failed to find, even in mid-winter, some warm  
and springy swamp where the grass and the  
skunk-cabbage still put forth with perennial ver-  
dure, and some hardier bird occasionally awaited  
the return of spring.  
  
Sometimes, notwithstanding the snow, when I  
returned from my walk at evening I crossed the  
deep tracks of a woodchopper leading from my  
door, and found his pile of whittlings on the  
hearth, and my house filled with the odor of his  
pipe. Or on a Sunday afternoon, if I chanced to  
be at home, I heard the cronching of the snow  
made by the step of a long-headed farmer, who  
from far through the woods sought my house, to  
have a social “crack”; one of the few of his vo-  
cation who are “men on their farms”; who  
donned a frock instead of a professor’s gown, and  
is as ready to extract the moral out of church or  
state as to haul a load of manure from his barn-  
yard. We talked of rude and simple times, when  
men sat about large fires in cold bracing weather,  
with clear heads; and when other dessert  
failed, we tried our teeth on many a nut which  
wise squirrels have long since abandoned, for  
those which have the thickest shells are com-  
monly empty.  
  
‘The one who came from farthest to my lodge,  
through deepest snows and most dismal tem-  
pests, was a poet. A farmer, a hunter, a soldier,  
a reporter, even a philosopher, may be daunted;

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FORMER INHABITANTS 855  
  
but nothing can deter a poet, for he is actuated by  
pure love. Who can predict his comings and  
goings? His business calls him out at all hours,  
even when doctors sleep. We made that small  
house ring with boisterous mirth and resound  
with the murmur of much sober talk, making  
amends then to Walden vale for the long silences.  
Broadway was still and deserted in comparison.  
At suitable intervals there were regular salutes  
of laughter, which might have been referred in-  
differently to the last-uttered or the forthcoming  
jest. We made many a “bran new” theory of  
life over a thin dish of gruel, which combined  
the advantages of conviviality with the clear-  
headedness which philosophy requires.  
  
I should not forget that during my last winter  
at the pond there was another welcome visitor,  
who at one time came through the village, through  
snow and rain and darkness, till he saw my lamp  
through the trees, and shared with me some long  
winter evenings. One of the last of the philoso  
phers, — Connecticut gave him to the world, —  
he peddled first her wares, afterwards, as he de-  
clares, his brains. ‘These he peddles still, prompt-  
ing God and disgracing man, bearing for fruit  
his brain only, like the nut its kernel. I think that  
he must be the man of the most faith of any alive.  
His words and attitude always suppose a better  
state of things than other men are acquainted  
with, and he will be the last man to be disap-

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356 WALDEN  
  
pointed as the ages revolve. He has no venture  
in the present. But though comparatively dis-  
regarded now, when his day comes, laws unsus-  
pected by most will take effect, and masters of  
families and rulers will come to him for advice. —  
  
“How blind that cannot see serenity !””  
  
A true friend of man; almost the only friend of  
human progress. An Old Mortality, say rather  
an Immortality, with unwearied patience and  
faith making plain the image engraven in men’s  
bodies, the God of whom they are but defaced  
and leaning monuments. With his hospitable  
intellect he embraces children, beggars, insane,  
and scholars, and entertains the thought of all,  
adding to it commonly some breadth and ele-  
gance. I think that he should keep a caravansary  
on the world’s highway, where philosophers of all  
nations might put up, and on his sign should be  
printed: ‘Entertainment for man, but not for  
his beast. Enter ye that have leisure and a quiet  
mind, who earnestly seck the right road.” He  
is perhaps the sanest man and has the fewest  
crotchets of any I chance to know; the same  
yesterday and to-morrow. Of yore we had saun-  
tered and talked, and effectually put the world  
behind us; for he was pledged to no institution  
in it, freeborn, ingenuus. Whichever way we  
turned, it seemed that the heavens and the earth  
had met together, since he enhanced the beauty

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FORMER INHABITANTS 857  
  
of the landscape. A blue-robed man, whose  
fittest roof is the overarching sky which reflects  
his serenity. I do not see how he can ever die;  
Nature cannot spare him.  
  
Having each some shingles of thought well  
dried, we sat and whittled them, trying our knives,  
and admiring the clear yellowish grain of the  
pumpkin pine. We waded so gently and rever-  
ently, or we pulled together so smoothly, that the  
fishes of thought were not scared from the stream,  
nor feared any angler on the bank, but came and  
went grandly, like the clouds which float through  
the western sky, and the mother-o’-pearl flocks  
which sometimes form and dissolve there. There  
we worked, revising mythology, rounding a fable  
here and there, and building castles in the air  
for which earth offered no worthy foundation.  
Great Looker! Great Expecter! to converse  
with whom was a New England Night’s Enter-  
tainment. Ah! such discourse we had, hermit  
and philosopher, and the old settler I have spoken  
of, —we three, — it expanded and racked my  
little house; I should not dare to say how many  
pounds’ weight there was above the atmospheric  
pressure on every circular inch; it opened its  
seams so that they had to be calked with much  
dulness thereafter to stop the consequent leak;  
—but I had enough of that kind of oakum  
already picked.  
  
There was one other with whom I had “solid

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358 WALDEN  
  
seasons,” long to be remembered, at his house  
in the village, and who looked in upon me from  
time to time; but I had no more for society  
there.  
  
‘There too, as everywhere, I sometimes ex-  
pected the Visitor who never comes. The  
Vishnu Purana says, “The house-holder is to  
remain at eventide in his courtyard as long as it  
takes to milk a cow, or longer if he pleases, to  
await the arrival of a guest.” I often performed  
this duty of hospitality, waited long enough to  
milk a whole herd of cows, but did not see the  
man approaching from the town. .

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xv  
WINTER ANIMALS  
  
HEN the ponds were firmly frozen, they  
afforded not only new and shorter routes  
to many points, but new views from their  
  
surfaces of the familiar landscape around them.  
When I crossed Flint’s Pond, after it was covered.  
with snow, though I had often paddled about and  
skated over it, it was so unexpectedly wide and so  
strange that I could think of nothing but Baf-  
fin’s Bay. The Lincoln hills rose up around me  
at the extremity of a snowy plain, in which I did  
not remember to have stood before; and the  
fishermen, at an indeterminable distance over  
the ice, moving slowly about with their wolfish  
dogs, passed for sealers or Esquimaux, or in  
misty weather loomed like fabulous creatures,  
and I did not know whether they were giants or  
pygmies. I took this course when I went to lec-  
ture in Lincoln in the evening, travelling in no  
road and passing no house between my own hut  
and the lecture room. In Goose Pond, which  
lay in my way, a colony of muskrats dwelt, and  
raised their cabins high above the ice, though  
none could be seen abroad when I crossed it.

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360 WALDEN  
  
Walden, being like the rest usually bare of snow,  
or with only shallow and interrupted drifts on it,  
was my yard, where I could walk freely when the  
snow was nearly two feet deep on a level else-  
where and the villagers were confined to their  
streets. There, far from the village street, and,  
except at very long intervals, from the jingle of  
sleigh-bells, I slid and skated, as in a vast moose-  
yard well trodden, overhung by oak woods and  
solemn pines bent down with snow or bristling  
with icicles.  
  
For sounds in winter nights, and often in  
winter days, I heard the forlorn but melodious  
note of a hooting owl indefinitely far; such a  
sound as the frozen earth would yield if struck  
with a suitable plectrum, the very lingua ver-  
nacula of Walden Wood, and quite familiar  
to me at last, though I never saw the bird while  
it was making it. I seldom opened my door in  
a winter evening without hearing it; Hoo hoo  
hoo, hoorer hoo, sounded sonorously, and the  
first three syllables accented somewhat like how  
der do; or sometimes hoo hoo only. One night  
in the beginning of winter, before the pond  
froze over, about nine o'clock, I was startled by  
the loud honking of a goose, and, stepping to  
the door, heard the sound of their wings like  
a tempest in the woods as they flew low over  
my house. They passed over the pond toward  
Fair-Haven, seemingly deterred from settling

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WINTER ANIMALS 361  
  
by my light, their commodore honking all the  
while with a regular beat. Suddenly an unmis-  
takable cat-owl from very near me, with the  
most harsh and tremendous voice I ever heard  
from any inhabitant of the woods, responded  
at regular intervals to the goose, as if deter-  
mined to expose and disgrace this intruder from  
Hudson’s Bay by exhibiting greater compass  
and volume of voice in a native, and boo-hoo him  
out of Concord horizon. What do you mean  
by alarming the citadel at this time of night con-  
secrated tome? Do you think I am ever caught  
napping at such an hour, and that I have not  
got lungs and a larynx as well as yourself?  
Boo-hoo, boo-hoo, boo-hoo! It was one of the  
most thrilling discords I ever heard. And yet,  
if you had a discriminating ear, there were in it  
the elements of a concord such as these plains  
never saw nor heard.  
  
I also heard the whooping of the ice in the  
pond, my great bed-fellow in that part of Con-  
cord, as if it were restless in its bed and would  
fain turn over, were troubled with flatulency  
and bad dreams; or I was waked by the crack-  
ing of the ground by the frost, as if some one  
had driven a team against my door, and in the  
morning would find a crack in the earth a quarter  
of a mile long and a third of an inch wide.  
  
Sometimes I heard the foxes as they ranged  
over the snow crust, in moonlight nights, in

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362 WALDEN  
  
search of @ partridge or other game, barking  
raggedly and demoniacally like forest dogs, as  
if laboring with some anxiety, or seeking ex-  
pression, struggling for light and to be dogs  
outright and run freely in the streets; for if  
we take the ages into our account, may there  
not be a civilization going on among brutes as  
well as men? They seemed to me to be rudi-  
mental, burrowing men, still standing on their  
defence, awaiting their transformation. Some-  
times one came near to my window, attracted  
by my light, barked a vulpine curse at me, and  
then retreated.  
  
Usually the red squirrel (Sciurus Hudsonius)  
waked me in the dawn, coursing over the roof  
and up and down the sides of the house, as if  
sent out of the woods for this purpose. In the  
course of the winter I threw out half a bushel  
of ears of sweet-corn, which had not got ripe,  
on to the snow crust by my door, and was  
amused by watching the motions of the various  
animals which were baited by it. In the twilight  
and the night the rabbits came regularly and  
made a hearty meal. All day long the red  
squirrels came and went, and afforded me much  
entertainment by their manceuvres. One would  
approach at first warily through the shrub-oaks,  
running over the snow crust by fits and starts  
like a leaf blown by the wind, now a few paces  
this way, with wonderful speed: and waste of

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WINTER ANIMALS 363  
  
energy, making inconceivable haste with his  
“trotters,” as if it were for a wager, and now as  
many paces that way, but never getting on more  
than half a rod at a time; and then suddenly  
pausing with a ludicrous expression and a gra-  
tuitous somerset, as if all the eyes in the universe  
were fixed on him, —for all the motions of a  
squirrel, even in the most solitary recesses of  
the forest, imply spectators as much as those of  
a dancing girl, — wasting more time in delay  
and circumspection than would have sufficed  
to walk the whole distance, —I never saw one  
walk,—and then suddenly, before you could  
say Jack Robinson, he would be in the top  
of @ young pitch-pine, winding up his clock and  
chiding all imaginary spectators, soliloquizing  
and talking to all the universe at the same time,  
—for no reason that I could ever detect, or he  
himself was aware of, I suspect. At length he  
would reach the corn, and selecting a suitable  
ear, brisk about in the same uncertain trigo-  
nometrical way to the topmost stick of my  
wood-pile, before my window, where he looked  
me in the face, and there sit for hours, supply-  
ing himself with a new ear from time to time,  
nibbling at first voraciously and throwing the  
half-naked cobs about; till at length he grew  
more dainty still and played with his food,  
tasting only the inside of the kernel, and the  
ear, which was held balanced over the stick by

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364 WALDEN  
  
one paw, slipped from his careless grasp and fell  
to the ground, when he would look over at it  
with a ludicrous expression of uncertainty, as  
if suspecting that it had life, with a mind not  
made up whether to get it again, or a new one,  
or be off; now thinking of corn, then listening  
to hear what was in the wind. So the little  
impudent fellow would waste many an ear in  
@ forenoon; till at last, seizing some longer  
and plumper one, considerably bigger than  
himself, and skilfully balancing it, he would set  
out with it to the woods, like a tiger with a buf-  
falo, by the same zigzag course and frequent  
pauses, scratching along with it as if it were too  
heavy for him and falling all the while, making  
its fall a diagonal between a perpendicular and  
horizontal, being determined to put it through  
at any rate;—a singularly frivolous and whim-  
sical fellow; — and so he would get off with it  
to where he lived, perhaps carry it to the top  
of a pine tree forty or fifty rods distant, and I  
would afterwards find the cobs strewed about  
the woods in various directions.  
  
‘At length the jays arrive, whose discordant  
screams were heard long before, as they were  
warily making their approach an eighth of a  
mile off; and in a stealthy and sneaking manner  
they flit from tree to tree, nearer and nearer, and  
pick up the kernels which the squirrels have  
dropped. Then, sitting on a pitch-pine bough,

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WINTER ANIMALS 365  
  
they attempt to swallow in their haste a kernel  
which is too big for their throats and chokes  
them; and after great labor they disgorge it,  
and spend an hour in the endeavor to crack it  
by repeated blows with their bills. They were  
manifestly thieves, and I had not much respect  
for them; but the squirrels, though at first shy,  
went to work as if they were taking what was  
their own.  
  
Meanwhile also came the chickadees in flocks,  
which, picking up the crumbs the squirrels  
had dropped, flew to the nearest twig, and,  
placing them under their claws, hammered away  
at them with their little bills, as if it were an  
insect in the bark, till they were sufficiently re-  
duced for their slender throats. A little flock  
of these titmice came daily to pick a dinner out  
of my wood-pile, or the crumbs at my door,  
with faint flitting lisping notes, like the tinkling  
of icicles in the grass, or else with sprightly day  
day day, or more rarely, in spring-like days, a  
wiry summery phe-be from the wood-side. ‘They  
were so familiar that at length one alighted on  
an armful of wood which I was carrying in, and  
pecked at the sticks without fear. I once had  
a sparrow alight upon my shoulder for a mo-  
ment while I was hoeing in a village garden,  
and I felt that I was more distinguished by that  
circumstance than I should have been by any  
epaulet I could have worn. The squirrels also

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866 WALDEN  
  
grew at last to be quite familiar, and occasion-  
ally stepped upon my shoe, when that was the  
nearest way.  
  
When the ground was not yet quite covered,  
and again near the end of winter, when the snow  
was melted on my south hill side and about my  
wood-pile, the partridges came out of the woods  
morning and evening to feed there. Which-  
ever side you walk in the woods the partridge  
bursts away on whirring wings, jarring the snow  
from the dry leaves and twigs on high, which  
comes sifting down in the sunbeams like golden  
dust; for this brave bird is not to be scared by  
winter. It is frequently covered up by drifts,  
and, it is said, “sometimes plunges from on  
wing into the soft snow, where it remains con-  
cealed for a day or two.” I used to start them  
in the open land also, where they had come out  
of the woods at sunset to “‘bud” the wild apple  
trees. They will come regularly every evening  
to particular trees, where the cunning sports-  
man lies in wait for them, and the distant or-  
chards next the woods suffer thus not a little.  
I am glad that the partridge gets fed, at any  
rate. It is Nature’s own bird which lives on  
buds and diet drink.  
  
In dark winter mornings, or in short winter  
afternoons, I sometimes heard a pack of hounds  
threading all the woods with hounding cry and  
yelp, unable to resist the instinct of the chase,

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and the note of the hunting horn at intervals,  
proving that man was in the rear. The woods  
ring again, and yet no fox bursts forth on to the  
open level of the pond, nor following pack  
pursuing their Acteeon. And perhaps at evening  
I see the hunters returning with a single brush  
trailing from their sleigh for a trophy, secking  
their inn. They tell me that if the fox would  
remain in the bosom of the frozen earth he would  
be safe, or if he would run in a straight line  
away no fox-hound could overtake him; but,  
having left his pursuers far behind, he stops to  
rest and listen till they come up, and when he  
runs he circles round to his old haunts, where  
the hunters await him. Sometimes, however,  
he will run upon a wall many rods, and then  
leap off far to one side, and he appears to know  
that water will not retain his scent. A hunter  
told me that he once saw a fox pursued by  
hounds burst out on to Walden when the ice  
was covered with shallow puddles, run part way  
across, and then return to the same shore. Ere-  
long the hounds arrived, but here they lost the  
scent. Sometimes a pack hunting by them-  
selves would pass my door, and circle round my  
house, and yelp and hound without regarding  
me, as if afilicted by a species of madness, so  
that nothing could divert them from the pursuit.  
‘Thus they circle until they fall upon the recent  
trail of a fox, for a wise hound will forsake every-

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thing else for this. One day a man came to my  
hut from Lexington to inquire after his hound  
that made a large track, and had been hunting  
for a week by himself. But I fear that he was  
not the wiser for all I told him, for every time  
I attempted to answer his questions he inter-  
rupted me by asking, “What do you do here?”  
He had lost a dog, but found a man.  
  
‘One old hunter who has a dry tongue, who  
used to come to bathe in Walden once every  
year when the water was warmest, and at such  
times looked in upon me, told me that many  
years ago he took his gun one afternoon and  
‘went out for a cruise in Walden Wood, and as  
he walked the Wayland road he heard the cry  
of hounds approaching, and erelong a fot  
leaped the wall into the road, and as quick as  
thought leaped the other wall out of the road,  
and his swift bullet had not touched him. Some  
way behind came an old hound and her three  
pups in full pursuit, hunting on their own ac-  
count, and disappeared again in the woods.  
Late in the afternoon, as he was resting in the  
thick woods south of Walden, he heard the  
voice of the hounds far over toward Fair-Haven  
still pursuing the fox; and on they came, their  
hounding cry which made all the woods ring  
sounding nearer and nearer, now from Well-  
Meadow, now from the Baker Farm. For a  
long time he stood still and listened to their

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WINTER ANIMALS 369  
  
music, so sweet to a hunter’s ear, when sud-  
denly the fox appeared, threading the solemn  
aisles with an easy coursing pace, whose sound  
was concealed by a sympathetic rustle of the  
leaves, swift and still, keeping the ground, leay-  
ing his pursuers far behind; and, leaping upon  
a rock amid the woods, he sat erect and listen-  
ing, with his back to the hunter. For a moment  
compassion restrained the latter’s arm; but  
that was a short-lived mood, and as quick as  
thought can follow thought his piece was lev-  
elled, and whang ! — the fox rolling over the rock  
lay dead on the ground. The hunter still kept  
his place and listened to the hounds. Still on  
they came, and now the near woods resounded  
through all their aisles with their demoniac  
ery. At length the old hound burst into view  
with muzzle to the ground, and snapping the  
air as if possessed, and ran directly to the rock;  
but spying the dead fox she suddenly ceased  
her hounding, as if struck dumb with amaze-  
ment, and walked round and round him in  
silence; and one by one her pups arrived, and,  
like their mother, were sobered into silence by  
the mystery. Then the hunter came forward  
and stood in their midst, and the mystery was  
solved. They waited in silence while he skinned  
the fox, then followed the brush awhile, and at  
length turned off into the woods again. That  
evening a Weston Squire came to the Concord

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hunter’s cottage to inquire for his hounds, and  
told how for a week they had been hunting on  
their own account from Weston woods. The  
Concord hunter told him what he knew and  
offered him the skin; but the other declined it  
and departed. He did not find his hounds that  
night, but the next day learned that they had  
crossed the river and put up at a farm-house  
for the night, whence, having been well fed,  
they took their departure early in the morning.  
The hunter who told me this could remember  
one Sam Nutting, who used to hunt bears on  
Fair-Haven Ledges, and exchange their skins  
for rum in Concord village; who told him, even,  
that he had seen a moose there. Nutting had a  
famous fox-hound named Burgoyne, — he pro-  
nounced it Bugine, — which my informant used  
to borrow. In the “Wast Book” of an old  
trader of this town, who was also a captain,  
town-clerk, and representative, I find the fol-  
lowing entry: Jan. 18th, 1742-8, “John Melven  
Cr. by 1 Grey Fox 0—2—3;” they are not  
found here; and in his ledger, Feb. 7th, 1743,  
Hezekiah Stratton has credit “by 4 a Catt skin  
0—1—4};” of course a wild-cat, for Strat-  
ton was a sergeant in the old French war, and  
would not have got credit for hunting less  
noble game. Credit is given for deerskins also,  
and they were daily sold. One man still pre-  
serves the horns of the last deer that was killed

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in this vicinity, and another has told me the  
particulars of the hunt in which his uncle was  
engaged. The hunters were formerly a numer-  
ous and merry crew here. I remember well  
one gaunt Nimrod who would catch up a leaf  
by the road-side and play a strain on it wilder  
and more melodious, if my memory serves me,  
than any hunting horn.  
  
At midnight, when there was a moon, I some-  
times met with hounds in my path prowling  
about the woods, which would skulk out of my  
way, as if afraid, and stand silent amid the  
bushes till I had passed.  
  
Squirrels and wild mice disputed for my  
store of nuts. There were scores of pitch-pines  
around my house, from one to four inches in  
diameter, which had been gnawed by mice the  
previous winter,—a Norwegian winter for  
them, for the snow lay long and deep, and they  
were obliged to mix a large proportion of pine  
bark with their other diet. These trees were  
alive and apparently flourishing at mid-summer,  
and many of them had grown a foot, though com-  
pletely girdled; but after another winter such  
were without exception dead. It is remark-  
able that a single mouse should thus be allowed  
a whole pine tree for its dinner, gnawing round  
instead of up and down it; but perhaps it is  
necessary in order to thin these trees, which  
are wont to grow up densely.

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‘The hares (Lepus Americanus) were very  
familiar. One had her form under my house  
all winter, separated from me only by the floor-  
ing, and she startled me each morning by her  
hasty departure when I began to stir, — thump,  
thump, thump, striking her head against the  
floor timbers in her hurry. They used to come  
round my door at dusk to nibble the potato  
parings which I had thrown out, and were so  
nearly the color of the ground that they could  
hardly be distinguished when still. Sometimes  
in the twilight I alternately lost and recovered  
sight of one sitting motionless under my window.  
When I opened my door in the evening, off they  
would go with a squeak and a bounce. Near at  
hand they only excited my pity. One evening  
one sat by my door two paces from me, at first  
trembling with fear, yet unwilling to’ move; a  
poor wee thing, lean and bony, with ragged  
ears and sharp nose, scant tail and slender paws.  
It looked as if Nature no longer contained the  
breed of nobler bloods, but stood on her last  
toes. Its large eyes appeared young and un-  
healthy, almost dropsical. I took a step, and  
lo, away it scudded with an elastic spring over  
the snow crust, straightening its body and its  
limbs into graceful length, and soon put the  
forest between me and itself, —the wild free  
venison, asserting its vigor and the dignity of  
Nature. Not without reason was its slender-

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WINTER ANIMALS 373  
  
ness. Such then was its nature. (Lepus, levipes,  
lightfoot, some think.)  
  
‘What is a country without rabbits and par-  
tridges? They are among the most simple and  
indigenous animal products; ancient and ven-  
erable families known to antiquity as to mod-  
em times; of the very hue and substance of  
Nature, nearest allied to leaves and to the  
ground,—and to one another; it is either  
winged or it is legged. It is hardly as if you had  
seen a wild creature when a rabbit or a partridge  
bursts away, only a natural one, as much to be  
expected as rustling leaves. The partridge and  
the rabbit are still sure to thrive, like true natives  
of the soil, whatever revolutions occur. If the  
forest is cut off, the sprouts and bushes which  
spring up afford them concealment, and they  
become more numerous than ever. That must  
be a poor country indeed that does not support  
ahare. Our woods teem with them both, and  
around every swamp may be seen the partridge  
or rabbit walk, beset with twiggy fences and  
horse-hair snares, which some cow-boy tends.

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XVI  
‘THE POND IN WINTER  
  
FTER a still winter night I awoke with  
the impression that some question had  
been put to me, which I had been en-  
  
deavoring in vain to answer in my sleep, as  
what — how — when — where? But there was  
dawning Nature, in whom all creatures live,  
looking in at my broad windows with serene and  
satisfied face, and no question on her lips. I  
awoke to an answered question, to Nature and  
daylight. The snow lying deep on the earth  
dotted with young pines, and the very slope of  
the hill on which my house is placed, seemed to  
say, Forward! Nature puts no question and  
answers none which we mortals ask. She has  
long ago taken her resolution. ‘“O Prince, our  
eyes contemplate with admiration and transmit  
to the soul the wonderful and varied spectacle  
of this universe. The night veils without doubt  
a part of this glorious creation; but day comes  
to reveal to us this great work, which extends  
from earth even into the plains of the ether.”  
‘Then to my morning work. First I take an  
axe and pail and go in search of water, if that be

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THE POND IN WINTER 875  
  
not a dream. After a cold and snowy night it  
needed a divining rod to find it. Every winter  
the liquid and trembling surface of the pond,  
which was so sensitive to every breath, and re-  
flected every light and shadow, becomes solid  
to the depth of a foot or a foot and a half, so that  
it will support the heaviest teams, and perchance  
the snow covers it to an equal depth, and it is  
not to be distinguished from any level field.  
Like the marmots in the surrounding hills, it  
closes its eyelids and becomes dormant for three  
months or more. Standing on the snow-covered  
plain, as if in pasture amid the hills, I cut my  
way first through a foot of snow, and then a foot  
of ice, and open a window under my feet, where,  
kneeling to drink, I look down into the quiet  
parlor of the fishes, pervaded by a softened light  
as through a window of ground glass, with its  
bright sanded floor the same as in summer;  
there a perennial waveless serenity reigns as in  
the amber twilight sky, corresponding to the  
cool and even temperament of the inhabitants.  
Heaven is under our feet as well as over our  
heads.  
  
Early in the morning, while all things are crisp  
with frost, men come with fishing reels and  
slender lunch, and let down their fine lines  
through the snowy field to take pickerel and  
perch; wild men, who instinctively follow other  
fashions and trust other authorities than their

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876 WALDEN  
  
townsmen, and by their goings and comings  
stitch towns together in parts where else they  
would be ripped. They sit and eat their lunch-  
eon in stout fear-naughts on the dry oak leaves  
on the shore, as wise in natural lore as the citi-  
zen is in artificial. They never consulted with  
books, and know and can tell much less than  
they have done. The things which they prac-  
tise are said not yet to be known. Here is one  
fishing for pickerel with grown perch for bait.  
You look into his pail with wonder as into a  
summer pond, as if he kept summer locked up  
at home, or knew where she had retreated.  
How, pray, did he get these in mid-winter? Ob,  
he got worms out of rotten logs since the ground  
froze, and so he caught them. His life itself  
passes deeper in Nature than the studies of the  
naturalist penetrate; himself a subject for the  
naturalist. The latter raises the moss and bark  
gently with his knife in search of insects; the  
former lays open logs to their core with his axe,  
and moss and bark fly far and wide. He gets  
his living by barking trees. Such a man has  
some right to fish, and I love to see Nature car-  
ried out in him. The perch swallows the grub-  
worm, the pickerel swallows the perch, and the  
fisherman swallows the pickerel; and so all the  
chinks in the scale of being are filled.  
  
When I strolled around the pond in misty  
weather I was sometimes amused by the primi-

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THE POND IN WINTER 377  
  
tive mode which some ruder fisherman had  
adopted. He would perhaps have placed alder  
branches over the narrow holes in the ice, which  
were four or five rods apart and an equal dis-  
tance from the shore, and having fastened the  
end of the line to a stick to prevent its being  
pulled through, have passed the slack line over  
a twig of the alder, a foot or more above the ice,  
and tied a dry oak leaf to it, which, being pulled  
down, would show when he had a bite. These  
alders loomed through the mist at regular in-  
tervals as you walked halfway round the pond.  
Ah, the pickerel of Walden! when I see them  
lying on the ice, or in the well which the fisher-  
man cuts in the ice, making a little hole to ad-  
mit the water, I am always surprised by their  
rare beauty, as if they were fabulous fishes, they  
are so foreign to the streets, even to the woods,  
foreign as Arabia to our Concord life. They  
possess a quite dazzling and transcendent beauty  
which separates them by a wide interval from  
the cadaverous cod and haddock whose fame is  
trumpeted in our streets. They are not green  
like the pines, nor gray like the stones, nor blue  
like the sky; but they have, to my eyes, if pos-  
sible, yet rarer colors, like flowers and precious  
stones, as if they were the pearls, the animalized  
nuclei or crystals of the Walden water. They,  
of course, are Walden all over and all through;  
are themselves small Waldens in the animal

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378 WALDEN  
  
kingdom, Waldenses. It is surprising that they  
are caught here, — that in this deep and capa-  
cious spring, far beneath the rattling teams and  
chaises and tinkling sleighs that travel the Wal-  
den road, this great gold and emerald fish swims.  
I never chanced to see its kind in any market;  
it would be the cynosure of all eyes there. Eas-  
ily, with a few convulsive quirks, they give up  
their watery ghosts, like a mortal translated be-  
fore his time to the thin air of heaven.  
  
‘As I was desirous to recover the long-lost  
bottom of Walden Pond, I surveyed it carefully,  
before the ice broke up, early in ’46, with com-  
pass and chain and sounding line. There have  
been many stories told about the bottom, or  
rather no bottom, of this pond, which certainly  
had no foundation for themselves. It is re-  
markable how long men will believe in the  
bottomlessness of a pond without taking the  
trouble to sound it. I have visited two such  
Bottomless Ponds in one walk in this neighbor-  
hood. Many have believed that Walden reached  
quite through to the other side of the globe.  
Some who have lain flat on the ice for a long  
time, looking down through the illusive medium,  
perchance with watery eyes into the bargain,  
and driven to hasty conclusions by the fear of  
catching cold in their breasts, have seen vast  
holes “‘into which a load of hay might be driven,”

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THE POND IN WINTER 379  
  
if there were anybody to drive it, the undoubted  
source of the Styx and entrance to the Infernal  
Regions from these parts. Others have gone  
down from the village with a “fifty-six” and a  
wagon load of inch rope, but yet have failed  
to find any bottom; for while the “fifty-six”  
was resting by the way, they were paying out  
the rope in the vain attempt to fathom their  
truly immeasurable capacity for marvellousness.  
But I can assure my readers that Walden has  
a reasonably tight bottom at @ not unreasonable,  
though at an unusual, depth. I fathomed it  
easily with a cod-line and a stone weighing  
about a pound and a half, and could tell accu-  
rately when the stone left the bottom, by having  
to pull so much harder before the water got  
underneath to help me. The greatest depth  
was exactly one hundred and two feet; to which  
may be added the five feet which it has risen  
since, making one hundred and seven. This is  
a remarkable depth for so small an area; yet  
not an inch of it can be spared by the imagina-  
tion. What if all ponds were shallow? Would  
it not react on the minds of men? I am thank-  
ful that this pond was made deep and pure for  
a symbol. While men believe in the infinite  
some ponds will be thought to be bottomless.  
  
‘A factory owner, hearing what depth I had  
found, thought that it could not be true, for,  
judging from his acquaintance with dams, sand

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380 WALDEN  
  
would not lie at so steep an angle. But the  
deepest ponds are not so deep in proportion to  
their area as most suppose, and, if drained,  
would not leave very remarkable valleys. They  
are not like cups between the hills; for this one,  
which is so unusually deep for its area, appears  
in a vertical section through its centre not  
deeper than a shallow plate. Most ponds, emp-  
tied, would leave a meadow no more hollow  
than we frequently see. William Gilpin, who  
is so admirable in all that relates to landscapes,  
and usually so correct, standing at the head of  
Loch Fyne, in Scotland, which he describes as  
“a bay of salt water, sixty or seventy fathoms  
deep, four miles in breadth,” aad about fifty  
miles long, surrounded by mountains, observes,  
“If we could have seen it immediately after the  
diluvian crash, or whatever convulsion of Nature  
occasioned it, before the waters gushed in, what  
a horrid chasm it must have appeared !  
  
“So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low.  
  
‘Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad, and deep,  
  
Capacious bed of waters —”  
But if, using the shortest diameter of Loch  
Fyne, we apply these proportions to Walden,  
which, as we have seen, appears already in a  
vertical section only like a shallow plate, it will  
appear four times as shallow. So much for the  
increased horrors of the chasm of Loch Fyne  
when emptied. No doubt many a smiling

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Walden Pond on a winter morning

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THE POND IN WINTER 381  
  
valley with its stretching cornfields occupies  
exactly such a “horrid chasm,” from which the  
waters have receded, though it requires the in-  
sight and the far sight of the geologist to con-  
vince the unsuspecting inhabitants of this fact.  
Often an inquisitive eye may detect the shores  
of a primitive lake in the low horizon hills, and  
no subsequent elevation of the plain have been  
necessary to conceal their history. But it is  
easiest, as they who work on the highways  
know, to find the hollows by the puddles after a  
shower. The amount of it is, the imagination,  
give it the least license, dives deeper and soars  
higher than Nature goes. So, probably, the  
depth of the ocean will be found to be very in-  
considerable compared with its breadth.  
  
As I sounded through the ice I could deter-  
mine the shape of the bottom with greater ac-  
curacy than is possible in surveying harbors  
which do not freeze over, and I was surprised  
at its general regularity. In the deepest part  
there are several acres more level than almost  
any field which is exposed to the sun, wind, and  
plough. In one instance, on a line arbitrarily  
chosen, the depth did not vary more than one  
foot in thirty rods; and generally, near the  
middle, I could calculate the variation for each  
one hundred feet in any direction beforehand  
within three or four inches, Some are accus-  
tomed to speak of deep and dangerous holes

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382 WALDEN  
  
even in quiet sandy ponds like this, but the effect  
of water under these circumstances is to level  
all inequalities. The regularity of the bottom  
and its conformity to the shores and the range  
of the neighboring hills were so perfect that a  
distant promontory betrayed itself in the sound-  
ings quite across the pond, and its direction  
could be determined by observing the opposite  
shore. Cape becomes bar, and plain shoal, and  
valley and gorge deep water and channel.  
When I had mapped the pond by the scale of  
ten rods to an inch, and put down the soundings,  
more than a hundred in all, I observed this re-  
markable coincidence. Having noticed that the  
number indicating the greatest depth was ap-  
parently in the centre of the map, I laid a rule  
on the map lengthwise, and then breadthwise,  
and found, to my surprise, that the line of great-  
est length intersected the line of greatest breadth  
exactly at the point of greatest depth, notwith-  
standing that the middle is so nearly level, the  
outline of the pond far from regular, and the  
extreme length and breadth were got by measur-  
ing into the coves; and I said to myself, Who  
knows but this hint would conduct to the deepest  
part of the ocean as well as of a pond or puddle?  
Is not this the rule also for the height of moun-  
tains, regarded as the opposite of valleys? We  
know that a hill is not highest at its narrowest  
  
part.

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THE POND IN WINTER $83  
  
Of five coves, three, or all which had been  
sounded, were observed to have a bar quite  
across their mouths and deeper water within, so  
that the bay tended to be an expansion of water  
within the land not only horizontally but ver-  
tically, and to form a basin or independent  
pond, the direction of the two capes showing  
the course of the bar. Every harbor on the sea-  
coast, also, has its bar at its entrance. In pro-  
portion as the mouth of the cove was wider com-  
pared with its length, the water over the bar’  
was deeper compared with that in the basin.  
Given, then, the length and breadth of the cove,  
and the character of the surrounding shore,  
and you have almost elements enough to make  
out a formula for all cases.  
  
In order to see how nearly I could guess, with  
this experience, at the deepest point in a pond,  
by observing the outlines of its surface and the  
character of its shores alone, I made a plan of  
White Pond, which contains about forty-one  
acres, and, like this, has no island in it, nor any  
visible inlet or outlet; and as the line of greatest  
breadth fell very near the line of least breadth,  
where two opposite capes approached each  
other and two opposite bays receded, I ventured  
to mark a point a short distance from the latter  
line, but still on the line of greatest length, as  
the deepest. The deepest part was found to be  
within one hundred feet of this, still farther in

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384 WALDEN  
  
the direction to which I had inclined, and was  
only one foot deeper, namely sixty feet. Of  
course, a stream running through, or an island  
in the pond, would make the problem much  
more complicated.  
  
If we knew all the laws of Nature, we should  
need only one fact, or the description of one  
actual phenomenon, to infer all the particular  
results at that point. Now we know only a few  
laws, and our result is vitiated, not, of course,  
by any confusion or irregularity in Nature, but  
by our ignorance of essential elements in the  
calculation. Our notions of law and harmony are  
commonly confined to those instances which we  
detect; but the harmony which results from a  
far greater number of seemingly conflicting, but  
really concurring, laws, which we have not de-  
tected, is still more wonderful. The particular  
laws are as our points of view, as, to the travel-  
ler, 2 mountain outline varies with every step,  
and it has an infinite number of profiles, though  
absolutely but one form. Even when cleft or  
bored through it is not comprehended in its  
entireness.  
  
What I have observed of the pond is no less  
true in ethics. It is the law of average. Such a  
rule of the two diameters not only guides us  
toward the sun in the system and the heart in  
man; but draw lines through the length and  
breadth of the aggregate of a man’s particular

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THE POND IN WINTER 385  
  
daily behaviors and waves of life into his coves  
and inlets, and where they intersect will be the  
height or depth of his character. Perhaps we  
need only to know how his shores trend and his  
adjacent country or circumstances, to infer his  
depth and concealed bottom. If he is surrounded  
by mountainous circumstances, an Achillean  
shore, whose peaks overshadow and are reflected  
in his bosom, they suggest a corresponding  
depth in him. Buta low and smooth shore proves  
him shallow on that side. In our bodies, a bold  
projecting brow falls off to and indicates a cor-  
responding depth of thought. Also there is a bar  
across the entrance of our every cove, or partic-  
ular inclination; each is our harbor for a season,  
in which we are detained and partially land-  
locked. ‘These inclinations are not whimsical  
usually, but their form, size, and direction are  
determined by the promontories of the shore,  
the ancient axes of elevation. When this bar is  
gradually increased by storms, tides, or currents,  
or there is a subsidence of the waters, so that it  
reaches to the surface, that which was at first  
but an inclination in the shore in which a thought  
was harbored becomes an individual lake, cut  
off from the ocean, wherein the thought secures  
its own conditions, changes, perhaps, from salt  
to fresh, becomes a sweet sea, dead sea, or a  
marsh. At the advent of each individual into  
this life, may we not suppose that such a bar has  
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risen to the surface somewhere? It is true, we  
are such poor navigators that our thoughts, for  
the most part, stand off and on upon a harbor-  
less coast, are conversant only with the bights of  
the bays of poesy, or steer for the public ports of  
entry, and go into the dry docks of science,  
where they merely refit for this world, and no  
natural currents concur to individualize them.  
As for the inlet or outlet of Walden, I have not  
discovered any but rain and snow and evapora-  
tion, though perhaps, with a thermometer and a  
line, such places may be found, for where the  
water flows into the pond it will be probably be  
coldest in summer and warmest in winter.  
When the ice-men were at work here in ’46-7,  
the cakes sent to the shore were one day rejected  
by those who were stacking them up there, not  
being thick enough to lie side by side with the  
rest; and the cutters thus discovered that the  
ice over a small space was two or three inches  
thinner than elsewhere, which made them think  
that there was an inlet there. They also showed  
me in another place what they thought was a  
“leach hole,” through which the pond leaked out  
under a hill into a neighboring meadow, pushing  
me out on a cake of ice to see it. It was a small  
cavity under ten feet of water; but I think that  
I can warrant the pond not to need soldering till  
they find a worse leak than that. One has sug-  
gested that if such a “leach hole” should be

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THE POND IN WINTER 387  
  
found, its connection with the meadow, if any  
existed, might be proved by conveying some  
colored powder or sawdust to the mouth of the  
hole, and then putting a strainer over the spring  
in the meadow, which would catch some of the  
particles carried through by the current.  
  
While I was surveying, the ice, which was six-  
teen inches thick, undulated under a slight wind  
like water. It is well known that a level cannot  
be used on ice. At one rod from the shore its  
greatest fluctuation, when observed by means of  
a level on land directed toward a graduated staff  
on the ice, was three quarters of an inch, though  
the ice appeared firmly attached to the shore.  
It was probably greater in the middle. Who  
knows but if ourinstruments were delicate enough  
we might detect an undulation in the crust of the  
earth? When two legs of my level were on the  
shore and the third on the ice, and the sights  
were directed over the latter, a rise or fall of  
the ice of an almost infinitesimal amount made  
a difference of several feet on a tree across the  
pond. When I began to cut holes for sounding,  
there were three or four inches of water on the  
ice under a deep snow which had sunk it thus  
far; but the water began immediately to run  
into these holes, and continued to run for two  
days in deep streams, which wore away the ice  
on every side, and contributed essentially, if not  
mainly, to dry the surface of the pond; for, as

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the water ran in, it raised and floated the ice.  
This was somewhat like cutting a hole in the  
bottom of a ship to let the water out. When such  
holes freeze, and a rain succeeds, and finally a  
new freezing forms a fresh smooth ice over all,  
it is beautifully mottled internally by dark fig-  
ures, shaped somewhat like a spider’s web,  
what you may call ice rosettes, produced by the  
channels worn by the water flowing from all  
sides to a centre. Sometimes, also, when the  
‘ice was covered with shallow puddles, I saw a  
double shadow of myself, one standing on the  
head of the other, one on the ice, the other on the  
trees or hill side.  
  
While yet it is cold January, and snow and ice  
are thick and solid, the prudent landlord comes  
from the village to get ice to cool his summer  
drink; impressively, even pathetically wise, to  
foresee the heat and thirst of July now in Janu-  
ary, — wearing a thick coat and mittens! when  
so many things are not provided for. It may be  
that he lays up no treasures in this world which  
will cool his summer drink in the next. He cuts  
and saws the solid pond, unroofs the house of  
fishes, and carts off their very element and air,  
held fast by chains and stakes like corded wood,  
through the favoring winter air, to wintry cellars,  
to underlie the summer there. It looks like solid-  
ified azure, as, far off, it is drawn through the

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THE POND IN WINTER 389  
  
streets. These ice-cutters are a merry race, full  
of jest and sport, and when I went among them  
they were wont to invite me to saw pit-fashion  
with them, I standing underneath.  
  
In the winter of ’46-7 there came a hundred  
men of Hyperborean extraction swoop down on  
to our pond one morning, with many car-loads of  
ungainly-looking farming tools, sleds, ploughs,  
drill-barrows, turf-knives, spades, saws, rakes,  
and each man was armed with a double-pointed  
pike-staff, such as is not described in the New  
England Farmer or the Cultivator. I did not  
know whether they had come to sow a crop of  
winter rye, or some other kind of grain recently  
introduced from Iceland. As I saw no manure,  
I judged that they meant to skim the land, as I  
had done, thinking the soil was deep and had  
lain fallow long enough. They said that a gentle-  
man farmer, who was behind the scenes, wanted  
to double his money, which, as I understood,  
amounted to half a million already; but, in order  
to cover each one of his dollars with another, he  
took off the only coat, ay, the skin itself, of  
Walden Pond in the midst of a hard winter.  
‘They went to work at once, ploughing, harrow-  
ing, rolling, furrowing, in admirable order, as  
if they were bent on making this a model farm;  
but when I was looking sharp to see what kind of  
seed they dropped into the furrow, a gang of  
fellows by my side suddenly began to hook up the

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390 WALDEN  
  
virgin mould itself, with a peculiar jerk, clean  
down to the sand, or rather the water, — for it  
was @ very springy soil, — indeed, all the terra  
firma there was, — and haul it away on sleds,  
and then I guessed that they must be cutting  
peat in a bog. So they came and went every day,  
with a peculiar shriek from the locomotive, from  
and to some point of the polar regions, as it  
seemed to me, like a flock of arctic snow-birds.  
But sometimes Squaw Walden had her revenge,  
and a hired man, walking behind his team,  
slipped through a crack in the ground down  
toward Tartarus, and he who was so brave before  
suddenly became but the ninth part of a man,  
almost gave up his animal heat, and was glad to  
take refuge in my house, and acknowledged that  
there was some virtue in a stove; or sometimes  
the frozen soil took a piece of ste! out of a plough-  
share, or a plough got set in the furrow and had  
to be cut out.  
  
To speak literally, a hundred Irishmen, with  
Yankee overseers, came from Cambridge every  
day to get out the ice. They divided it into  
cakes by methods too well known to require  
description, and these, being sledded to the  
shore, were rapidly hauled off on to an ice plat-  
form, and raised by grappling irons and block  
and tackle, worked by horses, on to a stack, as  
surely as so many barrels of flour, and there  
placed evenly side by side, and row upon row,

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THE POND IN WINTER 891  
  
as if they formed the solid base of an obelisk  
designed to pierce the clouds. They told me  
that in a good day they could get out a thousand  
tons, which was the yield of about one acre.  
Deep ruts and “‘cradle holes” were worn in the  
ice, as on terra firma, by the passage of the sleds  
over the same track, and the horses invariably  
ate their oats out of cakes of ice hollowed out  
like buckets. They stacked up the cakes thus  
in the open air in a pile thirty-five feet high on  
one side and six or seven rods square, putting  
hay between the outside layers to exclude the  
air; for when the wind, though never so cold,  
finds a passage through, it will wear large cavi-  
ties, leaving slight supports or studs only here  
and there, and finally topple it down. At first it  
looked like a vast blue fort or Valhalla; but  
when they began to tuck the coarse meadow hay  
into the crevices, and this became covered with  
rime and icicles, it looked like a venerable moss-  
grown and hoary ruin, built of azure-tinted  
marble, the abode of Winter, that old man we  
see in the almanac, — his shanty, as if he had  
a design to estivate with us. They calculated  
that not twenty-five per cent of this would reach  
its destination, and that two or three per cent  
would be wasted in the cars. However, a still  
greater part of this heap had a different destiny  
from what intended; for, either because the ice  
was found not to keep so well as was expected,

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892 WALDEN  
  
containing more air than usual, or for some  
other reason, it never got to market. This heap,  
made in the winter of ’46-7 and estimated to  
contain ten thousand tons, was finally covered  
with hay and boards; and though it was unroofed  
the following July, and a part of it carried off, the  
rest remaining exposed to the sun, it stood over  
that summer and the next winter, and was not  
quite melted till September, 1848. Thus the  
pond recovered the greater part.  
  
Like the water, the Walden ice, seen near at  
hand, has a green tint, but at a distance is beau-  
tifully blue, and you can easily tell it from the  
white ice of the river, or the merely greenish ice  
of some ponds, a quarter of a mile off. Sometimes  
one of those great cakes slips from the ice-man’s  
sled into the village street, and lies there for a  
week like a great emerald, an object of interest  
to all passers. I have noticed that a portion of  
Walden which in the state of water was green  
will often, when frozen, appear from the same  
point of view blue. So the hollows about this  
pond will, sometimes, in the winter, be filled  
with a greenish water somewhat like its own, but  
the next day will have frozen blue. Perhaps the  
blue color of water and ice is due to the light and  
air they contain, and the most transparent is the  
bluest. Ice is an interesting subject for con-  
templation. They told me that they had some  
in the ice-houses at Fresh Pond five years old

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Among the pines bardering the pond

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THE POND IN WINTER 893  
  
which was as good as ever. Why is it that a  
bucket of water soon becomes putrid, but frozen  
remains sweet forever? It is commonly said that  
this is the difference between the affections and  
the intellect.  
  
‘Thus for sixteen days I saw from my window  
a hundred men at work like busy husbandmen,  
with teams and horses and apparently all the im-  
plements of farming, such # picture as we see on  
the first page of the almanac; and as often as I  
looked out I was reminded of the fable of the  
lark and the reapers, or the parable of the sower,  
and the like; and now they are all gone, and in  
thirty days more, probably, I shall look from  
the same window on the pure sea-green Walden  
water there, reflecting the clouds and the trees,  
and sending up its evaporations in solitude, and  
no traces will appear that a man has ever stood  
there. Perhaps I shall hear a solitary loon laugh  
as he dives and plumes himself, or shall see a  
lonely fisher in his boat, like a floating leaf, be-  
holding his form reflected in the waves, where  
lately a hundred men securely labored.  
  
Thus it appears that the sweltering inh:  
tants of Charleston and New Orleans, of Ma-  
dras and Bombay and Calcutta, drink at my  
well. In the morning I bathe my intellect in the  
stupendous and cosmogonal philosophy of the  
Bhagvat Geeta, since whose composition years  
of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with

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894 WALDEN  
  
which our modem world and its literature seem  
puny and trivial; and I doubt if that philosophy  
is not to be referred to a previous state of ex-  
istence, so remote is its sublimity from our con-  
ceptions. I lay down the book and go to my  
well for water, and lo! there I meet the servant  
of the Brahmin, priest of Brahma and Vishnu and  
Indra, who still sits in his temple on the Ganges  
reading the Vedas, or dwells at the root of a tree  
with his crust and water jug. I meet his servant  
come to draw water for his master, and our  
buckets as it were grate together in the same  
well. The pure Walden water is mingled with  
the sacred water of the Ganges. With favoring  
winds it is wafted past the site of the fabulous  
islands of Atlantis and the Hesperides, makes  
the periplus of Hanno, and, floating by Ternate  
and Tidore and the mouth of the Persian Gulf,  
melts in the tropic gales of the Indian seas, and is  
landed in ports of which Alexander only heard  
the names.

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XVII  
SPRING  
  
(HE opening of large tracts by the ice-  
cutters commonly causes a pond to break  
up earlier; for the water, agitated by the  
  
wind, even in cold weather, wears away the sur-  
  
rounding ice. But such was not the effect on  
  
Walden that year, for she had soon got a thick  
  
new garment to take the place of the old. This  
  
pond never breaks up so soon as the others in  
this neighborhood, on account both of its greater  
depth and its having no stream passing through  
it to melt or wear away the ice. I never knew it  
to open in the course of a winter, not excepting  
  
that of °52-8, which gave the ponds so severe a  
  
trial. It commonly opens about the first of April,  
  
a week or ten days later than Flint’s Pond and  
  
Fair-Haven, beginning to melt on the north side  
  
and in the shallower parts where it began to  
  
freeze. It indicates better than any water here-  
abouts the absolute progress of the season, being  
least affected by transient changes of tempera-  
ture. A severe cold of a few days’ duration in  
  
March may very much retard the opening of the  
  
former ponds, while the temperature of Walden

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396 WALDEN  
  
increases almost uninterruptedly. A thermome-  
ter thrust into the middle of Walden on the 6th  
of March, 1847, stood at 92°, or freezing point;  
near the shore at $8°; in the middle of Flint’s  
Pond, the same day, at $24°; at a dozen rods  
from the shore, in shallow water, under ice a foot  
thick, at 86°. This difference of three and a half  
degrees between the temperature of the deep  
water and the shallow in the latter pond, and the  
fact that a great proportion of it is comparatively  
shallow, show why it should break up so much  
sooner than Walden. The ice in the shallowest  
part was at this time several inches thinner than  
in the middle. In mid-winter the middle had  
been the warmest and the ice thinnest there.  
So, also, every one who has waded about the  
shores of a pond in summer must have perceived  
how much warmer the water is close to the shore,  
where only three or four inches deep, than a little  
distance out, and on the surface where it is deep,  
than near the bottom. In spring the sun not  
only exerts an influence through the increased  
temperature of the air and earth, but its heat  
passes through ice a foot or more thick, and is  
reflected from the bottom in shallow water, and  
so also warms the water and‘ melts the under  
side of the ice, at the same time that it is melting  
it more directly above, making it uneven, and  
causing the air bubbles which it contains to ex-  
tend themselves upward and downward until it

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SPRING 397  
  
is completely honeycombed, and at last disap-  
pears suddenly in a single spring rain. Ice has its  
grain as well as wood, and when a cake begins to  
rot or “comb,” that is, assume the appearance of  
honeycomb, whatever may be its position, the air  
cells are at right angles with what was the water  
surface. Where there is a rock or a log rising  
near to the surface the ice over it is much thinner,  
and is frequently quite dissolved by this reflected  
heat; and I have been told that in the experiment  
at Cambridge to freeze water in a shallow wooden  
pond, though the cold air circulated underneath,  
and so had access to both sides, the reflection of  
the sun from the bottom more than counter-  
balanced this advantage. When a warm rain  
in the middle of the winter melts off the snow-  
ice from Walden, and leaves a hard, dark, or  
transparent ice on the middle, there will be a  
strip of rotten though thicker white ice, a rod or  
more wide, about the shores, created by this re-  
flected heat. Also, as I have said, the bubbles  
themselves within the ice operate as buming-  
glasses to melt the ice beneath.  
  
‘The phenomena of the year take place every  
day in a pond on a small scale. Every morn-  
ing, generally speaking, the shallow water is  
being warmed more rapidly than the deep,  
though it may not be made so warm after all,  
and every evening it is being cooled more  
rapidly until the morning. The day is an

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398 WALDEN  
  
epitome of the year. The night is the winter,  
the morning and evening are the spring and fall,  
and the noon is the summer. The  
  
and booming of the ice indicate a change of  
temperature. One pleasant morning after a  
cold night, February 24th, 1850, having gone  
to Flint’s Pond to spend the day, I noticed with  
surprise that when I struck the ice with the  
head of my axe, it resounded like a gong for  
many rods around, or as if I had struck on a  
tight drumhead. The pond began to boom  
about an hour after sunrise, when it felt the  
influence of the sun’s rays slanted upon it from  
over the hills; it stretched itself and yawned  
like a waking man with a gradually increasing  
tumult, which was kept up three or four hours.  
It look short siesta at noon, and boomed once  
more toward night, as the sun was withdrawing  
his influence. In the right stage of the weather  
a pond fires its evening gun with great regularity.  
But in the middle of the day, being full of cracks,  
and the air also being less elastic, it had com-  
pletely lost its resonance, and probably fishes  
and muskrats could not then have been stunned  
by a blow on ‘it. The fishermen say that the  
“thundering of the pond” scares the fishes and  
prevents their biting. The pond does not  
thunder every evening, and I cannot tell surely  
when to expect its thundering; but though I  
may perceive no difference in the weather, it

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SPRING 899  
  
does. Who would have suspected so large and  
cold and thick-skinned a thing to be so sensi-  
tive? Yet it has its law to which it thunders  
obedience when it should as surely as the buds  
expand in the spring. The earth is all alive  
and covered with papille. The largest pond is  
as sensitive to atmospheric changes as the globule  
of mercury in its tube.  
  
One attraction in coming to the woods to live  
was that I should have leisure and opportunity  
to see the spring come in. The ice in the pond  
at length begins to be honeycombed, and I can  
set my heel in it as I walk. Fogs and rains and  
warmer suns are gradually melting the snow;  
the days have grown sensibly longer; and I see  
how I shall get through the winter without add-  
ing to my wood-pile, for large fires are no longer  
necessary. I am on the alert for the first signs  
of spring, to hear the chance note of some arriv-  
ing bird, or the striped squirrel’s chirp, for his  
stores must be now nearly exhausted, or see the  
woodchuck venture out of his winter quarters.  
On the 18th of March, after I had heard the  
bluebird, song-sparrow, and red-wing, the ice  
was still nearly a foot thick. As the weather  
grew warmer, it was not sensibly worn away by  
the water, nor broken up and floated off as in  
rivers, but, though it was completely melted  
for half a rod in width about the shore, the

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400 WALDEN  
  
middle was merely honeycombed and saturated  
with water, so that you could put your foot  
through it when six inches thick; but by the  
next day evening, perhaps, after a warm rain  
followed by fog, it would have wholly disap-  
peared, all gone off with the fog, spirited away.  
One year I went across the middle only five  
days ‘before it disappeared entirely. In 1845  
Walden was first completely open on the Ist of  
April; in °46, the 26th of March; in ’47, the  
8th of April; in 61, the 28th of March; in ’52,  
the 18th of April; in °63, the 28rd of March;  
in ’64, about the 7th of April.  
  
Every incident connected with the breaking  
up of the rivers and ponds and the settling of  
the weather is particularly interesting to us who  
live in a climate of so great extremes. When  
the warmer days come, they who dwell near  
the river hear the ice crack at night with a  
startling whoop as loud as artillery, as if its icy  
fetters were rent from end to end, and within  
a few days see it rapidly going out. So the alli-  
gator comes out of the mud with quakings of  
the earth, One old man, who has been a close  
observer of Nature, and seems as thoroughly  
wise in regard to all her operations as if she  
had been put upon the stocks when he was a boy,  
and he had helped to lay her keel, — who has  
come to his growth, and can hardly acquire  
more of natural lore if he should live to the age

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SPRING 401  
  
of Methuselah, — told me, and I was surprised  
to hear him express wonder at any of Nature’s  
operations, for I thought that there were no  
secrets between them, that one spring day he  
took his gun and boat, and thought that he  
would have a little sport with the ducks. There  
was ice still on the meadows, but it was all gone  
out of the river, and he dropped down without  
obstruction from Sudbury, where he lived, to  
Fair-Haven Pond, which he found, unexpect-  
edly, covered for the most part with a firm field  
of ice. It was a warm day, and he was sur-  
prised to see so great a body of ice remaining.  
Not seeing any ducks, he hid his boat on the  
north or back side of an island in the pond, and  
then concealed himself in the bushes on the  
south side, to await them. The ice was melted  
for three or four rods from the shore, and there  
was a smooth and warm sheet of water, with a  
muddy bottom, such as the ducks love, within,  
and he thought it likely that some would be  
along pretty soon. After he had lain still there  
about an hour he heard a low and seemingly  
very distant sound, but singularly grand and  
impressive, unlike anything he had ever heard,  
gradually swelling and increasing as if it would  
have a universal and memorable ending, a  
sullen rush and roar, which seemed to him all  
at once like the sound of a vast body of fowl  
coming in to settle there, and, seizing his gun,

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402 WALDEN  
  
he started up in haste and excited; but he found,  
to his surprise, that the whole body of the ice  
had started while he lay there, and drifted in  
to the shore, and the sound he had heard was  
made by its edge grating on the shore, — at  
first gently nibbled and crumbled off, but at  
length heaving up and scattering its wrecks  
along the island to a considerable height before  
it came to a standstill.  
  
At length the sun’s rays have attained the  
right angle, and warm winds blow up mist and  
rain and melt the snow-banks, and the sun dis-  
persing the mist smiles‘on a checkered land-  
scape of russet and white smoking with incense,  
through which the traveller picks his way from  
islet to islet, cheered by the music of a thousand  
tinkling rills and rivulets whose veins are filled  
with the blood of winter which they are bearing  
off.  
  
Few phenomena gave me more delight than  
to observe the forms which thawing sand and  
clay assume in flowing down the sides of a deep  
cut on the railroad through which I passed on  
my way to the village, a phenomenon not very  
common on so large a scale, though the number  
of freshly exposed banks of the right material  
must have been greatly multiplied since rail-  
roads were invented. The material was sand  
of every degree of fineness and of various rich  
colors, commonly mixed with a little clay. When

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SPRING 403  
  
the frost comes out in the spring, and even in a  
thawing day in the winter, the sand begins to  
flow down the slopes like lava, sometimes burst-  
ing out through the snow and overflowing it  
where no sand was to be seen before. Innum-  
erable little streams overlap and interlace one  
with another, exhibiting a sort of hybrid prod-  
uct, which obeys halfway the law of currents,  
and halfway that of vegetation. As it flows  
it takes the forms of sappy leaves or vines, mak-  
ing heaps of pulpy sprays a foot or more in  
depth, and resembling, as you look down on  
them, the laciniated, lobed, and imbricated  
thalluses of some lichens; or you are reminded  
of coral, of leopards’ paws or birds’ feet, of  
brains or lungs or bowels, and excrements of all  
kinds. It is a truly grotesque vegetation, whose  
forms and color we see imitated in bronze, a  
sort of architectural foliage more ancient and  
typical than acanthus, chicory, ivy, vine, or  
any vegetable leaves; destined perhaps, under  
some circumstances, to become a puzzle to  
future geologists. The whole cut impressed me  
as if it were a cave with its stalactites laid open  
to the light. ‘The various shades of the sand are  
singularly rich and agreeable, embracing the  
different iron colors, brown, gray, yellowish,  
and reddish. When the flowing mass reaches  
the drain at the foot of the bank it spreads out  
flatter into strands, the separate streams losing

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404 WALDEN  
  
their semi-cylindrical form and gradually be-  
coming more flat and broad, running together  
as they are more moist, till they form an almost  
flat sand, still variously and beautifully shaded,  
but in which you can trace the original forms  
of vegetation; till at length, in the water itself,  
they are converted into banks, like those formed  
off the mouths of rivers, and the forms of vege-  
tation are lost in the ripple marks on the bottom.  
  
The whole bank, which is from twenty to  
forty feet high, is sometimes overlaid with a mass  
of this kind of foliage, or sandy rupture, for a  
quarter of a mile on one or both sides, the prod-  
uce of one spring day. What makes this sand  
foliage remarkable is its springing into existence  
thus suddenly. When I see on the one side the  
inert bank, — for the sun acts on one side first,  
—and on the other this luxuriant foliage, the  
creation of an hour, I am affected as if in a  
peculiar sense I stood in the laboratory of the  
Artist who made the world and me — had come  
to where he was still at work, sporting on this  
bank, and with excess of energy strewing his  
fresh designs about. I feel as if I were nearer  
to the vitals of the globe, for this sandy over-  
flow is something such a foliaceous mass as the  
vitals of the animal body. You find thus in the  
very sands an anticipation of the vegetable leaf.  
No wonder that the earth expresses itself out-  
wardly in leaves, it so labors with the idea in-

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SPRING 405  
  
wardly. The atoms have already learned this  
law, and are pregnant by it. The overhanging  
leaf sees here its prototype. Internally, whether  
in the globe or animal body, it is a moist thick  
lobe, a word especially applicable to the liver  
and lungs and the leaves of fat (deBw, labor,  
lapsus, to flow or slip downward, a lapsing;  
ois, globus, lobe, globe; also lap, flap, and  
many other words), externally a dry thin leaf,  
even as the / and v are a pressed and dried b.  
The radicals of lobe are Jb, the soft mass of  
the b (single lobed, or B, double lobed), with a  
liquid 1 behind it pressing it forward. In globe,  
gib, the guttural g adds to the meaning the capac-  
ity of the throat. The feathers and wings of  
birds are still drier and thinner leaves. Thus,  
also, you pass from the lumpish grub in the  
earth to the airy and fluttering butterfly. The  
very globe continually transcends and trans-  
lates itself, and becomes winged in its orbit.  
Even ice begins with delicate crystal leaves, as  
if it had flowed into moulds which the fronds  
of water plants have impressed on the watery  
mirror. The whole tree Feel i is but one leaf,  
and rivers are still vaster leaves whose pulp is  
intervening earth, and towns and cities are the  
ova of insects in their axils.  
  
When the sun withdraws the sand ceases to  
flow, but in the morning the streams will start  
once more and branch and branch again into

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406 WALDEN  
  
a myriad of others. You here see perchance  
how blood vessels are formed. If you look closely  
you observe that first there pushes forward from  
the thawing mass stream of softened sand,  
with a drop-like point, like the ball of the finger,  
feeling its way slowly and blindly downward,  
until at last with more heat and moisture, as  
the sun gets higher, the most fluid portion, in  
its effort to obey the law to which the most  
inert also yields, separates from the latter and  
forms for itself a meandering channel or artery  
within that, in which is seen a little silvery  
stream glancing like lightning from one stage  
of pulpy leaves or branches to another, and ever  
and anon swallowed up in the sand. It is won-  
derful how rapidly yet perfectly the sand organizes  
itself as it flows, using the best material its mass  
affords to form the sharp edges of its channel.  
Such are the sources of rivers. In the silicious  
matter which the water deposits is perhaps the  
bony system, and in the still finer soil and or-  
ganic matter the fleshy fibre or cellular tissue.  
What is man but a mass of thawing clay? The  
ball of the human finger is but a drop congealed.  
The fingers and toes flow to their extent from  
the thawing mass of the body. Who knows  
what the human body would expand and flow  
out to under a more genial heaven? Is not the  
hand a spreading palm leaf with its lobes and  
veins? The ear may be regarded, fancifully, as

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SPRING 407  
  
a lichen, umbilicaria, on the side of the head,  
with its lobe or drop. The lip — labium, from  
labor (?) — laps or lapses from the sides of the  
cavernous mouth. The nose is a manifest con-  
gealed drop or stalactite. The chin is a still  
larger drop, the confluent dripping of the face.  
The cheeks are a slide from the brows into the  
valley of the face, opposed and diffused by the  
cheek bones. Each rounded lobe of the vege-  
table leaf, too, is a thick and now loitering drop,  
larger or smaller; the lobes are the fingers of the  
leaf; and as many lobes as it has, in so many  
directions it tends to flow, and more heat or  
other genial influences would have caused it  
to flow yet farther.  
  
Thus it seemed that this one hill side illus-  
trated the principle of all the operations of  
Nature. The Maker of this earth but patented  
a leaf. What Champollion will decipher this  
hieroglyphic for us, that we may turn over a  
new leaf at last? This phenomenon is more  
exhilarating to me than the luxuriance and fer-  
tility of vineyards. True, it is somewhat excre-  
mentitious in its character, and there is no end  
to the heaps of liver, lights, and bowels, as if  
the globe were turned wrong side outward; but  
this suggests at least that Nature has some  
bowels, and there again is mother of humanity.  
‘This is the frost coming out of the ground; this  
is Spring. It precedes the green and flowery

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408 WALDEN  
  
spring, as mythology precedes regular poetry.  
I know of nothing more purgative of winter  
fumes and indigestions. It convinces me that  
Earth is still in her swaddling clothes, and  
stretches forth baby fingers on every side. Fresh  
curls spring from the baldest brow. ‘There is  
nothing inorganic. ‘These foliaceous heaps lie  
along the bank like the slag of a furnace, show-  
ing that Nature is “in full blast” within. The  
earth is not a mere fragment of dead history,  
stratum upon stratum like the leaves of a book,  
to be studied by geologists and antiquaries  
chiefly, but living poetry like the leaves of a tree,  
which precede flowers and fruit, — not a fossil  
earth, but a living earth; compared with whose  
great central life all animal and vegetable life  
is merely parasitic. Its throes will heave our  
exuyize from their graves. You may melt your  
metals and cast them into the most beautiful  
moulds you can; they will never excite me like  
the forms which this molten earth flows out  
into. And not only it, but the institutions  
upon it, are plastic like clay in the hands of the  
potter.  
  
Ere long, not only on these banks, but on  
every hill and plain and in every hollow, the  
frost comes out of the ground like a dormant  
quadruped from its burrow, and seeks the sea  
with music, or migrates to other climes in  
clouds. Thaw with his gentle persuasion is

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SPRING 409  
  
more powerful than Thor with bis hammer.  
The one melts, the other but breaks in pieces.  
  
When the ground was partially bare of snow,  
and a few warm days had dried its surface some-  
what, it was pleasant to compare the first tender  
signs of the infant year just peeping forth with  
the stately beauty of the withered vegetation  
which had withstood the winter, — life-ever-  
lasting, goldenrods, pinweeds, and graceful wild  
grasses, more obvious and interesting frequently  
than in summer even, as if their beauty was not  
ripe till then; even cotton-grass, cattails, mul-  
leins, Johnswort, hardhack, meadow-sweet, and  
other strong stemmed plants, those unexhausted  
granaries which entertain the earliest birds, —  
decent weeds, at least, which widowed Nature  
wears. I am particularly attracted by the arch-  
ing and sheaf-like top of the wool-grass; it  
brings back the summer to our winter memories,  
and is among the forms which art loves to copy,  
and which, in the vegetable kingdom, have the  
same relation to types already in the mind of  
man that astronomy has. It is an antique style  
older than Greek or Egyptian. Many of the  
phenomena of Winter are suggestive of an in-  
expressible tenderness and fragile delicacy. We  
are accustomed to hear this king described  
as arude and boisterous tyrant; but with the  
gentleness of a lover he adorns the tresses of  
Summer.

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410 WALDEN  
  
‘At the approach of spring the red squirrels  
got under my house, two at a time, directly  
under my feet as I sat reading or writing, and  
kept up the queerest chuckling and chirruping  
and vocal pirouetting and gurgling sounds that  
ever were heard; and when I stamped they only  
chirruped the louder, as if past all fear and re-  
spect in their mad pranks, defying humanity  
to stop them. No you don’t —chickaree —  
chickaree. They were wholly deaf to my argu-  
ments, or failed to perceive their force, and fell  
into a strain of invective that was irresistible.  
  
‘The first sparrow of spring! The year be-  
ginning with younger hope than ever! The  
faint silvery warblings heard over the partially  
bare and moist fields from the bluebird, the song-  
sparrow, and the red-wing, as if the last flakes  
of winter tinkled as they fell! What at such a  
time are histories, chronologies, traditions, and  
all written revelations? The brooks sing carols  
and gles to the spring. The marsh-hawk sail-  
ing low over the meadow is already seeking the  
first slimy life that awakes. The sinking sound of  
melting snow is heard in all dells, and the ice dis-  
solves apace in the ponds. The grass flames up  
on the hill sides like a spring fire, — “‘et primi-  
tus orbitur herba imbribus primoribus evocata,”  
—as if the earth sent forth an inward heat to  
  
the returning sun; not yellow but green is  
the color of its flame; — the symbol of perpetual

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SPRING All  
  
youth, the grass-blade, like a long green ribbon,  
streams from the sod into the summer, checked  
indeed by the frost, but anon pushing on again,  
lifting its spear of last year’s hay with the fresh  
life below. It grows as steadily as the rill oozes  
out of the ground. It is almost identical with  
that, for in the growing days of June, when the  
rills are dry, the grass-blades are their channels,  
and from year to year the herds drink at this  
perennial green stream, and the mower draws  
from it betimes their winter supply. So our  
human life but dies down to its root, and still  
puts forth its green blade to eternity.  
  
Walden is melting apace. There is a canal  
two rods wide along the northerly and westerly  
sides, and wider still at the east end. A great  
field of ice has cracked off from the main body.  
I hear a song-sparrow singing from the bushes  
on the shore, — olit, olit, olit, — chip, chip, chip,  
che, char,—che wiss, wiss, wiss. He too is  
helping to crack it. How handsome the great  
sweeping curves in the edge of the ice, answer-  
ing somewhat to those of the shore, but more  
regular! It is unusually hard, owing to the  
recent severe but transient cold, and all watered  
or waved like a palace floor. But the wind slides  
eastward over its opaque surface in vain, till it  
reaches the living surface beyond. It is glori-  
ous to behold this ribbon of water sparkling in  
the sun, the bare face of the pond full of glee

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412 WALDEN  
  
and youth, as if it spoke the joy of the fishes  
within it, and of the sands on its shore,—a  
silvery sheen as from the scales of a leuciscus, as  
it were all one active fish. Such is the contrast  
between winter and spring. Walden was dead  
and is alive again. But this spring it broke up  
more steadily, as I have said.  
  
‘The change from storm and winter to serene  
and mild weather, from dark and sluggish hours  
to bright and elastic ones, is a memorable crisis  
which all things proclaim. It is seemingly in-  
stantaneous at last. Suddenly an influx of light  
filled my house, though the evening was at hand,  
and the clouds of winter still overhung it, and  
the eaves were dripping with sleety rain. I  
looked out the window, and lo! where yesterday  
was cold gray ice there lay the transparent pond  
already calm and full of hope as in a summer eve-  
ning, reflecting a summer evening sky in its bosom,  
though none was visible overhead, as if it had  
intelligence with some remote horizon. I heard  
a robin in the distance, the first I had heard for  
many a thousand years, methought, whose note  
I shall not forget for many a thousand more, —  
the same sweet and powerful song as of yore. O  
the evening robin, at the end of a New England  
summer day! If I could ever find the twig he  
sits upon! I mean he; I mean the twig. This  
at least is not the Turdus migratorius. The  
pitch-pines and shrub-oaks about my house,

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SPRING 413  
  
which had so long drooped, suddenly resumed  
their several characters, looked brighter, greener,  
and more erect and alive, as if effectually cleansed  
and restored by the rain. I knew that it would  
not rain any more. You may tell by looking at  
any twig of the forest, ay, at your very wood-  
pile, whether its winter is past or not. As it  
grew darker, I was startled by the honking of  
geese flying low over the woods, like weary  
travellers getting in late from southern lakes,  
and indulging at last in unrestrained complaint  
and mutual consolation. Standing at my door,  
I could hear the rush of their wings; when,  
driving toward my house, they suddenly spied  
my light, and with hushed clamor wheeled and  
settled in the pond. So I came in, and shut the  
door, and passed my first spring night in the  
woods.  
  
In the morning I watched the geese from the  
door through the mist, sailing in the middle of  
the pond, fifty rods off, so large and tumultuous  
that Walden appeared like an artificial pond  
for their amusement. But when I stood on the  
shore they at once rose up with a great flapping  
of wings at the signal of their commander, and  
when they had got into rank, circled about over  
my head, twenty-nine of them, and then steered  
straight to Canada, with a regular honk from  
the leader at intervals, trusting to break their  
fast in muddier pools. A “plump” of ducks

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414 WALDEN  
  
rose at the same time and took the route to the  
north in the wake of their noisier cousins.  
  
For a week I heard the circling groping clangor  
of some solitary goose in the foggy mornings,  
seeking its companion, and still peopling the  
woods with the sound of a larger life than they  
could sustain. In April the pigeons were seen  
again flying express in small flocks, and in due  
time I heard the martins twittering over my  
clearing, though it had not seemed that the  
township contained so many that it could afford  
me any, and I fancied that they were peculiarly  
of the ancient race that dwelt in hollow trees ere  
white men came. In almost all climes the tor-  
toise and the frog are among the precursors and  
heralds of this season, and birds fly with song  
and glancing plumage, and plants spring and  
bloom, and winds blow, to correct this slight  
oscillation of the poles and preserve the equilib-  
rium of Nature.  
  
As every season seems best to us in its turn,  
so the coming in of spring is like the creation of  
Cosmos out of Chaos and the realization of the  
Golden Age. —  
  
“Burus ad Auroram, Nabathacaque regna recessit,  
Persidaque, et rediis juga subdita matutinis.”  
“The East-Wind withdrew to Aurora and the Nabathean  
Kingdom,  
‘And the Persian, and the ridges placed under the morning rays.

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SPRING 415  
  
Man was born. Whether that Artficer of things,  
‘The origin of a better world, made him from the divine seed;  
Or the earth being recent and lately sundered from the high  
Ether, retained some seeds of cognate heaven.””  
  
A single gentle rain makes the grass many  
shades greener. So our prospects brighten on  
the influx of better thoughts. We should be  
blessed if we lived in the present always, and  
took advantage of every accident that befell us,  
like the grass which confesses the influence of  
the slightest dew that falls on it; and did not  
spend our time in atoning for the neglect of past  
opportunities, which we call doing our duty.  
We loiter in winter while it is already spring. In  
a pleasant spring morning all men’s sins are for-  
given. Such a day is a truce to vice. While such  
a sun holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may  
return. Through our own recovered innocence  
we discern the innocence of our neighbors. You  
may have known your neighbor yesterday for  
a thief, a drunkard, or a sensualist, and merely  
pitied or despised him, and despaired of the  
world; but the sun shines bright and warm  
this first spring morning, recreating the world,  
and you meet him at some serene work, and see  
how his exhausted and debauched veins ex-  
pand with still joy and bless the new day, feel  
the spring influence with the innocence of in-  
fancy, and all his faults are forgotten. There is  
not only an atmosphere of good will about him,

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416 WALDEN  
  
but even a savor of holiness groping for expres-  
sion, blindly and ineffectually perhaps, like a  
new-born instinct, and for a short hour the south  
hill side echoes to no vulgar jest. You see some  
innocent fair shoots preparing to burst from his  
gnarled rind and try another year’s life, tender  
and fresh as the youngest plant. Even he has  
entered into the joy of his Lord. Why the jailer  
does not leave open his prison doors, — why  
the judge does not dismiss his case, — why the  
preacher does not dismiss his congregation! It  
is because they do not obey the hint which God  
gives them, nor accept the pardon which he  
freely offers to all.  
  
“A return to goodness produced each day in  
the tranquil and beneficent breath of the morn-  
ing, causes that in respect to the love of virtue  
and the hatred of vice, one approaches a little  
the primitive nature of man, as the sprouts  
of the forest which has been felled. In like man-  
ner the evil which one does in the interval of  
a day prevents the germs of virtues which began  
to spring up again from developing themselves  
and destroys them.  
  
“‘After the germs of virtue have thus been pre-  
vented many times from developing themselves,  
then the beneficent breath of evening does not  
suffice to preserve them. As soon as the breath  
of evening does not suffice longer to preserve  
them, then the nature of man does not differ

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SPRING 417  
  
much from that of the brute. Men seeing the  
nature of this man like that of the brute, think  
that he has never possessed the innate faculty  
of reason, Are those the true and natural senti-  
ments of man?”  
  
“The Golden Age was first created, which without any avenger  
Spontaneously without law cherished fidelity and rectitude.  
Punishment ail fear were not; nor were threatening words read  
(On suspended braas; nor did the suppliant crowd fear  
‘The words of their judge; but were safe without an avenger.  
‘Not yet the pine felled on its mountains had descended  
‘To the liquid waves that it might see a foreign world,  
‘And mortals knew no shores but their own.  
  
‘There was eternal spring, and placid sephyrs with warm  
Blasts soothed the flowers born without seed.”  
  
On the 29th of April, as I was fishing from  
the bank of the river near the Nine-Acre-Corner  
bridge, standing on the quaking grass and wil-  
low roots, where the muskrats lurk, I heard a  
singular rattling sound, somewhat like that of  
the sticks which boys play with their fingers,  
when, looking up, I observed a very slight and  
graceful hawk, like a night-hawk, alternately  
soaring like a ripple and tumbling a rod or two  
over and over, showing the underside of its  
wings, which gleamed like a satin ribbon in the  
sun, or like tHe pearly inside of a shell. ‘This  
sight reminded me of falconry and what noble-  
ness and poetry are associated with that sport.  
  
The Merlin it seemed to me it might be called:  
“

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418 WALDEN  
  
but I care not for its name. It was the most  
ethereal flight I had ever witnessed. It did not  
simply flutter like a butterfly, nor soar like the  
larger hawks, but it sported with proud reliance  
in the fields of air; mounting again and again  
with its strange chuckle, it repeated its free and  
beautiful fall, turning over and over like a kite,  
and then recovering from its lofty tumbling, as  
if it had never set its foot on terra firma. It ap-  
peared to have no companion in the universe,  
— sporting there alone, — and to need none but  
the morning and the ether with which it played.  
It was not lonely, but made all the earth lonely  
beneath it. Where was the parent which  
hatched it, its kindred, and its father in the  
heavens? The tenant of the air, it seemed re-  
lated to the earth but by an egg hatched some-  
time in the crevice of a crag;— or was its native  
nest made in the angle of a cloud, woven of the  
rainbow’s trimmings and the sunset sky, and  
lined with some soft midsummer haze caught  
up from earth? Its eyry now some cliffy cloud.  
  
Besides this I got a rare mess of golden and  
silver and bright cupreous fishes, which looked  
like a string of jewels. Ah! I have penetrated  
to those meadows on the morning of many a  
first spring day, jumping from hummock to  
hummock, from willow root to willow root, when  
the wild river valley and the woods were bathed  
in so pure and bright light as would have

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SPRING 419  
  
waked the dead, if they had been slumbering  
in their graves, as some suppose. There needs  
no’ stronger proof of immortality. All things  
must live in such a light. O Death, where was  
thy sting? O Grave, where was thy victory,  
then?  
  
Our village life would stagnate if it were not  
for the unexplored forests and meadows which  
surround it. We need the tonic of wildness, —  
to wade sometimes in marshes where the bittern  
and the meadow-hen lurk, and hear the booming  
of the snipe; to smell the whispering sedge where  
only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds  
her nest, and the mink crawls with its belly  
close to the ground. At the same time that we  
are earnest to explore and learn all things, we  
require that all things be mysterious and unex-  
plorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild,  
unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because un-  
fathomable. We can never have enough of  
Nature. We must be refreshed by the sight of  
inexhaustible vigor, vast and Titanic features,  
the sea-coast with its wrecks, the wilderness  
with its living and its decaying trees, the thun-  
der-cloud, and the rain which lasts three weeks  
and produces freshets. We need to witness our  
own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing  
freely where we never wander. We are cheered  
when we observe the vulture feeding on the car-  
rion which disgusts and disheartens us, and de-

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420 WALDEN  
  
riving health and strength from the  
  
‘There was a dead horse in the hollow by the  
path to my house, which compelled me some-  
times to go out of my way, especially in the  
night when the air was heavy, but the assurance  
it gave me of the strong appetite and inviolable  
health of Nature was my compensation for this.  
I love to see that Nature is so rife with life that  
myriads can be afforded to be sacrificed and  
suffered to prey on one another; that tender  
organizations can be so serenely squashed out  
of existence like pulp, — tadpoles which herons  
gobble up, and tortoises and toads run over in  
the road; and that sometimes it has rained  
flesh and blood! With the liability to accident,  
we must see how little account is to be made of  
it. The impression made on a wise man is that  
of universal innocence. Poison is not poisonous  
after all, nor are any wounds fatal. Compas-  
sion is a very untenable ground. It must be  
expeditious. Its pleadings will not bear to be  
  
stereotyped.  
  
Early in May, the oaks, hickories, maples,  
and other trees, just putting out amidst the pine  
woods around the pond, imparted a brightness  
like sunshine to the landscape, especially in  
cloudy days, as if the sun were breaking through  
mists and shining faintly on the hill sides here  
and there. On the third or fourth of May I saw  
a loon in the pond, and during the first week of

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SPRING 421  
  
the month I heard the whippoorwill, the brown  
thrasher, the very, the wood-pewee, chewink,  
and other birds, I had heard the wood-thrush  
long before. The phoebe had already come  
once more and looked in at my door and win-  
dow, to see if my house was cavern-like enough  
for her, sustaining herself on humming wings  
with clinched talons, as if she held by the air,  
while she surveyed the premises. ‘The sulphur-  
like pollen of the pitch-pine soon covered the  
pond and the stones and rotten wood along the  
shore, so that you could have collected a barrel-  
ful. ‘This is the “sulphur showers” we hear of.  
Even in Calidasa’s drama of Sacontala, we read  
of “rills dyed yellow with the golden dust of the -  
lotus.” And so the seasons went rolling on into  
summer, as one rambles into higher and higher  
grass.  
  
‘Thus was my first year’s life in the woods  
completed; and the second year was similar to  
it. I finally left Walden September 6th, 1847.

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Xvi  
CONCLUSION  
  
O the sick the doctors wisely recommend  
a change of air and scenery. Thank  
Heaven, here is not all the world. The  
buckeye does not grow in New England, and  
the mocking-bird is rarely heard here. ‘The  
wild goose is more of cosmopolite than we;  
he breaks his fast in Canada, takes a luncheon  
in the Ohio, and plumes himself for the night  
in a southern bayou. Even the bison to some  
extent keeps pace with the seasons, cropping  
the pastures of the Colorado only till a greener  
and sweeter grass awaits him by the Yellow-  
stone. Yet we think that if rail-fences are  
pulled down, and stone-walls piled up on our  
farms, bounds are henceforth set to our ‘lives  
and our fates decided. If you are chosen town  
clerk, forsooth, you cannot go to Terra del  
Fuego this summer: but you may go to the  
land of infernal fire nevertheless. The universe  
is wider than our views of it.  
Yet we should oftener look over the tafferel  
of our craft, like curious passengers, and not  
make the voyage like stupid sailors picking

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CONCLUSION 423  
  
oakum. The other side of the globe is but the  
home of our correspondent. Our voyage is only  
great circle-sailing, and the doctors prescribe  
for diseases of the skin merely. One hastens  
to Southern Africa to chase the giraffe; but  
surely that is not the game he would be after.  
How long, pray, would a man hunt giraffes if he  
could? Snipes and woodcocks also may afford  
rare sport; but I trust it would be nobler game  
to shoot one’s self. —  
“Direct your eye right inward, and you'l find  
  
‘A thousand regions in your mind  
  
Yet undiscovered. Travel them, and be  
  
‘Expert in home-cosmography.””  
  
What does Africa, — what does the West  
stand for? Is not our own interior white on the  
chart? black though it may prove, like the  
coast, when discovered. Is it the source of the  
Nile, or the Niger, or the Mississippi, or a North-  
west Passage around this continent, that we  
would find? Are these the problems which most  
concern mankind? Is Franklin the only man  
who is lost, that his wife should be so earnest  
to find him? Does Mr. Grinnell know where  
he himself is? Be rather the Mungo Park, the  
Lewis and Clarke and Frobisher, of your own  
streams and oceans; explore your own higher  
latitudes, — with shiploads of preserved meats  
to support you, if they be necessary; and pile  
the empty cans sky-high for a sign. Were pre-

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424, WALDEN  
  
served meats invented to preserve meat merely ?  
Nay, be a Columbus to whole new continents  
and worlds within you, opening new channels,  
not of trade, but of thought. Every man is the  
lord of a realm beside which the earthly empire  
of the Czar is but a petty state, a hummock left  
by the ice. Yet some can be patriotic who  
have no self-respect, and sacrifice the greater to  
the less, They love the soil which makes their  
graves, but have no sympathy with the spirit  
which may still animate their clay. Patriotism  
is a maggot in their heads. What was the mean-  
ing of that South-Sea Exploring Expedition,  
with all its parade and expense, but an indirect  
recognition of the fact that there are continents  
and seas in the moral world, to which every  
man is an isthmus or an inlet, yet unexplored by  
him, but that it is easier to sail many thousand  
miles through cold and storm and cannibals,  
in a government ship, with five hundred men  
and boys to assist one, than it is to explore the  
private sea, the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean of  
one’s being alone. —  
  
“Erret, ct extremos alter scrutetur Tberos.  
Plus habet hic vite, plus habet ie vee.”  
  
“Let them wander and scrutinize the outlandish Australians.  
T have more of God, they more of the road.”  
  
It is not worth the while to go round the world to  
count the cats in Zanzibar. Yet do this even

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CONCLUSION 425  
  
till you can do better, and you may perhaps find  
some “‘Symmes’ Hole” by which to get at the  
inside at last. England and France, Spain and  
Portugal, Gold Coast and Slave Coast, all front  
on this private sea; but no bark from them has  
ventured out of sight of land, though it is without  
doubt the direct way to India. If you would  
learn to speak all tongues and conform to the  
customs of all nations, if you would travel  
farther than all travellers, be naturalized in all  
climes, and cause the Sphinx to dash her head  
against a stone, even obey the precept of the  
old philosopher, and Explore thyself. Herein  
are demanded the eye and the nerve. Only the  
defeated and deserters go to the wars, cowards  
that run away and enlist. Start now on that  
farthest western way, which does not pause  
at the Mississippi or the Pacific, nor conduct  
toward a worn-out China or Japan, but, leads  
on direct a tangent to this sphere, summer and  
winter, day and night, sun down, moon down,  
and at last earth down too.  
  
Tt is said that Mirabeau took to highway rob-  
bery ‘‘to ascertain what degree of resolution was  
necessary in order to place one’s self in formal  
opposition to the most sacred laws of society.”  
He declared that ‘‘a soldier who fights in the  
ranks does not require half so much courage as  
a foot-pad,” — “that honor and religion have  
never stood in the way of a well-considered and

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426 WALDEN  
  
a firm resolve.” This was manly, as the world  
goes; and yet it was idle, if not desperate. A  
saner man would have found himself often  
enough ‘tin formal opposition” to what are  
deemed “‘the most sacred laws of society,”  
through obedience to yet more sacred laws, and  
so have tested his resolution without going out  
of his way. It is not for a man to put himself  
in such an attitude to society, but to maintain  
himself in whatever attitude he find himself  
through obedience to the laws of his being,  
which will never be one of opposition to a just  
government, if he should chance to meet with  
such.  
  
I left the woods for as good a reason as I went  
there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had  
several more lives to live, and could not spare  
any more time for that one. It is remarkable  
how easily and insensibly we fall into a particu-  
lar route, and make a beaten track for ourselves.  
I had not lived there a week before my feet wore  
a path from my door to the pond-side; and  
though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is  
still quite distinct. It is true, I fear that others  
may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep  
it open. The surface of the earth is soft and  
impressible by the feet of men; and so with  
the paths which the mind travels. How worn  
and dusty, then, must be the highways of the  
world, how deep the ruts of tradition and con-

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CONCLUSION 427  
  
formity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage,  
but rather to go before the mast and on the deck  
of the world, for there I could best see the moon-  
light amid the mountains. I do not wish to go  
below now.  
  
I learned this, at least, by my experiment:  
that if one advances confidently in the direction  
of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life  
which he has imagined, he will meet with a  
success unexpected in common hours. He will  
put some things behind, will pass an invisible  
boundary; new, universal, and more liberal  
laws will begin to establish themselves around  
and within him; or the old laws be expanded,  
and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal  
sense, and he will live with the license of a higher  
order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies  
his life, the laws of the universe will appear less  
complex, and solitude will not: be solitude, nor  
poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If  
you have built castles in the air, your work need  
not be lost; that is where they should be. Now  
put the foundations under them.  
  
It is a ridiculous demand which England and  
America make, that you shall speak so that they  
can understand you. Neither men nor toad-  
stools grow so. As if that were important, and  
there were not enough to understand you with-  
out them. As if Nature could support but one  
order of understandings, could not sustain birds

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428 WALDEN  
  
as well as quadrupeds, flying as well as creeping  
things, and hush and who, which Bright can  
understand, were the best English. As if there  
were safety in stupidity alone. I fear chiefly  
lest my expression may not be extra-vagant  
enough, may not wander far enough beyond the  
narrow limits of my daily experience, so as to  
be adequate to the truth of which I have been  
convinced. Eztravagance! it depends on how  
you are yarded. The migrating buffalo which  
seeks new pastures in another latitude, is not  
extravagant like the cow which kicks over the  
pail, leaps the cowyard fence, and runs after  
her calf, in milking-time. I desire to speak  
somewhere without bounds; like a man in a  
waking moment, to men in their waking mo-  
ments; for I am convinced that I cannot exag-  
gerate enough even to lay the foundation of  
a true expression. Who that has heard a strain  
of music feared then lest he should speak ex-  
travagantly any more forever? In view of the  
future or possible, we should live quite laxly  
and undefined in front, our outlines dim and  
misty on that side; as our shadows reveal an  
insensible perspiration toward the sun. The  
volatile truth of our words should continually  
betray the inadequacy of the residual statement.  
‘Their truth is instantly translated; its literal  
monument alone remains. The words which  
express our faith and piety are not definite; yet

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CONCLUSION 429  
  
they are significant and fragrant like frankin-  
cense to superior natures.  
  
Why level downward to our dullest perception  
always, and praise that as common sense? The  
commonest sense is the sense of men asleep,  
which they express by snoring. Sometimes we  
are inclined to class those who are once-and-a-  
half-witted with the half-witted, because we  
appreciate only a third part of their wit. Some  
would find fault with the morning-red, if they  
ever got up early enough. “They pretend,”  
as I hear, “that the verses of Kabir have four  
different senses: illusion, spirit, intellect, and  
the exoteric doctrine of the Vedas;” but in this  
part of the world it is considered a ground for  
complaint if a man’s writings admit of more  
than one interpretation. While England en-  
deavors to cure the potato-rot, will not any en-  
deavor to cure the brain-rot, which prevails so  
much more widely and fatally ?  
  
I do not suppose that I have attained to ob-  
scurity, but I should be proud if no more fatal  
fault were found with my pages on this score  
than was found with the Walden ice. Southern  
customers objected to its blue color, which is  
the evidence of its purity, as if it were muddy,  
and preferred the Cambridge ice, which is white,  
but tastes of weeds. The purity men love is  
like the mists which envelop the earth, and not  
like the azure ether beyond.

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430 WALDEN  
  
Some are dinning in our ears that we Ameri-  
cans, and moderns generally, are intellectual  
dwarfs compared with the ancients, or even the  
Elizabethan men. But what is that to the pur-  
pose? A living dog is better than a dead lion.  
Shall a man go and hang himself because he  
belongs to the race of pygmies, and not be the  
biggest pygmy that he can? Let every one mind  
his own business, and endeavor to be what he  
was made.  
  
Why should we be in such desperate haste to  
succeed, and in such desperate enterprises? If  
a man does not keep pace with his companions,  
perhaps it is because he hears a different drum-  
mer. Let him step to the music which he hears,  
however measured or far away. It is not im-  
portant that he should mature as soon as an  
apple tree or an oak. Shall he turn his spring  
into summer? If the condition of things which  
we were made for is not yet, what were any  
reality which we can substitute? We will not  
be shipwrecked on a vain reality. Shall we with  
pains erect a heaven of blue glass over ourselves,  
though when it is done we shall be sure to gaze  
still at the true ethereal heaven far above, as if  
the former were not?  
  
‘There was an artist in the city of Kouroo who  
was disposed to strive after perfection. One day  
it came into his mind to make a staff. Having  
considered that in an imperfect work time is

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CONCLUSION 431  
  
an ingredient, but into a perfect work time does  
not enter, he said to himself, It shall be perfect  
in all respects, though I should do nothing else  
in my life. He proceeded instantly to the forest  
for wood, being resolved that it should not be  
made of unsuitable material; and as he searched  
for and rejected stick after stick, his friends  
gradually deserted him, for they grew old in  
their works and died, but he grew not older by  
a moment. His singleness of purpose and reso-  
lution, and his elevated piety, endowed him,  
without his knowledge, with perennial youth.  
As he made no compromise with Time, Time  
kept out of his way, and only sighed at a dis-  
tance because he could not overcome him. Be-  
fore he had found a stock in all respects suitable  
the city of Kouroo was a hoary ruin, and he  
sat on one of its mounds to peel the stick. Be-  
fore he had given it the proper shape the dynasty  
of the Candahars was at an end, and with the  
point of the stick he wrote the name of the last  
of that race in the sand, and then resumed his  
work. By the time he had smoothed and polished  
the staff Kalpa was no longer the pole-star;  
and ere he had put on the ferule and the head  
adorned with precious stones, Brahma had  
awoke and slumbered many times. But why  
do I stay to mention these things? When the  
finishing stroke was put to his work, it suddenly  
expanded before the eyes of the astonished artist

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432 WALDEN  
  
into the fairest of all the creations of Brahma.  
He had made a new system in making a staff,  
a world with full and fair proportions; in which,  
though the old cities and dynasties had passed  
away, fairer and more glorious ones had taken  
their places. And now he saw by the heap of  
shavings still fresh at his feet, that, for him and  
his work, the former lapse of time had been an  
illusion, and that no more time had elapsed than  
is required for a single scintillation from the  
brain of Brahma to fall on and inflame the  
tinder of a mortal brain. The material was  
pure, and his art was pure; how could the  
result be other than wonderful ?  
  
No face which we can give to a matter will  
stead us so well at last as the truth. This alone  
wears well. For the most part, we are not where  
we are, but in a false position. Through an  
infirmity of our natures, we suppose a case,  
and put ourselves into it, and hence are in two  
cases at the same time, and it is doubly difficult  
to get out. In sane moments we regard only  
the facts, the case that is. Say what you have  
to say, not what you ought. Any truth is better  
than make-believe. Tom Hyde, the tinker,  
standing on the gallows, was asked if he had  
anything to say. ‘Tell the tailors,” said he,  
“to remember to make a knot in their thread  
before they take the first stitch.” His com-  
panion’s prayer is forgotten.

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CONCLUSION 483  
  
However mean your life is, meet it and live  
it; do not shun it and call it hard names. It  
is not so bad as you are. It looks poorest when  
you are richest. ‘The faultfinder will find faults  
even in paradise. Love your life, poor as it is.  
You may perhaps have some pleasant, thrilling,  
glorious hours, even in a poorhouse. The setting  
sun is reflected from the windows of the alms-  
house as brightly as from the rich man’s abode;  
the snow melts before its door as early in the  
spring. I do not see but a quiet mind may live  
as contentedly there, and have as cheering  
thoughts, as in a palace. The town’s poor  
seem to me often to live the most independent  
lives of any. Maybe they are simply great  
enough to receive without misgiving. Most  
think that they are above being supported by  
the town; but it oftener happens that they are  
not above supporting themselves by dishonest  
means, which should be more disreputable.  
Cultivate poverty like a garden herb, like sage.  
Do not trouble yourself much to get new things,  
whether clothes or friends. Turn the old;  
return to them. Things do not change; we  
change. Sell your clothes and keep your  
thoughts. God will see that you do not want  
society. If I were confined to a corner of a  
garret all my days, like a spider, the world  
would be just as large to me while I had my  
thoughts about me. The philosopher said:

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434 WALDEN  
  
“From an army of three divisions one can  
take away its general, and put it in disorder;  
from the man the most abject and vulgar one  
cannot take away his thought.” Do not seek  
so anxiously to be developed, to subject your-  
self to many influences to be played on; it is  
all dissipation, Humility like darkness reveals  
the heavenly lights. The shadows of poverty  
and meanness gather around us, “and lo!  
creation widens to our view.” We are often  
reminded that if there were bestowed on us the  
wealth of Croesus, our aims must still be the  
same, and our means essentially the same.  
Moreover, if you are restricted in your range  
by poverty, if you cannot buy books and news-  
papers, for instance, you are but confined to  
the most significant and vital experiences; you  
are compelled to deal with the material which  
yields the most sugar and the most starch. It  
is life near the bone where it is sweetest. You  
are defended from being a trifler. No man  
loses ever on a lower level by magnanimity on  
a higher. Superfluous wealth can buy super-  
fluities only. Money is not required to buy  
one necessary of the soul.  
  
1 live in the angle of a leaden wall, into whose  
composition was poured a little alloy of bell  
metal. Often, in the repose of my midday, there  
reaches my ears a confused tintinnabulum from  
without. It is the noise of my contemporaries.

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CONCLUSION 485  
  
My neighbors tell me of their adventures with  
famous gentlemen and ladies, what notabilities  
they met at the dinner-table; but I am no more  
interested in such things than in the contents of  
the Daily Times. The interest and the conver-  
sation are about costume and manners chiefly;  
but a goose is a goose still, dress it as you will.  
They tell me of California and Texas, of England  
and the Indies, of the Hon. Mr. —— of Georgia  
or of Massachusetts, all transient and fleeting  
phenomena, till I am ready to leap from their  
court-yard like the Mameluke bey. I delight  
to come to my bearings, — not walk in proces-  
sion with pomp and parade, in a conspicuous  
place, but to walk even with the Builder of the  
Universe, if I may, — not to live in this restless,  
nervous, bustling, trivial Nineteenth Century,  
but stand or sit thoughtfully while it goes by.  
What are men celebrating? They are all on a  
committee of arrangements, and hourly expect a  
speech from somebody. God is only the presi-  
dent of the day, and Webster is His orator. I  
love to weigh, to settle, to gravitate toward that  
which most strongly and rightfully attracts me;  
—not hang by the beam of the scale and try to  
weigh less, — not suppose a case, but take the  
case that is; to travel the only path I can, and  
that on which no power can resist me. It af-  
fords me no satisfaction to commence to spring  
an arch before I have got a solid foundation.

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436 WALDEN  
  
Let us not play at kittlybenders, There is a  
solid bottom everywhere. We read that the  
traveller asked the boy if the swamp before him  
had a hard bottom. The boy replied that it had.  
But presently the traveller's horse sank in up  
to the girths, and he observed to the boy, “I  
thought you said that this bog had a hard bot-  
tom.” “So it has,” answered the latter, “but  
you have not got half way to it yet.” So it is  
with the bogs and quicksands of society; but  
he is an old boy that knows it. Only what is  
thought, said, or done at a certain rare coinci-  
dence is good. I would not be one of those who  
will foolishly drive a nail into mere lath and  
plastering; such a deed would keep me awake  
nights. Give me a hammer, and let me feel for  
the furring. Do not depend on the putty. Drive  
a nail home and clinch it so faithfully that you  
can wake up in the night and think of your work  
with satisfaction, — a work at which you would  
not be ashamed to invoke the Muse. So will help  
you God, and so only. Every nail driven should  
be as another rivet in the machine of the uni-  
verse, you carrying on the work.  
  
Rather than love, than money, than fame, give  
me truth. I sat at a table where were rich food  
and wine in abundance, and obsequious attend-  
ance, but sincerity and truth were not; and I  
went away hungry from the inhospitable board.  
The hospitality was as cold as the ices. I

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CONCLUSION 437  
  
thought that there was no need of ice to freeze  
them. They talked to me of the age of the wine  
and the fame of the vintage; but I thought of  
an older, a newer, and purer wine, of a more  
glorious vintage, which they had not got, and  
could not buy. The style, the house and grounds  
and “entertainment,” pass for nothing with me.  
I called on the king, but he made me wait in his  
hall, and conducted like a man incapacitated for  
hospitality. There was a man in my neighbor-  
hood who lived in a hollow tree. His manners  
were truly regal. I should have done better had  
Icalled on him.  
  
How long shall we sit in our porticos practising  
idle and musty virtues, which any work would  
make impertinent? As if one were to begin the  
day with long-suffering, and hire a man to hoe  
his potatoes; and in the afternoon go forth to  
practise Christian meekness and charity with  
goodness aforethought! Consider the China  
pride and stagnant self-complacency of man-  
kind. This generation reclines a little to con-  
gratulate itself on being the last of an illustrious  
line; and in Boston and London and Paris and  
Rome, thinking of its long descent, it speaks of  
its progress in art and science and literature with  
satisfaction. ‘There are the Records of the Phil-  
osophical Societies, and the public Eulogies of  
Great Men! It is the good Adam contemplating  
his own virtue. “Yes, we have done great

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438 WALDEN  
  
deeds, and sung divine songs, which shall never  
die,” — that is, as long as we can remember them.  
The learned societies and great men of Assyria,  
— where are they? What youthful philosophers  
and experimentalists we are! ‘There is not one  
of my readers who has yet lived a whole human  
life. These may be but the spring months in  
the life of the race. If we have had the seven-  
years’ itch, we have not seen the seventeen-year  
locust yet in Concord. We are acquainted with a  
mere pellicle of the globe on which we live. Most  
have not delved six feet beneath the surface, nor  
leaped as many above it. We know not where  
we are. Besides, we are sound asleep nearly  
half our time. Yet we esteem ourselves wise,  
and have an established order on the surface.  
‘Truly, we are deep thinkers, we are ambitious  
spirits! As I stand over the insect crawling amid  
the pine needles on the forest floor, and endeav-  
oring to conceal itself from my sight, and ask  
myself why it will cherish those humble thoughts  
and hide its head from me who might, perhaps,  
be its benefactor and impart to its race some  
cheering information, I am reminded of the  
greater Benefactor and Intelligence that stands  
over me, the human insect.  
  
‘There is an incessant influx of novelty into the  
world, and yet we tolerate incredible dulness. I  
need only suggest what kind of sermons are still  
listened to in the most enlightened countries.

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CONCLUSION 439  
  
There are such words as joy and sorrow, but  
they are only the burden of a psalm, sung with a  
nasal twang, while we believe in the ordinary  
and mean. We think that we can change our  
clothes only. It is said that the British Empire  
is very large and respectable, and that the United  
States are a first-rate power. We do not believe  
that a tide rises and falls behind every man which  
can float the British Empire like a chip, if he  
should ever harbor it in his mind. Who knows  
what sort of seventeen-year locust will next  
come out of the ground? The government of  
the world I live in was not framed, like that of  
Britain, in after-dinner conversations over the  
wine.  
  
The life in us is like the water in the river. It  
may rise this year higher than man has ever  
known it, and flood the parched uplands; even  
this may be the eventful year, which will drown  
out all our muskrats. It was not always dry land  
where we dwell. I see far inland the banks  
which the stream anciently washed, before  
science began to record its freshets. Every one  
has heard the story which has gone the rounds of  
New England, of a strong and beautiful bug  
which came out of the dry leaf of an old table of  
apple-tree wood, which had stood in a farmer’s  
kitchen for sixty years, first in Connecticut, and  
afterward in Massachusetts, —from an egg de-  
posited in the living tree many years earlier

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440 WALDEN  
  
still, as appeared by counting the annual layers  
beyond it; which was heard gnawing out for  
several weeks, hatched perchance by the heat of  
an urn. Who does not feel his faith in a resur-  
rection and immortality strengthened by hearing  
of this? Who knows what beautiful and winged  
life, whose egg has been buried for ages under  
many concentric layers of woodenness in the  
dead dry life of society, deposited at the first in  
the alburnum of the green and living tree, which  
has been gradually converted into the semblance  
of its well-seasoned tomb, — heard perchance  
gnawing out now for years by the astonished  
family of man, as they sat round the festive  
board, — may unexpectedly come forth from  
amidst society’s most trivial and handselled  
furniture, to enjoy its perfect summer life at  
last!  
  
I do not say that John or Jonathan will realize  
all this; but such is the character of that mor-  
row which mere lapse of time can never make to  
dawn. The light which puts out our eyes is  
darkness to us. Only that day dawns to which  
we are awake. There is more day to dawn.  
‘The sun is but a morning star.

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HENRY DAVID THOREAU  
  
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AND FULL INDEXES  
  
VOLUME IV  
  
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CAPE COD  
  
HENRY DAVID THOREAU  
  
Princip ert ira omni, eam rina,  
  
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‘Fair eit stra sdcuratio adinare, quam ais si poms),  
‘Linmane de Pertgrinationt.  
  
   
  
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE  
  
In the same year as The Maine Woods, but  
as a Christmas book dated 1865, speared Cape  
Cod, also edited by W. E. Channing and pub-  
lished by Ticknor & Fields, The first four  
chapters of the book had already been printed.  
by their author in Putnam's Magazine in 1855,  
and chapters v.and viii. were printed, just in ad-  
‘vance of publication in the book, in The Atlantic  
Monthly in October and December, 1864.  
  
‘Thoreau has recorded his adventures in this  
book, and shows that he enjoyed the humor  
which attended his intercourse with the inde  
pendent, self-reliant folk of what was then more  
than now a singularly isolated arm of the State,  
Mr. Channing adds in his book on Thoreau:  
“One of the old Cod could not believe that Tho-  
eau was not a pedler; but said, after explana-  
tion failed, ‘Well, it makes no odds what it is  
‘you carry, 80 long as you carry truth along with  
you.”

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Page-8459

a Publio Dy  
fea ag aa  
‘= COLUMBUS BRANCH,  
  
   
  
CAPE COD  
  
I  
‘THE SHIPWRECK  
  
‘Wisumna to get a better view than I had yet  
had of the ocean, which, we are told, covers  
more than two thirds of the globe, but of which  
man who lives a few miles inland may never  
see any trace, more than of another world, I  
‘made a visit to Cape Cod in October, 1849, an-  
other the succeeding June, and another to Truro  
in July, 1855; the first and last time with a  
single companion, the second time alone. I  
have spent, in all, about three weeks on the  
Capo; walked from Eastham to Provincetown  
tovice on the Atlantic side, and once on the Bay  
side also, excepting four or five miles, and  
crossed the Cape half a dozen times on my way;  
bbut having come so fresh to the sea, I have got  
but little salted. My readers must expect only  
80 much saltness as the land breeze acquires  
from blowing over an arm of the sea, or is tasted  
‘on the windows and the bark of trees éyénty  
miles inland, after September gales:

Page-8460

2 CAPE CoD  
  
been accustomed to make excursions to the ponds  
within ten miles of Concord, but latterly I have  
extended my excursions to the seashore.  
  
T did not see why I might not make a book on  
Cape Cod, as well as my neighbor on “Human  
Culture.” It is but another name for the same  
thing, and hardly a sandier phase of it. As for  
my title, I suppose that the word Cape is from  
the French cap ; which is from the Latin caput,  
ahead; which is, perhaps, from the verb capere,  
to take, — that being the part by which we take  
hold of a thing: — Take Time by the forelock.  
It is also the safest part to take a serpent by.  
And as for Cod, that was derived directly from  
that “great store of cod-fish” which Captain  
Bartholomew Gosnold caught there in 1602;  
which fish appears to have been so called from  
the Saxon word codde, “a case in which seeds  
are lodged,” either from the form of the fish, or  
the quantity of spawn it contains; whence also,  
perhaps, codling (“pomum coctile”?) and  
coddle, — to cook green like peas. (V. Die.)  
  
‘Cape Cod is the bared and bended arm of  
Maseachusetts: the shoulder is at Buzzard’s  
Bay; the elbow, or crazy-bone, at Cape Malle-  
barre; the wrist at Truro; and the sandy fist at  
‘Provincetown, — behind which the State stands  
on her guard, with her back to the Green Moun-  
tains, aud ber feet planted on the floor of the

Page-8461

THE SHIPWRECK 8  
  
ocean, like an athlete protecting her Bay, —  
boxing with northeast storms, and, ever and  
anon, heaving up her Atlantic adversary from  
the lap of earth, ~ready to thrust forward her  
other fist, which keeps guard the while upon her  
breast at Cape Ann.  
  
On studying the map, I saw that there must  
be an uninterrupted beach on the east or outside  
of the forearm of the Cape, more than thirty  
miles from the general line of the coast, which  
would afford a good tea view, but that, on ac-  
count of an opening in the beach, forming the  
entrance to Nauset Harbor, in Orleans, I must  
strike it in Eastham, if I approached it by land,  
and probably I could walk thence straight to  
Race Point, about twenty-cight miles, and not  
meet with any obstruction.  
  
‘Wo left Concord, Massachusetts, on Tuesday,  
October 9, 1849. On reaching Boston, we found  
‘that the Provincetown steamer, which should  
have got in the day before, had not yet arrived,  
on account of a violent storm; and, as we no-  
ticed in the streets a handbill headed, “Death!  
‘one hundred and forty-five lives lost at Cohas-  
set,” we decided to go by way of Cohasset,  
‘We found many Irish in the ears, going to iden-  
tify bodies and to sympathize with the survivors,  
and also to attend the funeral which was to take  
place in the afternoon; —and when we arrived

Page-8462

4 CAPE COD  
  
at Cohasset, it appeared that nearly all the pas-  
sengers were bound for the beach, which was  
about a mile distant, and many other persons  
were flocking in from the neighboring country.  
There were several hundreds of them streaming  
off over Cohasset common in that direction,  
some on foot and some in wagons, —and among  
them were some sportsmen in their hunting-  
jackets, with their guns, and game-bags, and  
dogs. As we passed the graveyard we saw a  
large hole, like a cellar, freshly dug there, and,  
just before reaching the shore, by a pleasantly  
winding and rocky road, we met several hay-rig-  
gings and farm-wagons coming away toward the  
meeting -house, each loaded with three large,  
rough deal boxes. We did not need to ask what  
was in them. ‘The owners of tho wagons were  
made the undertakers. Many horses in carriages  
were fastened to the fences near the shore, and,  
for a mile or more, up and down, the beach was  
covered with people looking out for bodies, and  
examining the fragments of the wreck. ‘There  
was a small island called Brook Island, with a  
hut on it, lying just off the shore. ‘This is said  
to be the rockiest shore in Massachusetts, from  
Nantasket to Scituate, —hard sienitie rocks,  
which the waves have laid bare, but have not  
been able to crumble. It has been the scene of  
iipwreck.

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THE SHIPWRECK 5  
  
‘The brig St. John, from Galway, Ireland,  
laden with emigrants, was wrecked on Sunday  
morning; it was now Tuesday morning, and the  
sea was still breaking violently on the rocks.  
‘There were eighteen or twenty of tho same large  
boxes that I have mentioned, lying on a green  
hillside, a few rods from the water, and sur-  
rounded by a crowd. The bodies which had  
been recovered, twenty-seven or eight in all, had  
been collected there. Some were rapidly nail-  
ing down the lids, others were carting the boxes  
away, and others were lifting the lids, which  
were yet loose, and peeping under the cloths,  
for each body, with such rags as still adhered to  
it, was covered loosely with a white sheet. I  
witnessed no signs of grief, but there was a sober  
dispatch of business which was affecting. One  
man was seeking to identify a particular body,  
and one undertaker or carpenter was calling to  
another to know in what box a certain child was  
put. I'saw many marble feet and matted heads  
as the cloths were raised, and one livid, swollen,  
and mangled body of a drowned gir], — who pro-  
ably had intended to go out to service in some  
American family, — to which some rags still ad-  
hhered, with a string, half concealed by the flesh,  
about its swollen neck; the coiled-up wreck of  
a human hulk, gashed by the rocks or fishes, #0  
that the bone and muscle were exposed, but quite

Page-8464

6 CAPE COD  
  
bloodless, — merely red and white, — with wide-  
‘open and staring eyes, yot lustreless, dead-  
lights; or like the cabin windows of a stranded  
vessel, filled with sand. Sometimes there were  
‘two or more children, or a parent and child, in  
the same box, and on the lid would perhaps be  
written with red chalk, “Bridget such-a-one,  
and sister’s child.” The surrounding sward was  
covered with bits of sails and clothing. I have  
since heard, from one who lives by this beach,  
‘that a woman who had come over before, but  
had left her infant behind for her sister to  
bring, came and looked into these boxes, and  
saw in one—probably the same whose super-  
scription I have quoted—her child in her sis-  
ter’s arms, as if the sister had meant to be  
found thus; and within three days after, the  
mother died from the effect of that sight.  
  
‘Wo turned from this and walked along the  
rocky shore. In tho first cove were strewn  
what seemed the fragments of a vessel, in small  
pieces mixed with sand and seaweed, and great  
quantities of feathers; but it looked so old and  
rusty, that I at first took it to be some old  
wreck which had Iain there many years. I  
even thought of Captain Kidd, and that the  
feathers were those which sea-fowl had cast  
there; and perhaps there might be some tradi-  
tion about it in the neighborhood. I asked a

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THE SHIPWRECK T  
  
sailor if that was the St. John. He said it  
was. I asked him where she struck. He  
pointed to a rock in front of us, a mile from the  
shore, called the Grampus Rock, and added, —  
  
“You can see a part of her now sticking up;  
it looks like a small boat.”  
  
I saw it. It was thought to be held by the  
chain-cables and the anchors. I asked if the  
bodies which I saw were all that were drowned.  
  
“Not a quarter of them,” said he.  
  
“Whore are the rest?”  
  
“Most of them right underneath that piece  
you see.”  
  
Tt appeared to us that there was enough rub-  
bish to make the wreck of a large vessel in this  
cove alone, and that it would take many days to  
cart it off. It was several fect deep, and here  
and there was a bonnet or a jacket on it. In  
the very midst of the crowd about this wreck,  
there were men with carts busily collecting the  
seaweed which the storm had cast up, and con-  
veying it beyond the reach of the tide, though  
they were often obliged to separate fragments  
of clothing from it, and they might at any  
moment have found a human body under it.  
Drown who might, they did not forget that this  
weed was a valuable manure. ‘This shipwreck  
had not produced a visible vibration in the  
fabric of society.

Page-8466

8 CAPE CoD  
  
About a mile south we could see, rising above  
the rocks, the masts of the British brig which  
the St. John had endeavored to follow, which  
had slipped her cables, and, by good luck, run  
into the mouth of Cohasset Harbor. A little  
further along the shore we saw a man’s clothes  
on a rock; further, a woman’s scarf, a gown, a  
straw bonnet, the brig’s caboose, and one of het  
masts high and dry, broken into several pieces.  
In another rocky cove, several rods from the  
water, and behind rocks twenty feet high, lay a  
part of one side of the vessel, still hanging to-  
gether. It was, perhaps, forty feet long, by  
fourteen wide. I was even more surprised at  
the power of the waves, exhibited on this shat-  
tored fragment, than I had been at the sight of  
the smaller fragments before. The largest tim-  
bers and iron braces were broken superfinously,  
and I saw that no material could withstand the  
power of the waves; that iron must go to pieces  
in such a case, and an iron vessel would be  
cracked up like an egg-shell on the rocks. Some  
of these timbers, however, were so rotten that I  
could almost thrust my umbrella through them.  
‘They told us that some were saved on this piece,  
and also showed where the sea had heaved it  
into this cove which was now dry. When I saw  
where it had come in, and in what condition, I  
wondered that any had been saved on it, A lit~

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THE SHIPWRECK 9  
  
tle further on a crowd of men was collected  
around the mate of the St. John, who was tell-  
ing his story. Ho was a slim-looking youth,  
who spoke of the captain as the master, and  
seemed a little excited. Ho was saying that  
‘when they jumped into the boat, she filed, and,  
the vessel lurching, the weight of the water in  
the boat caused the painter to break, and so  
thoy were separated. Whereat one man came  
away, saying, —  
  
“Well, I don’t see but he tells a straight  
story enough. You see, the weight of the water  
in the boat broke the painter. A. boat full of  
water is very heavy,”—and so on, in a loud  
and impertinently earnest tone, as if he had a  
‘bet depending on it, but had no humane, inter-  
est in the matter.  
  
Another, a large man, stood near by upon a  
rock, gazing into the sea, and chewing largo  
quids of tobacco, as if that habit were forever  
confirmed with him.  
  
“Come,” says another to his companion,  
“let's be off. We've seen the whole of it.  
It’s no use to stay to the funeral.”  
  
Further, we saw one standing upon a rock,  
who, we were told, was one that was saved.  
He was a sober-looking man, dressed in a  
jacket and gray pantaloons, with his hands in  
the pockets. I asked him a few questions,

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10 CAPE CoD  
  
which he answered; but he seemed unwilling to  
talk about it, and soon walked away. By hig  
side stood one of the life-boat men, in an oil-  
cloth jacket, who told us how they went to  
the relief of the British brig, thinking that the  
boat of the St. John, which they passed on the  
way, held all her crew, —for the waves pre-  
vented their seeing those who were on the vessel,  
though they might have saved some had they  
Iknown there were any there. A little further  
was the flag of the St. John spread on a rock to  
dry, and held down by stones at the corners.  
‘This frail, but essential and significant portion  
of the vessel, which had so long been the sport  
of the winds, was sure to reach the shore.  
‘There were one or two houses visible from these  
rocks, in which were some of the survivors re-  
covering from the shock which their bodies and  
minds had sustained. One was not expected to  
live.  
  
‘We kept on down the shore as far as a pro-  
montory called Whitehead, that we might see  
more of the Cohasset Rocks. In a little cove,  
within half @ mile, there were an old man and  
his son collecting, with their team, the seaweed  
which that fatal storm had cast up, as serenely  
employed as if there had never been a wreck in  
the world, though they were within sight of the  
Grampus Rock, on which the St. John had

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THE. SHIPWRECK i  
  
struck. ‘The old man had heard that there was  
a wreck and knew most of the particulars, but  
he said that he had not been up there since it  
happened. It was the wrecked weed that con-  
cerned him most, rock-wood, kelp, and sea-  
‘weed, as he named them, which he carted to his  
barnyard; and those bodies were to him but  
other weeds which the tide cast up, but which  
were of no use to him. We afterwards came to  
the life-boat in its harbor, waiting for another  
emergency, —and in the afternoon we saw the  
funeral procession at a distance, at the head of  
which walked the captain with the other sur-  
vivors.  
  
On the whole, it was not so impressive a  
scene as I might have expected. If I had found  
‘one body cast upon the beach in some lonely  
place, it would have affected me more. I sym-  
pathized rather with the winds and waves, as if  
to toss and mangle these poor human bodies  
was the order of the day. If this was the law  
of Nature, why waste any time in awe or pity?  
If the last day were come, we should not think  
so much about the separation of friends or the  
blighted prospects of individuals. I saw that  
corpses might be multiplied, as on the field of  
battle, till they no longer affected us in any de-  
gree, as exceptions to the common lot of buman-  
  
ity. Take all the graveyards together, they are

Page-8470

12 CAPE CoD  
  
always the majority. It is the individual and  
private that demands our sympathy. A man  
can attend but one funeral in the course of his  
life, can behold but one corpse. Yet I saw  
that the inhabitants of the shore would be not a  
little affected by this event. ‘They would watch  
there many days and nights for the sea to give  
up its dead, and their imaginations and sympa-  
thies would supply the place of mourners far  
away, who as yet knew not of the wreck. Many  
days after this, something white was seen float  
ing on the water by one who was sauntering on  
the beach. It was approached in a boat, and  
found to be the body of 2 woman, which had  
risen in an upright position, whose white cap  
was blown back with the wind. I saw that the  
beauty of the shore itself was wrecked for many  
a lonely walker there, until he could perceive,  
at last, how its beauty was enhanced by wrecks  
ike this, and it acquired thus a rarer and  
sublimer beanty still.  
  
‘Why care for these dead bodies? They  
really have no friends but: the worms or fishes.  
‘Their owners were coming to the New World,  
as Columbus and the Pilgrims did, — they were  
within a mile of its shores; but, before they  
could reach it, they emigrated to a newer world  
than ever Columbus dreamed of, yet one of  
‘whose existence we believe that there is far more

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THE SHIPWRECK 18  
  
universal and convincing evidence— though it  
has not yet been discovered by science — than  
Columbus had of this: not merely mariners’  
tales and some paltry driftwood and seaweed,  
but a continual drift and instinct to all our  
shores, I saw their empty hulks that’ came to  
land ; but they themselves, meanwhile, were cast  
upon some shore yet further west, toward which  
we are all tending, and which we shall reach at  
last, it may be through storm and darkness, as  
they did. No doubt, we have reason to thank  
God that they have not been “ shipwrecked into  
life again.” The mariner who makes the safest  
port in Heaven, perchance, sooms to his friends  
‘on earth to be shipwrecked, for they deem Bos-  
ton Harbor the better place ; though perhaps in-  
visible to them, a skillful pilot comes to meet  
him, and the fairest and balmiest gales blow off  
that coast, his good ship makes the land in hal-  
ceyon days, and he kisses the shore in rapture  
there, while his old hulk tosses in the surf here.  
It is hard to part with one's body, but, no doubt,  
it is easy enough to do without it when once it is  
gone. All their plans and hopes burst like a  
bubble! Infants by the score dashed on the  
rocks by\* the enraged Atlantic Ocean! No,  
no! If the St. John did not make her port here,  
he has been telegraphed there. ‘The strongest  
wind cannot stagger a Spirit; it is a Spirit's

Page-8472

14 CAPE CoD  
  
breath. A just man’s purpose cannot be split  
on any Grampus or material rock, but itself  
will split rocks till it succeeds.  
  
‘The verses addressed to Columbus, dying,  
may, with slight alterations, be applied to the  
passengers of the St. John,—  
  
“Soon with them wall all be over,  
‘Soon the voyage will be begun  
‘That shall bear them to discoves,  
Far away, land unknown,  
  
“Land that each, alove, mst visit,  
‘But no tidings bring to men  
For no sailor, once departed,  
‘Ever hath returned agsin.  
  
   
  
“No carved wood, no broken branchee  
  
‘Ever deft from tat fer wild  
He who on that osean launches".  
‘Meets no corse of angel child.  
  
“ Undiamayed, my noble sailors,  
Spread, then spreed your eanvas out  
Spirital on a soa of ether  
  
‘Soon ahall yo sorunely float!  
  
“Whore the deep no plummet soundeth,  
‘Fear no hidden breakers there,  
  
‘And the fanning wing of angela  
‘Shall your bark right onward bear,  
  
“ Quit, now, fall of heart and comfort,  
‘Thees rude shares, they are of earth;  
‘Where the rosy clouds aro parting,  
‘Thore the bloated isles loom forth.”

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THE SHIPWRECK 15  
  
One summer day, since this, I came this way,  
on foot, along the shore from Boston. It was  
so warm, that some horses had climbed to the  
very top of the ramparts of the old fort at Hull,  
where there was hardly room to turn round, for  
the sake of the breese. The Datura stramo-  
‘nium, or thorn-apple, was in full bloom along  
the beach; and, at sight of this cosmopolite, —  
this Captain Cook among plants, —carried in  
ballast all over the world, I felt as if I were on  
the highway of nations. Say, rather, this  
Viking, king of the Bays, for it is not an inno-  
cont plant; it suggests not merely commerce,  
Dut its attendant vices, as if its fibres were the  
stuff of which pirates spin their yarns. I heard  
the voices of men shouting aboard a vessel, half  
‘a mile from the shore, which sounded as if they  
were in a barn in the country, they being be-  
tween the sails. It was a purely rural sound.  
‘As I looked over the water, I saw the isles  
rapidly wasting away, the sea nibbling vora-  
ciously at the continent, the springing arch of  
hill suddenly interrupted, as at Point Allerton,  
— what botanists might call premorse, — show-  
ing, by its curve against the sky, how much  
space it must have occupied, where now was  
water only. On the other hand, these wrecks  
of isles were being fancifully arranged into new  
shores, as at Hog Island, inside of Hull, where

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16 CAPE COD  
  
everything seemed to be gently lapsing into  
futurity. This isle had got the very form of a  
ripple, —and I thought that the inhabitants  
should bear a ripple for device on their shields,  
a wave passing over them, with the datura,  
which is said to produce mental alienation of  
long duration without affecting the bodily  
health,! springing from its edge. ‘The most in-  
‘teresting thing which I heard of, in this town-  
ship of Hull, was an unfailing spring, whose lo-  
ality was pointed out to me, on the side of a  
distant hill, as I was panting along the shore,  
though I did not visit it. “Perhaps, if I should  
go through Rome, it would be some spring on  
the Capitoline Hill I should remember the long-  
1 The Jamestown weed (or thorwapple). “Thi, being an  
satly plant was gathered very young for a boiled salad, by  
‘some of the soldiers sent thither [i. ¢., to Virginia] to quell the  
rebellion of Bacon; and some of ther ate plentifally of it the  
effect of which was 8 very pleasant comedy, for they turned  
dataral fools upon it for several days: one would blow up =  
feathor i th air; another would dart straws ati with much  
fury; and another, stark naked, was sting up ina corer like  
7 ernning and making mows at chem; « fourth would  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
this frantic condition they  
‘heir folly, destroy themnsel  
all their actions were fall  
dood, they were not very cleanly. A thousand auch simple  
‘tricks they played, and after eloyon days returned to them-  
solves again, not remembering anything that had paased.” —  
Beverly's History of Virginia, p. 120.

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THE SHIPWRECK aw  
  
est. It is true, I was somewhat interested in  
the well at the old French fort, which was said  
to be ninety feet deep, with a cannon at the  
bottom of it. On Nantasket beach I counted a  
dozen chaises from the public-honse. From  
time to time the riders turned their horses  
toward the sea, standing in the water for the  
coolness, —and I saw the value of beaches to  
cities for the sea breeze and the bath.  
  
At Jerusalem village the inhabitants were col-  
lecting in haste, before a thunder-shower now  
approaching, the Irish moss which they had  
spread to dry. The shower passed on one side,  
and gave me a few drops only, which did not  
cool the air. I merely felt a puff upon my  
cheek, though, within sight, a vessel was cap-  
sized in the bay, and several others dragged  
their anchors, and were near going ashore.  
‘The sea-bathing at Cohasset Rocks was perfect.  
‘The water was purer and more transparent than  
‘any had ever seen. There was not a particle  
of mud or slime about it. The bottom being  
sandy, I could see the sea-perch swimming  
about. The smooth and fantastically worn  
rocks, and the perfectly clean and tress-like  
rock-weeds falling over you, and attached so  
firmly to the rocks that you could pull yourself  
up by them, greatly enhanced the luxury of the  
bath. The stripe of barnacles just above the

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18 CAPE COD  
  
weeds reminded me of some vegetable growth,  
—the buds, and petals, and seed-vessels of  
flowers. They lay along the seams of the rock  
like buttons on a waisteoat. It was one of the  
hottest days in the year, yet I found the water  
0 icy cold that I could swim but a stroke or  
two, and thought that, in case of shipwreck,  
there would be more danger of being chilled to  
death than simply drowned. One immersion  
was enough to make you forget the dog-days  
utterly. Though you were sweltering before,  
it will take you half an hour now to remember  
that it was ever warm. There were the tawny  
rocks, like lions couchant, defying the ocean,  
whose waves incessantly dashed against and  
scoured them with vast quantities of gravel.  
‘The water held in their little hollows, on the re-  
ceding of the tide, was so crystalline that I could  
not believe it salt, but wished to drink it; and  
higher up were basins of fresh water left by the  
rain, —all which, being also of different depths  
and temperature, were convenient for different  
kinds of baths. Also, the larger hollows in the  
smoothed rocks formed the most convenient of  
seats and dressing-rooms. In these respects it  
‘was the most perfect seashore that I had seen,  
  
I saw in Cohasset, separated from the sea  
only by a narrow beach, a handsome but shallow  
lake of some four hundred acres, which, I was

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THE SHIPWRECK 19  
  
told, the sea had tossed over the beach in a great  
storm in the spring, and, after the alewives had  
passed into it, it had stopped up its outlet, and  
now the alewives were dving by thousands, and  
the inhabitants were apprehending a pestilence  
as the water evaporated. It had five rocky  
islets in it.  
  
‘This rocky shore is called Pleasant Cove, on  
some maps; on the map of Cohasset, that name  
appears to be confined to the particular cove  
where I saw the wreck of the St. John. The  
‘ocean did not look, now, as if any were ever  
shipwrecked in it; it was not grand and sublime,  
but beautiful as a lake. Not a vestige of a  
wreck was visible, nor could I believe that the  
bones of many a shipwrecked man were buried  
in that pure sand. But to go on with our first  
excursion,

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n  
STAGE-COACH VIEWS  
  
Avrer spending the night in Bridgewater,  
and picking up a few arrow-heads there in the  
morning, we took the cars for Sandwich, where  
we arrived before noon. This was the terminus  
of the “Cape Cod Railroad,” though it is but  
the beginning of the Cape. As it rained hard,  
with driving mists, and there was no sign of its  
holding up, we here took that almost obsolete  
conveyance, the stage, for “as far as it went  
that day,” as we told the driver. We had for-  
gotten how far a stage could go in a day, but  
we were told that the Cape roads were very  
“heavy,” though they added that being of sand,  
the rain would improve them. This coach was  
an exceedingly narrow one, but as there was a  
slight spherical excess over two on a seat, the  
driver waited till nine passengers had got in,  
without taking the measure of any of them, and  
then shut the door after two or three ineffectual  
slams, as if the fault were all in the hinges or  
the latch, —while we timed our inspirations and  
expirations so as to assist him.

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STAGE-COACH VIEWS 2  
  
‘We were now fairly on the Cape, which ex-  
tends from Sandwich eastward thirty-five miles,  
and thence north and northwest thirty more, in  
all sixty-five, and has an average breadth of  
about five miles. In the interior it rises to the  
height of two hundred, and sometimes perhaps  
three hundred feet above the level of the sea.  
According to Hitcheock, the geologist of the  
State, it is composed almost entirely of sand,  
even to the depth of three hundred feet in some  
places, though there is probably a concealed  
core of rock a little beneath the surface, and it  
is of diluvian origin, excepting a small portion  
at the extremity and elsewhere along the shores,  
which is alluvial. For the first half of the  
Cape large blocks of stone are found, here and  
there, mixed with the sand, but for the Inst  
thirty miles boulders, or even gravel, are rarely  
met with. Hitchcock conjectures that the ocean  
hhas, in course of time, eaten out Boston Harbor  
and other bays in the mainland, and that the  
minute fragments have been deposited by the  
currents at a distance from the shore, and  
formed this sand-bank. Above the sand, if the  
surface is subjected to agricultural tests, there  
is found to be a thin layer of soil gradually  
diminishing from Barnstable to Truro, where it  
ceases; but there are many holes and rents in  
this weather-beaten garment not likely to be

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22 CAPE CoD  
  
stitched in time, which reveal the naked flesh of  
the Cape, and its extremity is completely bare.  
T at once got out my book, the eighth volume  
of the Collections of the Massachusetts Histori-  
cal Society, printed in 1802, which contains  
some short notices of the Cape towns, and be-  
gan to read up to where I was, for in the car I  
could not read as fast as I traveled. To those  
who came from the side of Plymouth, it said,  
“After riding through a body of woods, twelve  
miles in extent, interspersed with but fow  
houses, the settlement of Sandwich appears,  
with a more agreeable effect, to the eye of the  
traveler.” Another writer speaks of this as a  
beautiful village. But I think that our villages  
will bear to be contrasted only with one another,  
not with Nature. I have no great respect for  
the writer’s taste, who talks easily about beau-  
tiful villages, embellished, perchance, with a  
“fulling-mill,” “a handsome academy,” or a  
meeting-house, and “a number of shops for the  
different mechanic arts;"” where the green and  
white houses of the gentry, drawn up in rows,  
front on a street of which it would be difficult  
to tell whether it is most like a desert or a long  
stable-yard. Such spots can be beautiful only  
to the weary traveler, or the returning native,  
—or, perchance, the repentant misanthropes  
not to him who, with unprejudiced senses, has

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STAGE-COACH VIEWS 23  
  
just come out of the woods, and approaches one  
of them, by a bare road, through a succession  
of straggling homesteads where he cannot tell  
which is the almshouse. However, as for  
Sandwich, I cannot speak particularly. Ours  
was but half a Sandwich at most, and that must  
have fallen on the buttered side some time. I  
only saw that it was a closely-built town for a  
‘small one, with glass-works to improve its sand,  
and narrow streets in which we turned round  
and round till we could not tell which way wo  
were going, and the rain came in, first on this  
side and then on that, and I saw that they in  
the houses were more comfortable than we in  
the coach. My book also said of this town,  
“The inhabitants, in general, are substantial  
livers,” —that is, I suppose, they do not live  
like philosophers; but, as the stage did not stop  
long enough for us to dine, we had no opportu-  
nity to test the truth of this statement. It may  
have referred, however, to the quantity “of oil  
they would yield.” It further said, “The in-  
habitants of Sandwich generally manifest a fond  
and steady adherence to the manners, employ-  
‘ments and modes of living which characterized  
their fathers,” which made me think that they  
were, after all, very much like-all the rest of  
the world; —and it added “that this was “a re-  
semblance, which, at this day, will constitute no

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24 CAPE CoD  
  
impeachment of either their virtue or tastes”  
which remark proves to me that the writer was  
cone with the rest of them. No people ever lived  
by cursing their fathers, however great a curse  
their fathers might have beon to them. But it  
must be confessed that ours was old authority,  
and probably they have changed all that now.  
Our route was along the Bay side, through  
Barnstable, Yarmouth, Dennis, and Brewster,  
to Orleans, with a range of low hills on our  
right, running down the Cape, ‘The weather  
was not favorable for wayside views, but we  
made the most of such glimpses of land and  
water as we could got through the rain. The  
country was, for the most part, bare, or with  
only a little scrubby wood left on the hills.  
‘We noticed in Yarmouth—and, if I do not  
mistake, in Dennis—large tracts where pitch-  
pines were planted four or five years before.  
‘They were in rows, as they appeared when we  
were abreast of them, and, excepting that there  
were extensive vacant spaces, seemed to be  
doitig remarkably well. This, we were told,  
‘was the only use to which such tracts could be  
profitably put. Every higher eminence had a  
pole set up on it, with an old storm-coat or sail  
tied to it, for a signal, that those on the south  
side of the Cape, for instance, might know when.  
the Boston packets had arrived on the north. It

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STAGE-COACH VIEWS 25  
  
appeared as if this use must absorb the greater  
part of the old clothes of the Cape, leaving but  
few rags for the peddlers. The windmills on  
tho hills, —lange weather-stained octagonal  
structures, —and tho salt-works scattered all  
along the shore, with their long rows of vats  
resting on piles driven into the marsh, their  
low, turtle-like roofs, and their slighter wind-  
mills, were novel and interesting objects to an  
inlander, The sand by the roadside was par-  
tially covered with bunches of a moss-like plant,  
Hudsonia tomentosa, which a woman in the  
stage told us was called “poverty grass,” -be-  
cause it grew where nothing else would.  
  
I was struck by the pleasant equality which  
reigned among the stage company, and their  
broad and invulnerable good humor. They  
were what is called free and easy, and met one  
another to advantage, as men who had, at  
length, learned how to live. ‘They appeared to  
know each other when they were strangers, they  
were so simple and downright. They were well  
met, in an unusual sense, that is, they met as  
well as they could meet, and did not seem to be  
troubled with any impediment. They were not  
afraid nor ashamed of one another, but were  
contented to make just such @ company as the  
ingredients allowed. It was evident that the  
same foolish respect was not here claimed, for

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26 CAPE CoD  
  
mere wealth and station, that is in many parts  
of New England; yet some of them were tho  
‘first people,” as they are called, of the various  
towns through which we passed. Retired sea-  
captains, in easy circumstances, who talked of  
farming as sea-captains are wont; an erect, re-  
spectable, and trustworthy-looking man, in his  
‘wrapper, some of the salt of the earth, who had  
formerly been the salt of the sea; or a more  
courtly gentleman, who, perchance, had been a  
representative to the General Court in his day;  
or a broad, red-faced, Cape Cod man, who had  
seen too many storms to be easily irritated; or  
a fisherman's wife, who had been waiting a  
week for a coaster to leave Boston, and had at  
length come by the cars.  
  
A strict regard for truth obliges us to say,  
that the few women whom we saw that day  
looked exceedingly pinched up. They had  
prominent chins and noses, having lost all their  
teeth, and a sharp W would represent their  
profile. They were not so well preserved as  
their husbands; or perchance they were well  
preserved as dried specimens. (Their hus-  
bands, however, were pickled.) But we respect,  
them not the less for all that; our own dental  
system is far from perfect.  
  
Still we kept on in the rain, or, if we stopped,  
it was commonly at a post-office, and we thought

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STAGE-COACH VIEWS 27  
  
that writing letters, and sorting them against  
‘our arrival, must be the principal employment  
of the inhabitants of the Cape this rainy day.  
‘The post-office appeared a singularly domestic  
institution here. Ever and anon the stage  
stopped before some low shop or dwelling, and  
a wheelwright or shoemaker appeared in his  
shirt-sleeves and leather apron, with spectacles  
newly donned, holding up Uncle Sam’s bag, as  
if it were a slice of home-made cake, for the  
travelers, while he retailed some piece of gossip  
to the driver, really as indifferent to the pres-  
‘ence of the former as if they were so much bag-  
gage. In one instance, we understood that a  
‘woman was the post-mistress, and they said that  
she made the best one on the road; but we sus-  
pected that the letters must be subjected toa  
very close serutiny there. While we were  
stopping, for this purpose, at Dennis, we ven-  
tured to put our heads out of the windows, to  
‘see where we were going, and saw rising before  
us, through the mist, singular barren hills, all  
stricken with poverty-grass, looming up as if  
they were in the horizon, though they were close  
to us, and we seemed to have got to the end of  
the land on that side, notwithstanding that the  
horses were still headed that way. Indeed,  
that part of Dennis which we saw was an exceed-  
ingly barren and desolate country, of a char-

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28 CAPE COD  
  
acter which I can find no name for; such a sur-  
face, perhaps, as the bottom of the sea mado  
dry land day before yesterday. It was covered  
with poverty-grass, and there was hardly a tree  
in sight, but here and there a little weather-  
stained, one-storied house, with a red roof, —  
for often the roof was painted, though the rest  
of the house was not,—standing bleak and  
cheerless, yet with a broad foundation to the  
land, where the comfort must have been all in-  
side. Yet we read in the Gazetteer, —for wo  
carried that too with us,—that, in 1887, one  
hundred and fifty masters of vessels, belonging  
to this town, sailed from the various ports of  
the Union. ‘There must be many more houses  
in the south part of the town, else we cannot  
imagine where they all lodge when they are at  
hhome, if ever they are there; but the truth is,  
their houses are floating ones, and their home is  
on the ocean. ‘There were almost no trees at  
all in this part of Dennis, nor could I learn that  
they talked of setting out any. It is true, there  
was a mecting-honse, set round with Lombardy  
poplars, in a hollow square, the rows fully as  
straight as the studs of a building, and the cor-  
ners as square; but, if I do not mistake, every  
one of them was dead. I could not help think~  
ing that they needed a revival here. Our book  
said that, in 1795, there was erected in Dennis,

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STAGE-COACH VIEWS 29  
  
“an elegant meeting-house, with a steeple.”  
Perbaps this was the one; though whether it  
had a steeple, or had died down so far from  
sympathy with the poplars, Ido not remember.  
Another meeting-house in this town was de-  
scribed as a ‘neat building ;” but of the mect-  
ing-house in Chatham, a neighboring town, for  
there was then but one, nothing is said, except  
that it “is in good repair,” — both which re-  
marks, I trust, may be understood as applying  
to the churches spiritual as well as material.  
However, “elegant meeting-houses,” from that  
Trinity one on Broadway, to this at Nobsous-  
set, in my estimation, belong to the same cato-  
gory with “beautiful villages.” I was never in  
seagon to see one. Handsome is that handsome  
does. What they did for shade here, in warm  
weather, we did not know, though we read that  
“fogs are more frequent in Chatham than in  
any other part of the country; and they serve  
‘in summer, instead of trees, to shelter the houses  
against the heat of the sun, To those who do-  
light, in extensive vision,” — is it to be inferred  
that the inhabitants of Chatham do not? —  
“they are unpleasant, but they are not found  
to be unhealthful.” Probably, also, the unob-  
structed sea-breeze answers the purpose of a fan,  
‘The historian of Chatham says further, that “in  
many families there is no difference between the

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80 CAPE coD  
  
breakfast and suppers cheese, cakes, and pies  
being as common at the one as at the other.”  
But that leaves us still uncertain whether they  
were really common at either.  
  
‘The road, which was quite hilly, here ran  
near the Bay-shore, having the Bay on one side,  
and “the rough hill of Scargo,” said to be the  
highest land on the Cape, on the other. Of the  
wide prospect of the Bay afforded by the sum-  
mit of this hill, our guide says, “The view has  
not much of the beautiful in it, but it commu-  
nicates a strong emotion of the sublime.” That  
is the kind of communication which we love to  
have made to us. We passed through the vil-  
lage of Suet, in Dennis, on Suet and Quivet  
Necks, of which it is said, “when compared with  
Nobseusset,” —we had a misty recollection of  
having passed through, or near to, the latter,  
—“it may be denominated a pleasant village;  
but, in comparison with the village of Sandwich,  
there is little or no beauty init.” However, we  
liked Dennis well, better than any town we had  
‘seen on the Cape, it was so novel, and, in that  
stormy day, so sublimely dreary.  
  
Captain John Sears, of Suet, was the first  
person in this country who obtained pure marine  
salt by solar evaporation alone; though it had  
Jong been made in a similar way on the coast of  
France, and elsewhere. ‘This was in the your

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STAGE-COACH VIEWS a1  
  
1176, at which time, on account of the war, salt  
was scarce and dear. The Historical Collec-  
tions contain an interesting account of his ex-  
periments, which we read when we first. saw the  
roofs of the salt-works. Barnstable County is  
the most favorable locality for these works on  
our northern coast, —there is so little fresh  
water here emptying into ocean. Quite recently  
there were about two millions of dollars invested  
in this business here. But now the Cape is un-  
able to compete with the importers of salt and  
the manufacturers of it at the West, and, ac-  
cordingly, her salt-works are fast going to de-  
cay. From making salt, they turn to fishing  
more than ever. The Gazetteer will uniformly  
tell you, under the head of each town, how many.  
go a-fishing, and the value of the fish and oil  
taken, how much salt is made and used, how  
many are engaged in the coasting trade, how  
many in manufacturing palm-leaf hats, leather,  
boots, shoes, and tinware, and then it has done,  
and leaves you to imagine the more truly do-  
mestic manufactures which are nearly the same  
all the world over.  
  
‘Late in the afternoon, we rode through Brews-  
ter, so named after Elder Brewster, for fear he  
would be forgotten else. Who has not heard  
of Elder Brewster? Who knows who he was?  
‘This appeared to be the modern-built town of

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82 CAPE cop  
  
the Cape, the favorite residence of retired sea-  
captains, Tt is said that “there are more mas-  
tera and mates of vessels which sail on foreign  
‘voyages belonging to this place than to any other  
town in the country.” ‘There were many of the  
modern American houses here, such as they turn  
out at Cambridgeport, standing on the sand;  
you. could almost swear that they had been  
floated down Charles River, and drifted across  
the bay. I call them American, because they  
are paid for by Americans, and “put up” by  
‘American carpenters; but they are little re-  
moved from lumber; only Eastern stuff dis-  
guised with white paint, the least interesting  
kind of drift-wood to me. Perhaps we have  
reason to be proud of our naval architecture, and  
need not go to the Greeks, or the Goths, or the  
Italians, for the models of our vessels. Sea-  
captains do not employ a Cambridgeport car-  
penter to build their floating houses, and for  
their houses on shore, if they must copy any, it  
would be more agreeable to the imagination to  
see one of their vessels turned bottom upward,  
in the Numidian fashion. We read that, “at  
certain seasons, the reflection of the sun upon  
the windows of the houses in Wellfleet and Truro  
(across the inner side of the elbow of the Cape)  
is discernible with the naked eye, at a distance  
of eighteon miles and upward, on the county

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STAGE-COACH VIEWS 33.  
  
road.” This we were pleased to imagine, as we  
had not seen the sun for twenty-four hours,  
  
‘Tho same author (the Rev. John Simpkins)  
said of the inhabitants, a good while ago: “No  
persons appear to have a greater relish for the  
social circle and domestic pleasures. They are  
not in the habit of frequenting taverns, unless  
‘on public occasions. I know not of a proper  
idler or tavern-haunter in the place.” ‘This is  
more than can be said of my townsmen.  
  
At length, we stopped for the night at Hig-  
gins’s tavern, in Orleans, feeling very much as  
if we were on a sand-bar in the ocean, and not  
knowing whether we should see land or water  
ahead when the mist cleared away. We here  
overtook two Italian boys, who had waded thus  
far down the Cape throygh the sand, with their  
organs on their backs, and were going on to  
Provincetown. What a hard lot, we thought,  
if the Provincetown people should shut their  
doors against them! Whose yard would they  
go to next? Yet we concluded that they had  
chosen wisely to come here, where other music  
than that of the surf must be rare. Thus the  
great civilizer sends ont his emissaries, sooner or  
later, to every sandy cape and light-house of the  
New World which the census-taker visite, and  
summons the savage there to surrender.

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OL  
THE PLAINS OF NAUSET  
  
‘Tae next morning, Thursday, October 11, it  
rained as hard as ever; but we were determined  
to proceed on foot, nevertheless. We first  
made some inquiries, with regard to the practi-  
ability of walking up the shore on the Atlantic  
side to Provincetown, whether we should meet  
with any creeks or marshes to trouble us. Hig-  
gins said that there was no obstruction, and that  
it was not much farther than by the road, but he  
thought that we should find it very “heavy”  
walking in the sand; it was bad enough in the  
road, a horse would sink in up to the fetlocks  
there. But there was one man at the tavern  
who had walked it, and he said that we could  
go very well, though it was sometimes inconven-  
ient and even dangerous walking under the  
bank, when there was a great tide, with an east-  
erly wind, which caused the sand to cave. For  
the first four or five miles we followed the road,  
which here turns to the north on the elbow, —  
the narrowest part of the Cape, — that we might  
lear an inlet from the ocean, a part of Nauset

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 85  
  
Harbor, in Orleans, on our right. We found  
the traveling good enough for walkers on the  
sides of the roads, though it was “heavy” for -  
horses in the middle. We walled with our um-  
brellas behind us since it blowed hard as well as  
rained, with driving mists, as the day before,  
and the wind helped us over the sand at a rapid  
rate. Everything indicated that we had reached  
‘strange shore. The road was a mere lane,  
winding over bare swells of bleak and barren-  
ooking land. ‘The houses were few and far be-  
tween, besides being small and rusty, though  
they appeared to be kept in good repair, and  
their door-yards, which were the unfenced Cape,  
were tidy; or, rather, they looked as if the  
ground around them was blown clean by the  
wind. Perhaps the scarcity of wood here, and  
the consequent absence of the wood-pile and  
other wooden traps, had something to do with  
this appearance. They seemed, like mariners  
ashore, to have sat right down to enjoy the firm-  
ness of the land, without studying their postures  
or habiliments. To them it was merely terra  
firma and cognita, not yet fertilis and jucunda.  
Every landseape which is dreary enough has a  
certain beauty to my eyes, and in this instance  
its permanent qualities were enhanced by the  
weather. Everything told of the sea, even  
when we did not seo its waste or hear its roar.

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86 CAPE COD  
  
For birds there were gulls, and for carts in the  
fields, boats turned bottom upward against the  
houses, aid sometimes the rib of a whale was  
woven into the fence by the roadside. The  
trees were, if possible, rarer than the houses,  
excepting apple-trees, of which there were a  
few small orchards in the hollows. ‘Theso were  
either narrow and high, with flat tops, having  
lost their side branches, like huge plum-bushes  
growing in exposed situations, or else dwarfed  
and branching immediately at the ground, like  
quince-bushes. They suggested that, under  
like cixcumstances, all trees would at last ac-  
quire like habits of growth. I afterward saw  
on the Cape many full-grown applo-trees not  
higher than a man’s head; one whole orchard,  
indeed, where all the fruit could have boen  
gathered by a man standing on the ground; but  
you could hardly creep beneath the trees.  
Some, which the owners told me were twenty  
years old, were only three and a half feet high,  
spreading at six inches from the ground five  
feet each way, and being withal surrounded  
with boxes of tar to catch the eanker-worms,  
they looked like plants in flower-pots, and as if  
they might be taken into the house in the winter.  
Tn another place, I saw some not much larger  
than currant-bushes; yet the owner told me that  
they had borne a barrel and a half of apples

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 87  
  
that fall. If they had been placed close to-  
gether, I could have cleared them all at .  
I measured some near the Highland Light in  
‘Truro, which had been taken from the shrubby  
‘woods thereabouts when young, and grafted.  
One, which had been set ten years, was on an  
average eighteen inches high, and spread nine  
fect, with aflat top. It had borne one bushel of  
apples two years before. Another, probably  
twenty years old from the seed, was five feet  
high, and spread eighteen feet, branching, as  
usual, at the ground, so that you could not creep  
under it. This bore a barrel of apples two  
years before. ‘The owner of these trees invari-  
ably used the personal pronoun in speaking of  
them; as, “I got him out of the woods, but he  
doesn't bear.” The largest that I saw in that  
neighborhood was nine fect high to the topmost  
leaf, and spread thirty-three feet, branching at  
the ground five ways.  
  
In one yard I observed a single, very healthy-  
looking tree, while all the rest were dead or dy-  
ing. ‘The occupant said that his father had  
‘manured all but that one with blacktish.  
  
This habit of growth should, no doubt, be  
encouraged, and they should not be trimmed  
up, as some traveling practitioners have ad-  
vised. In 1802 there was not a single fruit-tree  
in Chatham, the next town to Orleans, on the

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38 CAPE CoD  
  
south; and the old account of Orleans says:  
“Fruit-trees cannot be made to grow within a  
mile of the ocean. Even those which are placed  
at a greater distance are injured by the cast  
winds; and, after violent storms in the spring,  
‘a saltish taste is perceptible on their bark.”  
We noticed that they were often covered with a  
yellow lichen like rust, the Parmelia parietina.  
  
‘The most foreign and picturesque structures  
on the Cape, to an inlander, not excepting the  
salt-works, are the wind-mills, — gray-looking,  
octagonal towers, with long timbers slanting to  
the ground in the rear, and there resting on a  
cart-wheel, by which their fans are turned  
round to face the wind. These appeared also  
to serve in some measure for props against its  
force. A great circular rut was worn around  
the building by the wheel. ‘The neighbors who  
assemble to turn the mill to the wind are likely  
to know which way it blows, without a weather-  
cock. ‘They looked loose and slightly locomo-  
tive, like huge wounded birds, trailing a wing  
or a leg, and reminded one of pictures of the  
Netherlands. Being on elevated ground, and  
high in themselves, they serve as landmarks, —  
for there are no tall trees, or other objects com-  
monly, which can be seen at a distance in the  
horizon; though the outline of the land itself is  
so firm and distinct, that an insignificant cone,

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 89  
  
or even precipice of sand, is visible at a great  
distance from over the sea. Sailors making the  
land commonly steer either by the wind mills,  
or the meeting-houses. In the country, we are  
obliged to steer by the meeting-houses alone.  
Yet the meeting-house is a kind of wind mill,  
which runs one day in seven, turned either by  
the winds of doetrine or public opinion, or more  
rarely by the winds of Heaven, where another  
sort of grist is ground, of which, if it be not all  
bran or musty, if it be not plaster, we trust to  
make bread of life.  
  
‘There were, here and there, heaps of shells  
in the ficlds, where clams had been opened for  
bait; for Orleans is famous for its shell-fsh,  
especially clams, or, as our author says, “to  
speak nore properly, worms.” The shores are  
more fertile than the dry land. The inhabi-  
tants measure their crops, not only by bushels  
of corn, but by barrels of clams. A thousand  
barrels of clam-bait are counted as equal in  
value to six or eight thousand bushels of Indian  
corn, and once they were procured without  
more labor or expense, and the supply was  
thought to be inexhaustible. “For,” runs the  
history, “after a portion of the shore has been  
dug over, and almost all the clams taken up, at  
the end of two years, it is said, they are as  
plenty there as ever. It is even affirmed by

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40 CAPE COD  
  
many pertons, that it is as necessary to stir the  
clam ground frequently as it is to hoe a field of  
potatoes; because, if this labor is omitted, the  
clams will be crowded too closely together, and  
will be prevented from increasing in size.” But  
‘we were told that the small glam, Mya arenaria,  
‘was not so plenty here as formerly. Probably  
the clam-ground has been stirred too frequently,  
after all. Nevertheless, one man, who com-  
plained that they fed pigs with them and so  
made them scarce, told me that he dug and  
‘opened one hundred and twenty-six dollars’  
worth in one winter, in Truro.  
  
‘We crossed a brook, not more than fourteen  
rods long between Orleans and Eastham called  
Jeremiah’s Gutter. The Atlantic is said some-  
times to meet the Bay here, and isolate the  
northern part of the Cape. ‘The streams of the  
Cape are necessarily formed on a minute scale  
since there is no room for them to run, without  
tumbling immediately into the sea; and beside,  
we found it difficult to run ourselves in that  
sand, when there was no want of room. Hence,  
the Jeast channel where water runs, or may run,  
is important, and is dignified with a name.  
‘We read that there is no running water in  
Chatham, which is the next town. The barren  
aspect of the land would hardly be believed if  
described, Tt was such soil, or rather land, as.

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 41  
  
to judge from appearances, no farmer in the in-  
terior would think of cultivating, or even fene-  
ing. Generally, the ploughed fields of the Cape  
look white and yellow, like a mixture of salt  
and Indian meal. This is called soil. All an  
inlander’s notions of soil and fertility will be  
confounded by a visit to these parts, and he will  
not be able, for some time afterward, to distin  
guish soil from sand. The historian of Chatham  
says of a part of that town, which has been  
gained from the sea: “There is a doubtful ap-  
pearance of a soil beginning to be formed. It  
is styled doubtful, because it would not be ob-  
served by every eye, and perhaps not acknow-  
ledged by many.” We thought that this would  
not bea bad description of the greater part of  
the Cape. There is a “beach” on the west sido  
of Eastham, which we crossed the next summer,  
half a mile wide, and stretching across the town-  
ship, containing seventeen hundred acres on  
which there is not now a particle of vegetable  
mould, though it formerly produced wheat. All  
sands are here called “beaches,” whether they  
are waves of water or of air that dash against  
them, since they commonly have their origin on  
the shore. “The sand in some places,” says  
the historian of Eastham, “lodging against the  
beach-grass, has been raised into hills fifty feet  
high, where twenty-five’ years ago no hills ex

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42 CAPE COD  
  
isted. In others it has filled up small valleys,  
and swamps. Where a strong-rooted bush  
stood, the appearance is singular; a mass of  
earth and sand adheres to it, resembling a small  
tower. In several places, rocks, which were  
formerly covered with soil, aro disclosed, and  
being lashed by the sand, driven against them  
by the wind, look aa if they were recently dug  
from a quarry.”  
  
‘We were surprised to hear of the great crops  
of corn which are still raised in Eastham, not-  
withstanding the real and apparent barrenness.  
Our landlord in Orleans had told us that he  
raised three or four hundred bushels of corn  
annually, and also of the great number of pigs  
which he fattened. In Champlain’s “Voyages,”  
there is a plate representing the Indian corn-  
fields hereabouts, with their wigwams in the  
midst, as they appeared in 1605, and it was  
here that the Pilgrims, to quote their own  
words, “bought eight or ten hogsheads of corn  
and beans” of the Nauset Indians, in 1622, to  
‘keep themselved from starving. “In 1667 the  
  
   
  
1 They touched after thin at a place called Mattach  
0 they got more corn but their shallop being cast away  
{n.a storm, the Governor was obliged to return to Plymouth on  
oot, fifty miles through the woods, According to Moart’s Re-  
Intion, “he came safely home, though weary and surbated,”  
‘hat is, foot-sore. (Ital. sobattere, Lat sub ot solen battere, to  
[bruise the soles of the foat; v. Dic. Not‘ from acerbaus, em

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 48  
  
town [of Eastham] voted that every housekeeper  
should kill twelve blackbirds, or three crows,  
which did great damage to the corn, and this  
vote was repeated for many years.” In 1695  
an additional order was passed, namely, that  
“every unmarried man in the township shall kill  
six blackbirds, or three crows, while he remains  
single; as a penalty for not doing it, shall not  
be married until he obey this order.” Tho  
blackbirds, however, still molest the corn. I  
saw them at it the next summer, and there were  
many scarecrows, if not seare-blackbirds, in the  
fields, which I often mistook for men. From  
which I concluded, that either many men were  
not married, or many blackbirds were. Yet  
they put but three or four kernels in a hill, and  
lot fewer plants remain than we do. In the ac-  
count of Eastham, in the “Historical. Collec-  
tions,” printed in 1802, it is said, that “more  
corn is produced than the inhabitants consume,  
and above a thousand bushels are annually sent  
to market. The soil being free from stones, a  
plough passes through it speedily; and after the  
corn has come up, a small Cape horse, soniewhat  
Dittered of agysieved,”” ax one commentator on this passage  
supposes.) This word is of very rare occurrence, being applied  
only to governors and persons of like description, who are in  
‘hat prodicament; thoagh auch generally have considerable  
  
‘mileage allowed thom, and might aave their solos if they  
eared.

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“4 CAPE COD  
  
larger than a goat, will, with the assistance of  
‘two boys, easily hoe three or four acres in a  
day; several farmers are accustomed to produce  
five hundred bushels of grain annually, and not  
long since one raised eight hundred bushels on  
sixty acres.” Similar accounts are given to-  
day; indeed, the recent accounts are in some  
instances suspectable repetitions of the old, and  
T have no doubt that their statements are as  
often founded on the exception as the rule, and  
that by far the greater number of acres are as  
barren as they appear to be. It is sufficiently  
remarkable that any crops can be raised here,  
and it may be owing, as others have suggested,  
to the amount of moisture in the atmosphere,  
‘the warmth of the sand, and the rareness of  
frosts. A miller, who was sharpening his  
stones, told me that, forty years ago, he had  
been to a busking here, where five hundred  
bushels were husked in one evening, and the  
com was piled six feet high or more, in the  
midst, but now, fifteen or eighteen bushels to  
an acre were an average yield. I never saw  
fields of such puny and unpromising-looking  
corn, as in this town. Probably the inhabi-  
tants are contented with small crops from a  
great surface easily cultivated. It is not always  
the most fertile Iand that is the most profitable,  
aud this sand may repay cultivation, as well as

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 45  
  
the fertile bottoms of the West. It is said,  
moreover, that the vegetables raised in the sand,  
without manure, are remarkably sweet, the  
pumpkins especially, though when their seed is  
planted in the interior they soon degenerate. I  
can testify that the vegetables here, when they  
succeed at all, look remarkably green and  
healthy, though perhaps it is partly by contrast  
with the sand. Yet the inhabitants of the Cape  
towns, generally, do not raise their own meal  
or pork. Their gardens are commonly little  
patches, that have been redeemed from the  
‘edges of the marshes and swamps.  
  
‘All the morning we had heard the sea roar  
on the eastern shore, which was several miles  
distant; for it still felt the effects of the storm  
in which the St. John was wrecked, — though a  
school-boy, whom we overtook, hardly knew  
what we meant, his ears were so used to it. He  
would have more plainly heard the same sound  
in ashell. It was a very inspiriting sound to  
walk by, filling the whole air, that of the sea  
dashing against the land, heard several miles  
inland. Instead of having a dog to growl be-  
fore your door, to have an Atlantic Ocean to  
growi for a whole Cape! On the whole, we  
were glad of the storm, which would show u:  
the ocean in its angriest mood. Charles Darwin  
‘was assured that the roar of the surf on the

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46 CAPE COD  
  
coast of Chile, after a heavy gale, could be  
heard at night a distance of “21 sea miles  
across a hilly and wooded country.” We con-  
versed with the boy we have mentioned, who  
might have been eight years old, making him  
walk the while under the lee of our umbrella;  
for we thought it as important to kmow what  
was life on the Cape to a boy as to a man.  
‘We learned from him where the best grapes  
were to be found in that neighborhood. He  
was carrying his dinner in a pail; and, without  
any impertinent questions being put by us, it  
did at length appear of what it consisted. The  
homeliest facts are always the most acceptable to  
an inquiring mind. At length, before we got  
to Eastham meeting-house, we left the road and  
struck across the country for the eastern shore  
at Nauset Lights, —three lights close together,  
‘two or three miles distant from us. They were  
so many that they might be distinguished from  
others; but this seemed a shiftless and costly  
way of accomplishing that object. We found  
ourselves at once on an apparently boundless  
plain, without a tree or a fence, or, with one or  
two exceptions, a house in sight. Instead of  
fences, the earth was sometimes thrown up into  
a slight ridge. My companion compared it to  
the rolling prairies of Iinois. In the Storm of  
wind and rain which raged when we traversed.

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET at  
  
it, it no doubt appeared more vast and desolate  
than it really is. As there were no hills, but  
only here and there a dry hollow in the midst  
of the waste, and the distant horizon was con-  
cealed by mist, we did not know whether it was  
high or low. A solitary traveler, whom we saw  
perambulating in the distance, loomed like a  
giant. He appeared to walk slouchingly, as if  
held up from above by straps under his shoul-  
ders, as much as supported by the plain below.  
‘Men and boys would have appeared alike at a  
little distance, there being no object by which  
to measure them. Indeed, to an inlander, the  
Cape landscape is a constant mirage. This  
kind of country extended a mile or two each  
way. ‘These were the “Plains of Nauset,” once  
covered with wood, where in winter the winds  
howl and the snow blows right merrily in the  
face of the traveler. I was glad to have got out,  
of the towns, where I am wont to feel unspeak-  
ably mean and disgraced, —to have left behind  
me for a season the bar-rooms of Massachusetts,  
where the full-grown are not. weaned from sav-  
age and filthy habits, —still sucking a cigar.  
My spirits rose in proportion to the outward  
dveariness. The towns need to be ventilated.  
The gods would be pleased to see some pure  
flames from their altars. They are not to be  
  
appeased with cigar-smoke,

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48 CAPE COD.  
  
‘As we thus skirted the back-side of the  
towns, for we did not enter any village, till wo  
got to Provincetown, wo read their histories un-  
der our umbrellas, rarely meeting anybody.  
‘The old accounts are the richest in topography,  
which was what we wanted most; and, indeed,  
in most things else, for I find that the readable  
parts of the modern accounts of these towns con-  
sist, in a great measure, of quotations, acknow-  
ledged and unacknowledged, from the older  
ones, without any additional information of  
‘equal interest; — town histories, which at length  
run into a history of the Church of that place,  
that being the only story they have to tell, and  
conelude by quoting the Latin epitaphs of the  
old pastors, having been written in the good  
old days of Latin and of Greek. They will go  
back to the ordination of every minister, and  
tell you faithfully who made the introductory  
prayer, and who delivered the sermon; who  
made the ordaining prayer, and who gave the  
charge; who extended the right hand of fellow-  
ship, and who pronounced the benediction; also  
how many ecclesiastical councils convened from  
time to time to inquire into the orthodoxy of  
some minister, and the names of all who com-  
posed them. As it will take us an hour to get  
over this plain, and there is no variety in the  
prospect, peculiar as it is, I will read a little in  
the history of Eastham the while.

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 49  
  
‘When the committee from Plymouth had pur-  
chased the territory of Eastham of the Indians,  
“it was demanded, who laid claim to Billings-  
gate?” which was understood to be all that part  
of the Cape north of what they had purchased.  
“The answer was, there was not any who owned  
it. ‘Then,’ said the committee, ‘that land is  
ours.” ‘The Indians answered, that it was.”  
‘This was a remarkable assertion and admission.  
The Pilgrims appear to have regarded them-  
selves as Not Any’s representatives. Perhaps  
this was the first instance of that quiet way of  
“speaking for” a place not yet occupied, or at  
least not improved as much as it may be, which  
their descendants have praeticed, and are still  
practicing so extensively. Not Any seems to  
have been the sole proprietor of all America be-  
fore the Yankees. But history says, that when  
tho Pilgrims had held the lands of Billingsgate  
many years, at length, “appeared an Indian,  
who styled himself Lieutenant Anthony,” who  
laid claim to them, and of him they bought  
them. Who knows but a Lieutenant Anthony  
may be knocking at the door of the White  
House some day? At any rate, I know that if  
you hold a thing unjustly, there will surely be  
the devil to pay at last.  
  
Thomas Prince, who was several times the  
governor of the Plymouth colony, was the

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50 CAPE COD  
  
leader of the settlement of Eastham. ‘There  
was recently standing, on what was once his  
farm, in this town, a pear-tree which is said to  
have been brought from England, and planted  
there by him, about two hundred years ago. It  
was blown down a few months before we were  
there. A late account says that it was recently  
in a vigorous state; the fruit small, but exeel-  
lent; and it yielded on an average fifteen bush-  
els. Some appropriate lines have been ad-  
ressed to it, by a Mr. Heman Doane, from  
which I will quote, partly because they are the  
only specimen of Cape Cod verse which I re-  
member to have seen, and partly because they  
are not bad.  
“Two hundred years have, onthe wings of Tine,  
Passed with this joys and won, sins tho, Old Tree!  
Pot forth thy Bint leavin thin foreign lime,  
"Tranaplante from the aol beyood the ee.”  
[These stars represent the more clerical lines,  
and also those which have deceased]  
“That exiled band long sino have passed aay,  
‘And wil, old Troe! thou sande the place  
‘Where Prise’ band Ad plant theo fa bis day, —  
‘An undesigned memorial of his race  
‘Add tone; of thine oar honored fathers, when  
‘Tho came from Plymouth o'er and settled hares  
Doane, Higgins, Snow, and other worthy men,  
  
‘Wheve names their sons remember to revere,

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 61  
  
“Old Time has thinned thy boughs, Old Pilgrim Tree!  
‘And bowed theo with the weight of many years;  
‘Yot, ‘mid the froats of age, thy bloom we 90  
‘And yearly still thy mellow fruit appears”  
  
   
  
There are some other lines which I might  
quote, if they were not tied to unworthy com-  
panions, by the rhyme. When one ox will lie  
down, the yoke bears hard on him that stands  
up.  
  
One of the first settlers of Eastham was Dea-  
con John Doane, who died in 1707, aged one  
hundred and ten. Tradition says that he was  
rocked in a cradle several of his last years.  
‘That, certainly, was not an Achillean life, His  
mother must have let him slip when she dipped  
him into the liquor which was to make him in-  
vulnerable, and he went in, heels and all. Some  
of the stone-bounds to his farm, which he set up,  
are standing to-day, with his initials cut in  
them.  
  
‘The ecclesiastical history of this town inter-  
ested us somewhat. It appears that “they very  
early built a small meeting-house, twenty feet  
square, with a thatched roof through which they  
might fire their muskets,” —of course, at the  
Devil. “In 1662, the town agreed that a part  
of every whale cast on shore be appropriated for  
the support of the ministry.” No doubt there  
seemed to be some propriety in thus leaving the

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52 CAPE COD  
  
support of the ministers to Providence, whose  
servants they are, and who alone rules the  
storms; for, when few whales were cast up, they  
might suspect that their worship was not accept-  
able. The ministers must have sat upon the  
cliffs in every storm, and watched the shore  
with anxiety. And, for my part, if I were a  
minister, I would rather trust to the bowels of  
the billows, on the back-side’ of Cape Cod, to  
cast up a whale for me, than to the generosity  
of many a country parish that I know. You  
cannot say of a country minister's salary, com-  
monly, that it is “very like a whale.” Never-  
theless, the minister who depended ‘on whales  
cast up must have had a trying time of it. I  
would rather have gone to the Falkland Isles with  
a harpoon, and done with it. ‘Think of a whale  
having the breath of life beaten out of him by  
a storm, and dragging in over the bars and  
guzzles, for the support of the ministry! What  
a consolation it must have been to him! I have  
heard of a minister, who had been a fisherman,  
being settled in Bridgewater for as long a time  
as he could tell a cod from a haddock. Gener-  
‘ous as it seems, this condition would empty most  
country pulpits forthwith, for it is long since  
the fishers of men were fishermen. Also, a duty  
was put on mackerel here to support a free-  
school ;.in other words, the mackerel-school was

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 53  
  
taxed in order that the children’s school might  
be free, ‘In 1665 the Court passed a law to  
inflict corporal punishment on all persons, who  
resided in the towns of this government, who  
denied the Scriptures.” Think of a man being  
whipped on a spring morning, till he was con-  
strained to confess that the Scriptures were true!  
“Tt was also voted by the town, that all persons  
who should stand out of the meeting-house dur-  
ing the time of divine service should be set in  
the stocks.” It behooved such a town to see  
that sitting in the meeting-house was nothing  
akin to sitting in the stocks, lest the penalty of  
obedience to the law might be greater than that  
of disobedience. ‘This was the Eastham famous  
of late years for its camp-meetings, held in a  
grove near by, to which thousands flock from all  
parts of the Bay. We conjectured that the  
reason for the perhaps unusual, if not unhealth-  
ful development of the religious sentiment here,  
vwas the fact that a large portion of the popula-  
tion are women whose husbands and sons are  
either abroad on the sea, or else drowned, and  
there is nobody but they and the ministers left  
behind. The old account says that “hysteric  
fits are very common in Orleans, Eastham, and  
the towns below, particularly on Sunday, in the  
time of divine servic ‘When one woman is  
affected, five or six others generally sympathize

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54 CAPE CoD  
  
with hers and the congregation is thrown into  
the utmost confusion. Several old men suppose,  
unphilosophically and uncharitably, perhaps,  
that the will is partly concerned, and that ridi-  
cule and threats would have a tendency to pre-  
vent the evil.” How this is now we did not  
learn. We saw one singularly masculine woman,  
however, in a house on this very plain, who did  
not look as if she was ever troubled with hyster-  
ics, or sympathized with those that were; or,  
perchance, life itself was to her a hysterie fit, —  
a Nauset woman, of a hardness and coarseness  
such as no man ever possesses or suggests. It  
was enough-to see the vertebra and sinews of  
her neck, and her set jaws of iron, which would  
have bitten a board-nail in two in their ordinary  
action, — braced against the world, talking like  
a man-of-war’s-man in petticoats, or as if shout  
ing to you through a breaker; who looked as if  
‘it made her head ache to live; hard enough for  
any enormity. I looked upon her as one who  
hhad committed infanticide; who never had a  
brother, unless it wore some wee thing that died  
in infancy, —for what need of him?—and  
whose father must have died before she was  
born. ‘This woman told us that the camp-meet-  
ings were not held the previous summer for fear  
of introducing the cholera, and that they would  
have been held earlier this summer, but the rye

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 55  
  
was so backward that straw would not have been  
ready for them; for they lie in straw. ‘There  
are sometimes one hundred and fifty ministers,  
()) and five thousand hearers, assembled. The  
ground, which is called Millennium Grove, is  
owned by a company in Boston, and is the most  
suitable, or rather unsuitable, for this purpose  
of any that I saw on the Cape. It is fenced,  
and the frames of the tents are, at all times, to  
be seen interspersed among the oaks. They  
have an oven and a pump, and keep all their  
kitchen utensils and tent coverings and furni-  
ture in a permanent building on the spot.  
‘They select a time for their meetings, when the  
moon is full, A man is appointed to clear out,  
the pump a week beforehand, while the ministers  
are clearing their throats; but, probably, the  
latter do not always deliver as pure a stream as  
the former. I saw the heaps of clam-shells left,  
under the tables, where they had feasted in pre-  
vious summers, and supposed, of course, that  
that was the work of the unconverted, or the  
backsliders and scoffers. It looked as if  
‘camp-meeting must be a singular combination  
of a prayer-meeting and a picnic.  
  
‘The first minister settled here was the Rev.  
Samuel Treat, in 1672, a gentleman who is said  
to be “entitled to a distinguished rank among  
the evangelists of New England.” He con-

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56 CAPE CoD  
  
verted many Indians, as well as white men, in  
his day, and translated the Confession of Faith  
into the Nauset language. These were the In-  
dians concerning whom their first teacher,  
Richard Bourne, wrote to Gookin, in 1674, that  
he had been to see one who was sick, “and there  
came from him very savory and heavenly expres-  
sions,” but, with regard to the mass of them,  
he says, “the truth is, that many of them are  
very loose in their course, to my heart-breaking  
sorrow.” Mr. Treat is described as a Calvinist  
of the strictest kind, not one of those who, by  
giving up or explaining ayay, become like a  
porcupine disarmed of its quills, but a consistent  
Calvinist, who can dart his quills to a distance  
and courageously defend himself. There exists,  
a volume of his sermons in manuscript “which,”  
says a commentator, “appear to have been de-  
signed for publication.” I quote the following  
sentences at second hand, from a Discourse on  
Luke xvi. 23, addressed to sinners: —  
  
“Thou must erelong go to the bottomless pit.  
‘Hell hath enlarged herself, and is ready to re-  
ceive thee. There is room enough for thy en-  
tertainment. . . .  
  
“Consider, thou art going toa place prepared  
by God on purpose to exalt his justice in, —a  
place made for no other employment but tor-  
ments. Hell is God’s house of correction; and,

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 51  
  
remember, God doth all things like himself.  
When God would show his justice and what is  
the weight of his wrath, he makes a hell where  
it shall, indeed, appear to purpose. . . . Woe  
to thy soul when thou shalt be set up as a butt  
for the arrows of the Almighty. . . .  
  
“Consider, God himself shall be the principal  
agent in thy misery, —his breath is the bellows  
which blows up the flame of hell forever; —and  
if he punish theo, if he meet thee in his fury,  
he will not meet thee as a man; he will give  
thee an omnipotent blow.”  
  
“Some think sinning ends with this life; but  
it isa mistake. ‘The creature is held under an  
everlasting law; the damned increase in sin in  
hell. Possibly, the mention of this may please  
thee. But, remember, there shall be no pleas-  
ant sins there; no eating, drinking, singing,  
dancing, wanton dalliance, and drinking stolen  
waters; but damned sins, bitter, hellish sins;  
sins exasperated by torments, cursing God,  
spite, rage, and blasphemy. —The guilt of all  
thy sins shall be laid upon thy soul, and be  
made so many heaps of fuel. . . .  
  
“Sinner, I beseech thee, realize the truth of  
these things. Do not go about to dream that  
this is derogatory to God’s mercy, and nothing  
but a vain fable to scare children out of their  
wits withal. God can be merciful, though he

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58 CAPE COD  
  
make thee miserable. He shall have monu-  
ments enongh of that precious attribute, shining  
Tike stars in the place of glory, and singing  
ternal hallelujahs to the praise of Him that re-  
deemed them, though, to exalt the power of his  
justice, he damn sinners heaps upon heaps.”  
“But,” continues the same writer, “with the  
advantage of proclaiming the doctrine of terror,  
which is naturally productive of a sublime and  
impressive style of eloquence (‘Triumphat ven-  
toso glorie curru orator, qui pectus angit, ir-  
ritat, et implet terroribus.’ Vid. Burnet, De  
Stat. Mort., p. 809), he could not attain the  
character of a popular preacher. His voice  
was so loud, that it could be heard at a great  
distance from the meeting-house, even amidst  
the shricks of hysterical women, and the winds  
that howled over the plains of Nauset; but  
there was no more music in it than in the dis-  
cordant sounds with which it was mingled.”  
“The effect of his preaching,” it is  
“was that his hearers were several times, in the  
course of his ministry, awakened and alarmed ;”  
and on one occasion a comparatively innocent  
young man was frightened nearly out of his  
wits, and Mr. Treat had to exert himself to  
make hell seem somewhat cooler to him; yet  
we are assured that ‘Treat’s “manners were  
cheerful, his conversation pleasant, and some-

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 59  
  
times facetious, but always decent. He was  
fond of a stroke of humor, and a practical joke,  
and manifested his relish for them by long and  
loud fits of laughter.”  
  
‘This was the man of whom a well-known  
anecdote is told, which doubtless many of my  
readers. have heard, but which, nevertheless, I  
will venture to quote: —  
  
“ After his marriage with the daughter of Mr.  
‘Willard (pastor of the South Church in Boston),  
he was sometimes invited by that gentleman to  
preach in his pulpit. Mr. Willard possessed a  
graceful delivery, © masculine and harmonious  
voice; and, though he did not gain much repu-  
tation by his ‘Body of Divinity,’ which is fre-  
quently sneered at, particularly by those who  
have not read it, yet in his sermons are strength  
of thought and energy of language. The natural  
consequence was that he was generally admired.  
Mr. Treat having preached one of his best dis-  
courses to the congregation of his father-i  
Jaw, in his usual unhappy manner, excited uni-  
versal disgust; and several nice judges waited  
on Mr. Willard, and begged that Mr. Treat,  
who was a worthy, pious man, it was true, but  
a wretched preacher, might never be invited into  
his pulpit again. To this request Mr. Willard  
mace no replys but he desired his son-in-law to  
end him the discourse; which, being left with

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60 CAPE CoD  
  
him, he delivered it without alteration to his  
people a few weeks after. ... They flew to  
Mr. Willard and requested a copy for the press,  
See the difference,’ they cried, ‘between your-  
self and your son-in-law; you have preached a  
sermon on the same text as Mr. Treat’s, but  
whilet his was contemptible, yours is excellent.’”  
‘As is observed in a note, “Mr. Willard, after  
producing the sermon in the handwriting of Mr.  
‘Treat, might have addressed these sage critics  
in the words of Phesdrus, —  
  
‘Bin ie declarat, quale sti judicon!  
  
‘Mr. Treat died of a stroke of the palsy, just  
after the memorable storm known as the Great  
Snow, which left the ground around his house  
entirely bare, but heaped up the snow in the  
road to an uncommon height. Through this an  
arched way was dug, by which the Indians bore  
his body to the grave.  
  
‘The reader will imagine us, all the while,  
steadily traversing that extensive plain in a di-  
rection a little north of east toward Nauset  
Beach, and reading under our umbrellas as we  
sailed, while it blowed hard with mingled mist  
and rain, as if we were approaching\*a fit anni-  
versary of Mr. Treat’s funeral. We fancied  
that it was such a moor as that on which some-  
  
2 Lib. v. Fab. 5,

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET oL  
  
body perished in the snow, as is related in the  
“Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life.”  
  
‘The next minister settled here was the “Rev.  
Samuel Osborn, who was born in Ireland, and  
educated at the University of Dublin.” He is  
said to have been “a man of wisdom and vir~  
tue,” and taught his people the use of peat, and  
tho art of drying and preparing it, which as  
they had scarcely any other fuel, was a great  
blessing to them. He also introduced improve-  
‘ments in agriculture. But, notwithstanding his  
‘many services, as he embraced the religion of  
Arminius, some of his flock became dissatisfied.  
‘At length, an ecclesiastical council, consisting  
of ten ministers, with their churches, sat upon \*  
him, and they, naturally enough, spoiled his  
usefulness. The council convened at the desire  
of two divine philosophers, Joseph Doane and  
Nathaniel Freeman.  
  
In their report they say, “It appears to the  
council that the Rev. Mr. Osborn hath, in his  
preaching to this people, said, that what Christ  
did and suffered doth nothing abate or diminish  
our obligation to obey the law of God, and that  
Christ's suffering and obedience were for him-  
self; both parts of which, we think, contain  
dangerous error.”  
  
“Also: ‘It hath been said, and doth appear  
to this council, that the Rev. Mr. Osborn, both

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62 CAPE COD  
  
in public and in private, asserted that there are  
no promises in the Bible but what are condi-  
tional, which we think, also, to be an error, and  
do say that there are promises which are abso-  
lute and without any condition, —such as the  
promise of a new heart, and that he will write  
his law in our hearts.’”  
  
“Also, they say, ‘it hath been alleged, and  
doth appear to us, that Mr. Osborn hath de-  
clared, that obedience is a considerable cause of  
a person’s justification, which, we think, con-  
tains very dangerous error.’”  
  
‘And many the like distinctions they made,  
such as some of my readers, probably, are more  
familiar with than I am. So, far in the East,  
among the Yezidis, or Worshipers of the Devil,  
so-called, the Chaldeans, and others, sccord-  
ing to the testimony of travelers, you may still  
hear these remarkable disputations on doctri-  
nal points going on. Osborn was, accordingly,  
dismissed, and he removed to Boston, where he  
kept school for many years. But he was fully  
justified, methinks, by his works in the peat  
meadow; one proof of which is, that he lived  
to be between ninety and one hundred years old.  
  
‘The next minister was the Rev. Benjamin  
‘Webb, of whom, though a neighboring clergy-  
man pronounced him “the best man and the  
‘best minister whom he ever knew,” yet the his-  
torian says, that, —

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THE PLAINS OF NAUSET 68  
  
“As he spent his days in the uniform dis-  
charge of his duty (jt reminds one of a country  
muster) and there were no shades to give relief  
to his character, not much can be said of him.  
ity the Devil did not plant a few shade-trees  
along his avenues.) His heart was as pure as  
the new-fallen snow which completely covers  
every dark spot in afield; his mind was as so-  
rene as the sky in a mild evening in June, when  
the moon shines without a cloud. Name any  
virtue, and that virtue he practiced; name any  
vice, and that vice he shunned. But if peculiar  
qualities marked his character, they were his  
humility, his gentleness, and his love of God.  
‘The people had long been taught by a son of  
thunder (Mr. Treat); in him they were in-  
structed by a son of consolation, who sweetly  
allured them to virtue by soft persuasion, and  
by exhibiting the merey of the Supreme Being;  
for his thoughts were so much in heaven, that  
they seldom descended to the dismal regions be-  
low; and though of the same religious senti-  
ments as Mr. Treat, yet his attention was turned  
to those glad tidings of great joy which » Say-  
four came to publish.”  
  
‘We were interested to hear that such # man  
had trodden the plains of Nauset.  
  
‘Turning over further in our book, our eyes  
fell on the name of the Rev. Jonathan Bascom  
of Orleans: “Senex emuncts naris, doctus, et

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64 CAPE CoD  
  
auctor elegantium verborum, facetus, et dulcis  
festique sermonis.” And, again, on that of the  
Rey. Nathan Stone, of Dennis: “Vir humilis,  
mitis, blandus, advenarum hospes; (there was  
need of him there;) suis commodis in terri non  
studens, reconditis thesauris in celo.” An easy  
virtue that, there, for methinks no inhabitant of  
Dennis could be very studious about his earthly  
commodity, but must regard the bulk of his  
treasures as in heaven. But probably the most  
just and pertinent character of all is that which  
appears to be given to the Rev. Ephraim  
Briggs, of Chatham, in the langnage of the later  
Romans, “Seip, sepoese, aepoemese, wecheloum,””  
—which not being interpreted, we know not  
what it means, though we have no doubt it oc-  
curs somewhere in the Scriptures, probably in  
the Apostle Eliot’s Epistle to the Nipmucks,  
  
T xt no one think that I do not love the old  
ministers. ‘They were, probably, the best men  
of their generation, and they deserve that their  
biographies should fill the pages of the town  
histories. If I could but hear the “glad tid-  
ings” of which they tell, and which, perchance,  
they heard, I might write in a worthier strain \*  
than this.  
  
‘There was no better way to make the reader  
realize how wide and peculiar that plain was, and  
how long it took to traverse it, than by inserting  
these extracts in the midst of my narrative.

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Iv  
‘THE BEACH  
  
Ar length we reached the seemingly retreat-  
ing boundary of the plain, and entered what had  
appeared at a distance an upland marsh, but  
proved to be dry sand covered with beach-grass,  
the bearberry, bayberry, shrub-oaks, and beach-  
plum, slightly ascending as we approached the  
shores then, crossing over a belt of sand on  
which nothing grew, though the roar of the sea  
wounded scarcely louder than before, and we  
were prepared to go half a mile farther, we sud-  
denly stood on the edge of a bluff overlooking  
the Atlantic. Far below us was the beach,  
from half a dozen to a dozen rods in width, with  
long line of breakers rushing to the wtrand.  
‘The sea was exceodingly dark and stormy, the  
sky completely overcast, the clouds still drop-  
ping rai, and the wind seemed to blow not so  
much as the exciting cause, as from sympathy  
with the already agitated ocean. The waves  
broke on the bars at some distance from the  
shore, and curving green or yellow as if over 80  
many unseen dams, ten or twelve feot high, like

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66 CAPE COD  
  
thousand waterfalls, rolled in foam to the  
sand. ‘There was nothing but that savage ocean  
between us and Europe.  
  
Having got down the bank, and as close to  
the water as we could, where the sand was the  
Aardest, leaving the Nausct Lights bebind us,  
wo began to walk leisurely up the beach, in  
& northwest direction, toward Provincetown,  
which was about twenty-five miles distant, still  
sailing under our umbrellas with a strong aft  
wind, admiring in silence, as we walked, the  
‘great force of the ocean stream, —  
  
srorausio nya obivos "rears,  
  
The white breakers were rushing to the shore;  
the foam ran up the sand, and then ran back, 28  
far as we could see (and we imagined how much  
farther along the Atlantic coast, before and be-  
hind us), as regularly, to compare great things  
with small, as the master of a choir beats time  
with his white wand; and ever and anon a  
higher wave caused us hastily to deviate from  
our path, and we looked back on our tracks  
filled with water and foam. The breakers  
looked like droves of a thousand wild horses of  
Neptune, rushing to the shore, with their white  
manes streaming far behind; and when, at  
length, the sun shone for a moment, their manes  
were rainbow tinted. Also, the long kelp-

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THE BEACH eT  
  
weed was tossed up from time to time, like the  
tails of sea-cows sporting in the brine.  
  
‘There was not a sail in sight, and we s:  
none that day, —for they had all sought har-  
bors in the late storm, and had not been able to  
got out again; and the only human beings whom  
we saw on the beach for several days were one  
or two wreckers looking for drift-wood, and  
fragments of wrecked vessels. After an easterly  
storm in the spring, this beach is sometimes  
strewn with eastern wood from one end to the  
other, which, as it belongs to him who saves-it,  
and the Cape is nearly destitute of wood, is a  
godsend to the inhabitants. We soon met one  
of these wreckers,—a regular Cape Cod man,  
with whom we parleyed, with a bleached and  
weather-beaten face, within whose wrinkles I  
distinguished no particular feature. It was like  
an old sail endowed with life, —a hanging-cliff  
of weather-beaten flesh, —like one of the clay  
Doulders which occurred in that sand-bank.  
He had on a hat which had seen salt water, and  
a coat of many pieces and colors, though it was  
mainly the color of the beach, as if it had been  
sanded. His variegated back—for his coat  
had many patches, even between the shoulders  
—was a rich study to us when we had passed  
him and looked round. It might have been dis-  
honorable for him to have so many sears behind,

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68 CAPE CoD  
  
it is true, if he had not had many more and  
‘more serious ones in front. He looked as if he  
sometimes saw a doughnut, but never descended  
to comfort; too grave to laugh, too tough to  
cry; as indifferent as a clam, —like a sea-clam  
with hat on and legs, that was out walking the  
strand. He may have been one of the Pilgrims,  
—Peregrine White, at least, —who has kept  
on the back side of the Cape, and let the cen-  
turies go by. He was looking for wrecks, old  
logs, water-logged and covered with barnacles,  
or bits of boards and joists, even chips which he  
drew out of the reach of the tide, and stacked  
upto dry. When the log was too lange to carry  
far, he cut it up where the last wave had left it,  
or rolling it a few feet, appropriated it by stick-  
ing two sticks into the ground crosswise above  
‘it. Some rotten trunk, which in Maine cum-  
bers the ground, and is, perchance, thrown into  
the water on purpose, is here thus carefully  
picked up, split and dried, and husbanded. Be-  
fore winter the wrecker painfully carries these  
things up the bank on his shoulders by a long  
diagonal slanting path made with a hoe in the  
sand, if there is no hollow at hand. You may  
see his hooked pike-staff always lying on the  
bank, ready for use. He is the true monarch  
of the beach, whose “right there is none to dis-  
pute,” and he is as much identified with it as a  
beach-bird.

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THE BEACH 69  
  
Crantz, in his account of Greenland, quotés  
Dalagen’s relation of the ways and usages of  
the Greenlanders, and says, “Whoever finds  
arift-wood, or the spoils of a shipwreck on the  
strand, enjoys it as his own, though he does not  
live there. But he must haul it ashore and lay  
a stone upon it, as a token that some one has  
taken possession of it, and this stone is the deed  
of security, for no other Greenlander will offer  
to meddle with it afterwards.” Such is the in-  
stinctive law of nations. We have also this ac-  
count of drift-wood in Crantz: “As he (the  
Founder of Nature) has denied this frigid rocky  
region the growth of trees, he has bid the  
streams of the Ocean to convey to its shores a  
great deal of wood, which accordingly comes  
floating thither, part without: ice, but the most  
part along with it, and lodges itself between the  
islands. Were it not for this, we Europeans  
should have no wood to burn there, and the poor  
Greenlanders (who, it is true, do not use wood,  
but train, for burning) would, however, have no  
wood to roof their houses, to erect their tents,  
as also to build their boats, and to shaft their  
arrows, (yet there grew some small but erooked  
alders, ete.,) by which they must procure their  
maintenance, clothing and train for warmth,  
light, and cooking. Among this wood are great  
trees torn up by the roots, which, by driving up

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10 CAPE COD  
  
and down for many years and rubbing on the  
ice, are quite bare of branches and bark, and  
corroded with great wood-worms. A small part  
of this drift-wood are willows, alder and birch  
trees, which come out of the bays in the south  
(&e., of Greenland); also large trunks of aspen-  
trees, which must come from a greater distance;  
but the greatest part is pine and fir. We find  
also good deal of a sort of wood finely veined,  
with few branches; this I fancy is larch-wood,  
which likes to dooorate the sides of lofty, stony  
mountains. There is also a solid, reddish wood,  
of a more agreeable fragrance than the common  
fir, with visible eross-veins; which I take to be  
the same species as the beautiful silver-firs, or  
sirbel, that have the smell of cedar, and grow on  
the high Grison hills, and the Switzers wain-  
seot their rooms with them.” ‘The wrecker di  
rected us to a slight depression, called Snow's  
Hollow, by which we ascended the bank, — for  
elsewhere, if not difficult, it was inconvenient to  
climb it on account of the sliding sand which  
filled our shoes.  
  
‘This sand-bank — the backbone of the Cape  
—rose directly from the beach to the height of  
‘a hundred feet or more above the ocean. Tt  
was with singular emotions that we first stood  
upon it and discovered what a place we had  
chosen to walk on. On our right, beneath us,

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THE BEACH 1  
  
was the beach of smooth and gently-sloping  
sand, a dozen rods in width; next, the endless  
series of white breakers; further still, the light  
green water over the bar, which runs the whole  
length of the fore-arm of the Cape, and beyond  
this stretched the unwearied and illimitable  
ocean, On our left, extending back from the  
very edge of the bank, was a perfect desert of  
shining sand, from thirty to eighty rods in  
width, skirted in the distance by small sand-  
hills fifteen or twenty feet high; between which,  
however, in some places, the sand penetrated as  
much farther. Next commenced the region of  
vegetation, —a succession of small hills and  
valleys covered with shrubbery, now glowing  
with the brightest imaginable autumnal tints;  
and beyond this were seen, here and there, the  
waters of the bay. Here, in Wellfleet, this  
pure sand plateau, known to sailors as the Table  
Lands of Eastham, on account of its appearance,  
‘as seen from the ocean, and because it once  
made a part of that town, —full fifty rods in  
width, and in many places much more, and  
sometimes full one hundred and fifty feet above  
the ocean, —stretched away northward from  
the southern boundary of the town, without a  
particle of vegetation, —as level almost as a  
table, —for two and a half or three miles, or  
as far as the eye could reach; slightly rising

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2 CAPE COD  
  
towards the ocean, then stooping to the beach,  
by as steep a slope as sand could lie on, and as  
regular as a military engineer could desire. It  
was like the escarped rampart of a stupendous  
fortress, whose glacis was the beach, and whose  
champaign the ocean. From its surface we  
overlooked the greater part of the Cape. In  
short, we were traversing a desert, with the view  
of an autumnal landscape of extraordinary bril-  
lianey, a sort of Promised Land, on the one  
hand, and the ocean on the other. Yet, though.  
the prospect was so extensive, and the country  
for the most part destitute of trees, a house was  
arely visible, —we never saw one from the  
beach, —and the solitude was that of the ocean  
and the desert combined. A thousand men could  
not have seriously interrupted it, but would have  
been lost in the vastness of the scenery as their  
footsteps in the sand.  
  
‘The whole coast is so free from rocks, that we  
saw but one or two for more than twenty miles.  
‘The sand was soft like the beach, and trying to  
the eyes, when the sun shone. A few piles of  
drift-wood, which some wreckers had painfully  
‘brought up the bank and stacked up there to  
dry, being the only objects in the desert, looked  
indefinitely large and distant, even like wigwams,  
though, when we stood near them, they proved  
to be insignificant little “jags”” of wood.

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THE BEACH 13  
  
For sixteen miles, commencing at the Nauset  
Lights, the bank held its height, though farther  
north it was not so level as here, but interrupted  
by slight hollows, and the patches of beach-  
grass and bayberry frequently crept into the  
sand to its edge. There are some pages entitled  
“A Description of the Eastern Coast of the  
County of Barnstable,” printed in 1802, point-  
ing out the spots on which the Trustees of the  
‘Hymane Society have erected huts called Char-  
ity or Humane Houses, “and other places where  
shipwrecked seamen may look for shelter.”  
‘Two thousand copies of this were dispersed,  
that every vessel which frequented this coast  
might be provided with one. I have read this  
Shipwrecked Seaman's Manual with a melan-  
choly kind of interest, —for the sound of the  
surf, or, you might say, the moaning of the sea,  
is heard all through it, as if its author were the  
sole survivor of a shipwreck himself. Of this  
part of the coast he says: “This highland ap-  
roaches the ocean with steep and lofty banks,  
which it is extremely difficult to climb, especially  
ina storm. In violent tempests, during very  
high tides, the sea breaks against the foot of  
them, rendering it then unsafe to walk on the  
strand which lies between them and the ocean.  
Should the seaman succeed in his attempt to  
ascend them, he must forbear to penetrate into

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4 CAPE CoD  
  
the country, as houses are generally so remote  
that they would escape his research during the  
night; he must pass on to the valleys by which  
the banks are intersected. These valleys, which  
the inhabitants call Hollows, run at right angles  
with the shore, and in the middle or lowest part  
of them a road leads from the dwelling-houses  
to the sea.” By the word road must not always  
‘be understood a visible cart-track.  
  
‘There were these two roads for us, —an upper  
and a lower one, —the bank and the beach:  
both stretching twenty-eight miles northwest,  
from Nauset Harbor to Race Point, without a  
single opening into the beach, and with hardly  
a serious interruption of the desert. If you  
were to ford the narrow and shallow inlet at  
Nauset Harbor, where there is not more than  
eight fect of water on the bar at full sea, you  
might walk ten or twelve miles farther, which  
would make a beach forty miles long, —and the  
bank and beach, on the east side of Nantucket,  
are but a continuation of these. I was com-  
paratively satisfied. There I had got the Cape  
under me, as much as if I were riding it bare-  
backed. Tt was not as on the map, or seen from  
the stage-coach; but there I found it all out of  
doors, huge and real, Cape Cod! as it cannot  
be represented on a map, color it as you wil  
the thing itself, than which there is nothing

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THE BEACH 1%  
  
more like it, no truer picture or account; which  
you cannot go farther and see. I cannot remem:  
‘ber what I thought before that it was. They  
commonly celebrate those beaches only which  
have a hotel on them, not those which have a  
humane house alone. But I wished to see that  
seashore where man’s works are wrecks; to put  
up at the true Atlantic House, where the ocean  
is land-lord as well as sea-lord, and comes ashore  
without a wharf for the landing; where the  
crumbling land is the only invalid, or at best is  
but dry land, and that is all you can say of it.  
  
‘We walked on quite at our leisure, now on tho  
beach, now on the bank, —sitting from time to  
time on some damp log, maple or yellow bireh,  
which had long followed the seas, but had now  
at last settled on land; or under the lee of a  
sand-hill, on the bank, that we might gaze stead-  
ily on the ocean. The bank was so steep, that,  
where there was no danger of its caving, we sat  
on its edge as on a bench. It was difficult for  
us landsmen to look out over the ocean without  
imagining land in the horizon; yet the clouds  
appeared to hang low over it, and rest on the  
water as they never do on the land, perhaps on  
account of the great distance to which we saw.  
‘Tho sand was not without sdvantage, for,  
though it was “heavy” walking in it, it was soft,  
to the feet; and, notwithstanding that it had

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6 CAPE COD  
  
been raining nearly two days, when it held up  
for half an hour, the sides of the sand-hills,  
which were porous and sliding, afforded a dry  
seat. All the aspects of this desert are beau-  
tiful, whether you behold it in fair weather or  
foal, or when the sun is just breaking out after  
a storm, and shining on its moist surface in the  
distance, it is so white, and pure, and level,  
and each slight inequality and track is so dis-  
tinctly revealed; and when your eyes slide off  
this, they fall on the ocean. In summer the  
mackerel gulls—which here have their nests  
among the neighboring sand-hills— pursue the  
traveler anxiously, now and then diving close to  
his head with a squeak, and he may see them,  
like swallows, chase some crow which has been  
feeding on the beach, almost across the Cape.  
  
‘Though for some time I have not spoken of  
the roaring of the breakers, and the ceaseless  
flux and reflux of the waves, yet they did not  
for a moment cease to dash and roar, with such  
‘a tumult that, if you had been there, you could  
scarcely have heard my voice the while; and  
they are dashing and roaring this very moment,  
though it may be with less din and violence, for  
there the sea never rests. We were wholly ab-  
sorbed by this spectacle and tumult, and like  
Chryses, though in a different mood from him,  
we walked silent along the shore of the resound-  
ing sea.

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THE BEACH 7  
  
Bi 8 dxéew wap Gira roAuproleBowo Saddoons?  
  
I put in a little Greek now and then, partly  
because it sounds so much like the ocean, —  
though I doubt if Homer’s Mediterranean Sea  
ever sounded s0 loud as this.  
  
‘The attention of those who frequent tho  
‘camp-meetings at Eastham is said to be divided  
between the preaching of tho Methodists and  
the preaching of the billows on the back side of  
the Cape, for they all stream over here in the  
course of their stay. I trust that in this caso  
the londest voice carries it. With what effeot  
may we suppose the ocean to say, “My hearers!”  
to the multitude on the bank! On that side  
some John N. Maffit; on this, the Reverend  
Poluphloisboios Thalassa,  
  
‘There was but little weed cast up here, and  
that kelp chiefly, there being scarcely @ rock  
for rock-weed to adhere to. Who has not had  
a vision from some vessel’s deck, when he had  
still his land legs on, of this great brown apron,  
drifting half upright, and quite submerged  
through the green water, clasping a stone or a  
deep-sea mussel in its unearthly fingers? I  
have seen it carrying a stone half as large as my  
  
2 We have no word in English to expreas the sound of many  
‘waves dashing at once, whether gently or violently weAupaole-  
{Boor to the ext, and in the ocean's gontle moods, an ardpiuor  
‘pédanua to the oye

Page-8536

8 CAPE COD  
  
head. We sometimes watched @ mass of this  
cablo-like weed, as it was tossed up on the crest  
of a breaker, waiting with interest to see it  
come in, as if there was some treasure buoyed.  
up by it; but we were always surprised and dis-  
appointed at the insignificance of the mass  
which had attracted us. As we looked out over  
tho water, the smallest objects floating on it ap-  
peared indefinitely large, we were so impressed  
by the vastness of the ocean, and each one bore  
80 large a proportion to the whole ocean, which  
we saw. We were so often disappointed in the  
size of such things as came ashore, the ridiculous  
bits of wood or weed, with which the ocean la-  
bored, that we began to doubt whether the At-  
lantic itself would bear a still closer inspection,  
and would not turn out to be but a small pond,  
if it should come ashore to us. This kelp, oar.  
weed, tangle, devil’s apron, sole-leather, or ri  
bon-weed, —as various species are called, —  
appeared to us a singularly marine and fabulous  
product, a fit invention for Neptuno to adorn  
car with, or a freak of Proteus. All that is  
told of the sea has a fabulous sound to an in-  
habitant of the land, and all its products have a  
cortain fabulous quality, as if they belonged to  
another planet, from seaweed to a sailor’s yarn,  
ora fish story. In this element the animal and  
vegetable kingdoms meot and are strangely min-

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THE BEACH 19  
  
gled. One species of kelp, according to Bory  
St. Vincent, has a stem fifteen hundred feet ~  
long, and hence is the longest vegetable known,  
and a brig’s crew spent two days to no purpose  
collecting the trunks of another kind cast ashore  
on tho Falkland Islands, mistaking it for drift-  
wood.! This species looked almost edible; at  
least, I thought that if I were starving, I would  
try it. One sailor told me that the cows ate it.  
It out like cheese; for I took the earliest oppor-  
tunity to sit down and deliberately whittle up a  
fathom or two of it, that I might become more  
intimately acquainted with it, see how it cut,  
and if it were hollow all the way through. ‘The  
lade looked like a broad belt, whose edges had  
been quilled, or as if stretched by hammering,  
and it was also twisted spirally. ‘The extremity  
was generally worn and ragged from the lashing  
of the waves. A piece of the stem which I car-  
ied home shrunk to one quarter of ite size a  
week afterward, and was completely covered  
with crystals of salt like frost. ‘The reader will  
exeuse my greenness, —though it is not sea-  
greenness, like his, perchance, —for I live by a  
river shore, where this weed does not wash up.  
‘When we consider in what meadows it grew,  
and how it was raked, and in what kind of hay  
weather got in or out, we may well be curious  
  
4 Soo Harvey on Alga.

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80 CAPE CoD  
  
about it. One who is weather-wise has given  
~ the following account of the matter: —  
  
“When descends on the Atlantio  
‘The gigantic  
‘Storm-wind of the equinos,  
LLandward in hin wrath he seourges  
  
   
  
“From Bermuda's roofs, from edges  
Of sunken ledges,  
Tn some far-off bright Azoro  
From Bahama and the dashing,  
Silver-fashing  
‘Surges of San Salvador:  
  
“Prom tho tumbling surf that burioe  
‘The Orknayan Skerries,  
Answering the hoarse Hobrides;  
‘And from wrecks of ships and drifting  
Spars, uplifting  
  
(On the desolate rainy seas;  
  
“ yor difting, diting, drifting  
On the sifting  
Carron of the restless main”  
But he was not thinking of this shore, when he  
added, —  
“Tl in sheltered coven and reachou  
OF sandy beaches,  
AIL have found repose again.”  
These weeds were the symbols of those gro-  
tesque and fabulous thoughts which have not  
yet got into the sheltered coves of literature.

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THE BEACH 81  
  
“Bor drifting, drifting, drifting  
‘On the shifting  
Current of th rortlan heart”  
And not yet “in Book recorded  
‘Dhoy, like hoarded  
“Household words, no more depart.”  
  
‘The beach was also strewn with beautiful sea-  
jellies, which the wreckers called Sun-squall,  
one of the lowest forms of animal life, some  
white, some wine-colored, and a foot in diameter.  
I at first thought that they were a tender part  
of some marine monster, which the storm or  
some other foe had mangled. What right has  
the sea to bear in its bosom such tender things  
as sea-jellies and mosses, whon it has such a  
boisterous shore, that the stoutest fabrics are  
wrecked against it? Strange that it should un-  
dertake to dandle such delicate children in its  
arm. I did not at first recognize these for the  
same which I had formerly seen in myriads in  
Boston Harbor, rising, with a waving motion,  
to the surface, as if to meet the sun, and dis-  
coloring the waters far and wide, so that I  
seemed to be sailing through a mere sun-fish  
soup. They say that when you endeavor to take  
one up, it will spill out the other side of your  
hand like quicksilver. Before the land rose out  
of the ocean, and became dry land, chaos  
reigned; and between high and low water mark,  
where she is partially disrobed and rising, a sort

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82 CAPE COD  
  
of chaos reigns still, which only anomalous  
creatures can inhabit. Mackerel-gulls were all  
the while flying over our heads and amid the  
breakers, sometimes two white ones pursuing a  
lack one; quite at home in the storm, though  
they are as delicate organizations as sea-jellies  
and mosses; and we saw that they were adapted  
to their circumstances rather by their spirits  
than their bodies. Theirs must be an essen-  
tially wilder, that is less human, nature, than  
that of larks and robins. ‘Their note was like  
the sound of some vibrating metal, and harmon-  
‘zed well with the scenery and the roar of the  
surf, as if one had rudely touched the strings of  
the lyre, which ever lies on the shore; a ragged  
shred of ocean music tossed aloft on the spray.  
But if I were required to name a sound, the re-  
membrance of which most perfectly revives the  
impression which the beach has made, it would  
be the dreary peep of the piping plover (Cha-  
radriua melodus) which haunts there. Their  
voices, too, are heard as a fugacious part in the  
dixge which is ever played along the shore for  
those mariners who have been lost in the deep  
sineo first it was created. “But through all this  
dreariness we seemed to have @ pure and un-  
qualified strain of eternal melody, for always  
the same strain which is adirge to one household  
is a morning song of rejoicing to another.

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THE BEACH 83  
  
A remarkable method of catching gulls, de-  
rived from the Indians, was practiced in Well-  
fleet in 1794. “The Gull House,” it is said,  
“is built with erotches, fixed in the ground on  
the beach,” poles being stretched across for the  
top, and the sides made close with stakes and sea-  
weed. “The poles on the top [are] covered with  
Jean whale, The man, being placed within, is  
not discovered by the fowls, and, while they are  
contending for and eating the flesh, he draws  
them in, one by one, between the poles, until he  
has collested forty or fifty.” Hence, perchance,  
a man is said to be gulled, when he is taken in.  
‘We read that one “sort of gulls is called by the  
Dutch mallemucke, i. e., the foolish fly, because  
they fall upon a whale as eagerly as a fly, and,  
indeed, all gulls are foolishly bold and easy to  
be shot. ‘The Norwegians call this bird havhest,  
sea-horso (and the English translator says, it is  
probably what we call boobies). If they have  
eaten too much, they throw it up, and eat it  
again till they are tired. It is this habit in the  
gulls of parting with their property [disgorging  
the contents of their stomachs to the skuas},  
which has given rise to the terms gull, guller,  
and gulling, among men.” We also read that  
they used to kill small birds which roosted on  
the beach at night, by making a fire with hog’s  
lard in a frying-pan. The Indians probably

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84 CAPE CoD  
  
uused pine torches; the birds flocked to the  
ight, and were knocked down with a stick.  
We noticed holes dug near the edge of the bank,  
where gunners conceal themselves to shoot the  
Jarge gulls which coast up and down a-fishing,  
for these are considered good to eat.  
  
‘We found some large clams, of the species  
Mactra solidissima, which the storm had torn  
up from the bottom, and cast ashore. I selected  
one of the largest, about six inches in length,  
and carried it along, thinking to try an experi-  
ment on it. We soon after met a wrecker,  
with a grapple and a rope, who said that he was  
looking for tow cloth, which had made part of  
the cargo of the ship Franklin, which was  
wrecked here in the spring, at which time nine  
or ten lives were lost., The reader may remem-  
ber this wreck, from the circumstance that a  
letter was found in the captain’s valise, which  
washed ashore, directing him to wreck the vessel  
before he got to America, and from the trial  
which took place in consequence. ‘The wrecker  
said that tow cloth was still cast up in such  
storms as this. He also told us that the clam  
which I had was the sea-clam, or hen, and was  
good to eat. We took our nooning under a  
sana-hill, covered with beach-grass, in a dreary  
little hollow, on the top of the bank, while it  
alternately rained and shined, There, having

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THE BEACH 85  
  
reduced some damp drift-wood, which I had  
picked up on the shore, to shavings with my  
mie, I kindled a fire with a match and some  
paper, and cooked my clam on the embers for  
my dinner; for breakfast was commonly the  
only meal which I took in a house on this excur-  
sion. When the clam was done, one valve held  
the meat, and the other the liquor, ‘Though it,  
was very tough, I found it sweet and savory, and.  
ato the whole with a relish. Indeed, with the  
addition of a cracker or two, it would have been  
a bountiful dinner. I noticed that the shells  
were such as I had seen in the sugar-kit at  
home. Tied toa stick, they formerly made the  
Indian’s hoe hereabouts.  
  
At length, by mid-afternoon, after we had  
had two or three rainbows over the sea, the  
showers ceased, and the heavens gradually  
cleared up, though the wind still blowed as hard  
  
. and the breakers ran as high as before. Keep-  
ing on, we soon after came to a Charity-house,  
which we looked into to see how the shipwrecked  
mariner might fare. Far away in some desolate  
hollow by the sea-side, just within the bank,  
stands a lonely building on piles driven into the  
sand, with a slight nail put through the staple,  
which a freezing man can bend, with some  
straw, perchance, on the floor on which he may  
lie, or which ho may burn in the fire-place to

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86 CAPE COD  
  
keep him alive, Perhaps this hut has never  
been required to shelter a shipwrecked man,  
and the benevolent person who promised to in-  
spect it annually, to see that» the straw and  
matches are here, and that the boards will keep  
off the wind, has grown remiss and thinks that  
storms and shipwrecks are over; and this very  
night a perishing crew may pry open its door  
with their numbed fingers and leave half their  
number dead here by morning. When I  
thought what must be the condition of the fami-  
lies which alone would ever occupy or had oc-  
cupied them, what must have been the tragedy  
of the winter evenings spent by human beings  
around their hearths, these houses, though they  
were meant for human dwellings, did not look  
cheerful to me. ‘They appeared but a stage to  
the grave. The gulls flew around and screamed  
over them; the roar of the ocean in storms, and  
the lapse of its waves in calms, alone resounds  
through them, all dark and empty within, year  
in, year out, except, perchance, on one memor-  
able night. Houses of entertainment for ship-  
wrecked men! What kind of sailor's homes  
were they?  
  
“Each hut,” says the author of the “Descrip-  
tion of tho Eastern Coast of the County of  
Barnstable,” “stands on piles, is eight feot long,  
eight feet wide, and seven feet high; a sliding

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THE BEACH at  
  
door is on the south, a sliding shutter on the  
west, and a pole, rising fifteen feet above the  
top of the building, on the east. Within it is  
supplied either with straw or hay, and is further  
accommodated with a bench.” They have va-  
ried little from this model now. There are  
similar huts at the Isle of Sable and Anticosti,  
on the north, and how far south along the coast  
I know not. It is pathetic to read the minute  
and faithful directions which he gives to seamen  
who may be wrecked on this coast, to guide  
them to the nearest Charity-house, or other  
shelter, for, as is said of Eastham, though there  
are a few houses within a mile of the shore, yet  
storm, which rages here with oxces-  
sive fury, it would be almost impossible to dis-  
cover them either by night or by day.” You  
hear their imaginary guide thus marshalling,  
cheering, directing the dripping, shivering,  
freezing troop along: “ At the entrance of tl  
valley the sand has gathered, so that at present  
a little climbing is necessary. Passing over  
several fences and taking heed not to enter the  
‘wood on the right hand, at the distance of three  
quarters of a mile a house is to be found. ‘This  
hhouso stands on the south side of the road, and  
not far from it on the south is Pamet) River,  
which runs from east to west through a body of  
salt marsh.” ‘To him cast ashore in Eastham,

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88 CAPE CoD  
  
he says, “The meeting-house is without a steeple,  
but it may be distinguished from the dwelling-  
houses near it by its situation, which is between  
‘two small groves of locusts, one on the south and  
one on the north, — that on the south being  
three times as long as the other. About a mile  
and a quarter from the hut, west by north, ap-  
pear the top and arms of a windmill.” And so  
on for many pages.  
  
‘We did not learn whether these houses had  
been the means of saving any lives, though this  
writer says, of one erected at the head of Stont’s  
Creck, in Truro, that “it was built in an im-  
proper manner, having a chimney in it; and  
‘was placed on a spot where no beach-grass grew.  
‘The strong winds blew the sand from its foun-  
dation, and the weight of the chimney brought  
it to the ground; so that in January of the pres-  
ent year [1802] it was entirely demolished.  
‘This event took place about six weeks before  
the Brutus was cast away. If it had remained,  
it is probable that the whole of the unfortunate  
‘crew of that ship would have been saved, as  
they gained the shore a few rods only from the  
spot where the hut had stood.”  
  
‘This “Charity-house,” as the wrecker called  
it, this “Humane house,” as some call it, that  
is, the one to which we first came, had neither  
window nor sliding shutter, nor elapboards, nor

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THE BEACH 89  
  
paint. As we have said, there was a rusty nail  
put through the staple. However, as we wished  
to get an idea of a Humane house, and we  
hoped that we should never have a better oppor-  
tunity, we put our eyes, by turns, to a knot-  
hole in the door, and, after long looking, with-  
‘out seeing, into the dark, —not knowing how  
many shipwrecked men’s bones we might see at  
last, looking with the eye of faith, knowing  
that, though to him that knocketh it may not  
always be opened, yet to him that looketh long  
enough through a kmot-hole the inside shall be  
visible, —for we had had some practice at look-  
ing inward, — by steadily keeping our other ball.  
covered from the light meanwhile, putting the  
outward world behind us, ocean and land, and  
‘the beach, — till the pupil became enlarged and  
collected the rays of light that were wandering  
in that dark (for the pupil shall be enlarged by  
looking; there never was so dark a night but a  
faithful and patient eye, however small, might  
at last prevail over it),—after all this, I say,  
things began to take shape to our vision, —if  
‘we may use this expression where there was no-  
thing but emptiness,—and we obtained the  
long-wished-for insight. ‘Though we thought at  
first that it was a hopeless case, after several  
minutes? steady exercise of the divine faculty,  
our prospects began decidedly to brighten, and

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90 CAPE CoD  
  
wo were ready to exclaim with the blind bard of  
“Paradise Lost and Regained,” —  
“Hii, oly Light! offpring of Heaven fmt bor,  
Or of the Eternal co-ternal beam  
May [express thee unblamed ?”  
  
‘A little longer, and a chimney rushed red on  
‘our sight. In short, when our vision had grown,  
familiar with the darkness, we discovered that  
there were some stones and some loose wads of  
‘wool on the floor, and an empty fire-place at the  
further end; but it was not supplied with  
matches, or straw, or hay, that we could see,  
nor “accommodated with a bench.” Indeed, it  
was the wreck of all cosmical beauty there  
within.  
  
‘Turning our backs on the outward world, we  
thus looked through the knot-hole into the Hu-  
mane house, into the very bowels of mercy; and  
for bread we found a stone. It was literally a  
great ery (of sea-mews outside), and a little  
wool. However, we were glad to sit outside,  
under the lee of the Humane house, to escape  
the piercing wind; and there we thought how  
cold is charity! how inhumane humanity! ‘This,  
then, is what charity hides! Virtues antique  
and far away, with ever a rusty nail over the  
latch; and very difficult to keep in repair,  
withal, it is 60 uncertain whether any will ever  
gain the beach near you. So we shivered round

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THE BEACH OL  
  
bout, not being able-to got into it, ever and  
anon looking through the knot-hole into that  
night without a star, until we concluded that it  
was not a humane house at all, but a seaside  
box, now shut up, belonging to some of the  
family of Night or Chaos, where they spent their  
summers by the sea, for the sake of the sea-  
breeze, and that it was not proper for us to be  
prying into their concerns.  
  
“My companion had declared before this that I  
had not a particle of sentiment, in rather abso-  
lute terms, to my astonishment; but I suspect  
he meant that my logs did not ache just then,  
though I am not wholly a stranger to that senti.  
ment. But I did not intend this for a senti.  
‘mental journey.

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Vv  
  
‘THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN  
  
   
  
Havixe walked about eight miles since we  
struck the beach, and passed the boundary be-  
tween Wellfleet and Truro, a stone post: in the  
sand, —for even this sand comes under the ju-  
risdiction of one town or another, —we turned  
inland over barren hills and valleys, whither the  
sea, for some reason, did not follow us, and,  
tracing up a Hollow, discovered two or three  
sober-looking houses within half a mile, uncom-  
monly near the eastern coast. Their garrets  
were apparently so full of chambers, that their  
roofs could hardly lie down straight, and we did  
not doubt that there was room for us there.  
Houses near the sea are generally low and broad.  
‘These were a story and a half high; but if you  
merely counted the windows in their gable ends,  
you would think that there were many stories  
more, or, at any rate, that the half-story was the  
only one thought worthy of being illustrated.  
‘The great number of windows in the ends of the  
houses, and their irregularity in size and posi-  
tion, here and elsewhere on the Cape, struck us

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 93  
  
agreeably, —as if each of the various occupants,  
who had their cunabula behind had punched a  
hole where his necessities required it, and ac-  
cording to his size and stature, without regard  
to outside effect. There were windows for the  
grown folks, and windows for the children, —  
three or four apiece; as a certain man had a  
large hole cut in his barn-door for the cat, and  
another smaller one for the kitten. Sometimes  
they were so low under the eaves that I thought  
they must have perforated the plate beam for an-  
other apartment, and J noticed some which were  
triangular, to fit that part more exactly. The  
ends of the houses had thus as many muzzles as  
a revolver, and, if the inhabitants have the same  
habit of staring out the windows that some of  
oar neighbors have, a traveler must stand a  
small chance with them.  
  
Generally, the old-fashioned and unpainted  
hhouses on the Cape looked more comfortable, as  
well as picturesque, than the modern and more  
pretending ones, which were less in harmony  
with the scenery, and less firmly planted.  
  
‘These houses were on the shores of a chain of  
ponds, seven in number, the source of a small  
stream called Herring River, which empti  
into the Bay. ‘There are many Herring Rivers  
on the Cape; they will, perhaps, be more numer-  
ous than herrings soon. We knccked at the

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94 CAPE COD  
  
door of the first house, but its inhabitants were  
all gone away. In the mean while, we saw the  
occupants of the next one looking ont the win-  
dow at us, and before we reached it an old  
‘woman came out and fastened the door of her  
bulkhead, and went in again. Nevertheless,  
we did not hesitate to knock at her door, when a  
grizzly -looking man appeared, whom we took  
to be sixty or seventy years old. He asked us,  
at first, suspiciously, where we were from, and  
what our business was; to which we returned  
plain answers,  
  
“How far is Concord from Boston?” he in-  
quired. 8  
  
“Twenty miles by railroad.”  
  
“Twenty miles by railroad,” he repeated.  
  
“Did n't you ever hear of Concord of Revo-  
Jutionary fame?”  
  
“Did n't I ever hear of Concord? Why, I  
heard guns fire at the battle of Bunker Hill.  
[Whey hear the sound of heavy cannon across the  
Bay.] I am almost ninety; I am eighty-cight  
year old. I was fourteen year old at the time  
‘of Concord Fight,—and where were you  
then?”  
  
‘We were obliged to confess that we were not  
in the fight.  
  
“Well, walk in, we "ll leave it to the women,”  
said he.

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 95  
  
So we walked in, surprised, and sat down, an  
old woman taking our hats and bundles, and the  
old man continued, drawing up to the large,  
old-fashioned fire-place, —  
  
“Tam a poor, good-for-nothing crittur, as  
Jeaiah says; Iam all broken down this year. I  
am under petticoat government here.”  
  
“The family consisted of the old man, his wife,  
and his daughter, who appeared nearly as old as  
hor mother, a fool, her son (a brutish-looking,  
middle-aged man, with a prominent lower face,  
who was standing by the hearth when we en-  
tered, but immediately went out), and a little  
boy of ten.  
  
‘While my companion talked with the women,  
T talked with tho old man. They said that he  
was old and foolish, but he was evidently too  
knowing for them.  
  
“These women,” said he to me, “are both of  
them poor good-for-nothing eritturs. ‘This one  
is my wife. I married her sixty-four years ago.  
She is eighty-four years old, and as deaf as an  
adder, and the other is not much better.””  
  
He thought well of the Bible, or at least he  
spoke well, and did not think ill, of it, for that  
would not have been prudent for a man of his  
age. He said that he had read it attentively for  
many years, and he had much of it at his  
tongue’s end. He seemed deeply impressed

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96 CAPE COD  
  
with a sense of his own nothingness, and would  
repeatedly exclaim, —  
  
“Tam a nothing. What I gather from my  
Bible is just this; that man is a poor good-for-  
nothing crittur, and everything is just as God  
sees fit and disposes.”  
  
“May I ask your name?” T said.  
  
“Yes,” he answered, “I am not ashamed to  
tell my name. My name is——. My great-  
grandfather came over from England and settled  
here.”  
  
‘He was an old Wellfleet oysterman, who had  
acquired a competency in that business, and had  
sons still engaged in it.  
  
Nearly all the oyster shops and stands in  
‘Massachusetts, I am told, are supplied and kept  
by natives of Wellfleet, and a part of this town  
is still called Billingsgate from the oysters hav-  
ing been formerly planted there; but the native  
oysters are said to have died in 1770. Various  
causes are assigned for this, such as a ground  
frost, the carcasses of black-fish, kept to rot in  
the harbor, and the like, but the most common  
account of the matter is,—and I find that a  
similar superstition with regard to the disap-  
pearance of fishes exists almost everywhere, —  
that when Wellfleet began to quarrel with the  
neighboring towns about the right to gather  
them, yellow specks appeared in them, and

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 97  
  
Providence caused them to disappear. A few  
years ago sixty thousand bushels were annually  
brought from the South and planted in the har-  
bor of Wellfleet till they attained “the proper  
relish of Billingsgate;” but now they are im-  
ported commonly full-grown, and laid down  
near their markets, at Boston and elsewhere,  
where the water, being a mixture of salt and  
frosh, suits them better. ‘The'business was said  
to be still good and improving.  
  
‘The old man said that the oysters were liable  
to freeze in the winter, if planted too high; but  
if it were not “so cold as to strain their eyes”  
they were not injured. The inhabitants of New  
Brunswick have noticed that “ice will not form  
over an oyster-bed, unless the cold is very in-  
tense indeed, and when the bays are frozen over  
the oyster-beds are easily discovered by the  
water above them remaining unfrozen, or as the  
French residents say, degle.” Our host said  
that they kept them in cellars all winter.  
  
“Without anything to eat or drink?” I  
asked.  
  
“Without anything to eat or drink,” he an-  
swered.  
  
“Can the oysters move?”  
  
“Just as much as my shoe.”  
  
But when I caught him saying that they  
“bedded themselves down in the sand, flat side  
  
   
   
  
   
   
  
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2 cowumsus BRANCH,  
742 TENTH AVENUE.  
oe es  
Yip Sm <  
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LON DES

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98 CAPE CoD  
  
up, round side down,” I told him that my shoe  
could not do that, without the aid of my foot in  
it; at which he said that they merely settled  
down as they grew; if put down in a square  
they would be found so; but the clam could  
move quite fast. I have sinco been told by  
oystermen of Long Island, where the oyster is  
still indigenous and abundant, that they aro  
found in large masses attached to the parent in  
their midst, and are so taken up with their  
tongs; in which case, they say, the age of the  
young proves that there could have been no mo-  
tion for five or six years at least. And Buck-  
Jand in his Curiosities of Natural History (page  
50) says: “An oyster, who has once taken up  
his position and fixed himself when quite young,  
ean never make a change. Oysters, neverthe-  
Jess, that have not fixed themselves, but remain  
Tose at the bottom of the sea, have the power  
of locomotion; they open their shells to their  
fullest extent, and then suddenly contracting  
them, the expulsion of the water forwards gives  
a motion backwards. A fisherman at Guernsey  
told me that he had frequently seen oysters mov-  
ing in this way.”  
  
Some still entertain the question “whether  
the oyster was indigenous in Massachusetts  
Bay,” and whether Wellfleet harbor was a  
“natural habitat” of this fish; but, to say no-

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 99  
  
thing of the testimony of old oystermen, which,  
I think, is quite conclusive, though the native  
oyster may now be extinct there, I saw that  
their shells, opened by the Indians, were strewn,  
all over the Cape. Indeed, the Cape was at  
first thickly settled by Indians on account of  
the abundance of these and other fish. We saw  
‘many traces of their occupancy after this, in  
‘Truro, near Great Hollow, and at High-Head,  
near East Harbor River, — oysters, clams,  
cockles, and other shells, mingled with ashes  
and the bones of deer and other quadrupeds. I  
picked up half a dozen arrow-heads, and in an  
hour or two could have filled my pockets with  
them, The Indians lived about the edges of the  
‘swamps, then probably in somo instances ponds,  
for shelter and water. Moreover, Champlain,  
in the edition of his “ Voyages” printed in 1613,  
says that in the year 1606 he and Poitrincourt  
explored a harbor (Barnstable Harbor?) in the  
southerly part of what is now called Massachu-  
setts Bay, in latitude 42°, about five leagues  
south, one point west of Cap Blane, (Cape  
Cod), and there they found many good oysters,  
and they named it “le Port aux Huistres”  
[sic] (Oyster Harbor). In one edition of his  
map (1682), the “A. aux Escailles” is drawn  
emptying into the same part of the bay, and on  
the map “Novi Belgii,” in Ogilby’s America  
  
   
  
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100 CAPE CoD  
  
(1670), the words “Port aux Huistres” are  
placed against the same place. Also William  
Wood, who left New England in 1633, speaks,  
in his “New England’s Prospect,” published in  
1684, of “a great oyster-bank” in Charles  
River, and of another in the Mistick, each of  
vshich obstructed the navigation of its river.  
“The oysters,” says he, “be great ones in form  
of a shoeshorn; some be a foot long; these  
breed on certain banks that are bare every  
spring tide. This fish without the shell is so  
big, that it must admit of a division before you  
can well get it into your mouth.” Oysters are  
still found there.”  
  
Our host told us that the sea-clam, or hen,  
‘was not easily obtained; it was raked up, but  
never on the Atlantic side, only east ashore  
there in small quantities in storms. ‘The fisher-  
‘man sometimes wades in water several feet deep,  
and thrusts @ pointed stick into the sand before  
him. When this enters between the valves of a  
clam, he closes them on it, and is drawn out.  
Tt has been known to catch and hold coot and  
teal which were preying on it. I chanced to be  
on the bank of the Acushnet at New Bedford one  
day since this, watching some ducks, when a  
‘man informed me that, having let out his young  
ducks to seek their food amid the samphire  
  
4 eo ace Thomas Morton's New English Canaan, . 00,

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 101  
  
(Salicornia) and other weeds along the river-  
side at low tide that morning, at length he no-  
ticed that one remained stationary, amid the  
weeds, something preventing it from following  
the others, and going to it he found its foot  
tightly shut in a quahog’s shell. He took up  
both together, carried them to his home, and  
his wife opening the shell with a knife released  
the duck and cooked the quahog. ‘The old man  
said that the great clams were good to eat, but  
that they always took out a certain part which  
was poisonous, before they cooked them,  
“People’ said it would kill a cat.” I did not  
tell him that I‘had eaten a lange one entire that  
afternoon, but began to think that I was tougher  
than a cat. He stated that pedlers came round  
there, and sometimes tried to sell the women  
folks a skimmer, but he told them that their  
women had got a better skimmer than they  
could make, in the shell of their clams; it was  
shaped just right for this purpose. —‘They call  
them “skim-alls ” in some places. He also said  
that the sun-squall was poisonous to handle,  
and when the sailors came across it, they did  
not meddle with it, but heaved it out of their  
way. I told him that I had handled it that  
afternoon, and had felt no ill effects as yet.  
But he said it made the hands itch, especially if,  
they had previously been scratched, or if I put

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102 CAPE CoD  
it into my bosom, I should find out what it  
  
was.  
  
He informed us that no ice ever formed on  
the back side of tho Cape, or not more than  
‘once in a century, and but little snow lay there,  
it being either absorbed or blown or washed  
away. Sometimes in: winter, when the tide was  
down, the beach was frozen, and afforded a hard  
road up the back side for some thirty miles, as  
‘smooth as a floor. One winter when he was a  
bboy, he and his father “took right out into the  
back side before daylight, and walked to Prov-  
incetown and back to dinner.”  
  
‘When I asked what they did with all that  
barren-looking land, where I saw so few culti-  
vated fields, — “Nothing,” he satd.  
  
“Then why fence your fields?”  
  
“To keep the sand from blowing and cover-  
ing up the whole.”  
  
“The yellow sand,” said he, “has some life  
in it, but the white little or none.”  
  
‘When, in answer to his questions, I told him  
that I was a surveyor, he said that they who  
surveyed his farm were accustomed, where tho  
ground was uneven, to loop up each chain as  
high as their elbows; that was the allowance  
they made, and he wished to know if I could  
tell him why they did not come out according to  
his deed, or twice alike. He seemed to have

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 108  
  
more respect for surveyors of the old school,  
which I did not wonder at. “King George the  
‘Third,” said he, “laid out.a road four rods wide  
and straight the whole length of the Cape,” but  
where it was now he could not tell.  
  
‘This story of the surveyors reminded me of a  
Long-Islander, who once, when I had made  
ready to jump from the bow of his boat to the  
shore, and he thought that I underrated the dis-  
tance and would fall short, —thongh I found  
afterward that he judged of the elasticity of my  
joints by his own, — told me that when he came  
to a brook which he wanted to get over, he held  
up one log, and then, if his foot appeared to  
cover any part of the opposite bank, he knew  
that he could jump it. “Why,” I told him,  
“to say nothing of the Mississippi, and other  
small watery streams, I could blot out a star  
with my foot, but I would not engage to jump  
that distance,” and asked how he knew when he  
had got his leg at the right clevation. But he  
regarded his legs as no less accurate than a pair  
of screw dividers or an ordinary quadrant, and  
appeared to have a painful recollection of every  
degree and minute in the are which they de-  
scribed; and he would have had me believe that  
there was a kind of hitch in his hip-joint which  
answered the purpose. I suggested that he  
should connect his two ankles by a string of the

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104 CAPE COD  
  
proper length, which should be the chord of an  
arc, measuring his jumping ability on horizontal  
surfaces, — assuming.one leg to be a perpendic-  
ular to the plane of the horizon, which, how-  
ever, may have been too bold an assumption in  
this case. Nevertheless, this was a kind of  
geometry in the legs which it interested me to  
hear of.  
  
Our host took pleasure in telling us the names  
of the ponds, most of which we could see from  
his windows, and making us repeat them after  
him, to see if we had got them right. They  
were Gull Pond, the largest and a very hand-  
some one, clear and deep, and more than a mile  
in circumference, Newcomb’s, Swett’s, Slough,  
Horse-Leech, Round, and Herring Ponds, all  
connected at high water, if I do not mistake.  
‘The coast-surveyors had come to him for their  
names, and he told them of one which they had  
not detected. He said that they were not so  
high as formerly. ‘There was an earthquake  
about four years before he was born, which  
cracked the pans of the ponds, which were of  
iron, and caused them to settle. I did not re-  
member to have read of this. Innumerable  
gulls used to resort to them; but the large gulls  
‘were now very scarce, for, as he said, the Eng-  
lish robbed their nests far in the north, where  
they breed. He remembered well when gulls

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 105  
  
were taken in the gull-house, and when small  
birds were killed by means of a frying-pan and  
fire at night. His father once lost a valuable  
horse from this cause. A party from Wellfleet  
having lighted their fire for this purpose, one  
dark night, on Billingsgate Island, twenty horses  
which were pastured there, and this colt among  
them, being frightened by it, and endeavoring  
in the dark to cross the passage which separated  
them from the neighboring beach, and which  
was then fordable at low tide, were all swept out  
to sea and drowned. I observed that many  
horses were still turned out to pasture all sum-  
mer on the islands and beaches in Wellfleet,  
Eastham, and Orleans, as a kind of common.  
He also described the killing of what he called  
“wild hens,” here, after they had gone to roost  
in the woods, when he was a boy. Perhaps they  
were “prairie hens” (pinnated grouse)  
  
He liked the beach-pea (Lathyrus maritimus),  
cooked green, as well as the cultivated. He  
had seen it growing very abundantly in New-  
foundland, where also the inhabitants ate them,  
but he had never been able to obtain any ripe  
for seed. Weread, under the head of Chatham,  
that “in 1555, during a time of great scarcity,  
the people about Orford, in Sussex (England)  
‘were preserved from perishing by eating tho  
seods of this plant, which grew there in great

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106 CAPE CoD  
  
abundance upon the sea coast. Cows, horses,  
sheep, and goats eat it.” But the writer who  
quoted this could not learn that they had ever  
been used in Barnstable County.  
  
‘He had been a voyager, then? Ob, he had  
been about the world in his day. He once con-  
sidered himself a pilot for all our coast; but  
now they had changed the names 20 he might be  
bothered.  
  
He gave us to taste what he called the Sum-  
mer Sweeting, a pleasant apple which he raised,  
and frequently grafted from, but had never seen  
growing elsewhere, except once, —three trees  
on Newfoundland, or at the Bay of Chaleur, I  
forget which, as he was sailing by. He was  
sure that he could tell the tree at a distance.  
  
At length the fool, whom my companion  
called the wizard, came in, muttering between  
his teeth, “Damn book-pedlers, —all the time  
talking about books. Better do something.  
Damn ’em. I'll shoot ‘em. Got a doctor  
down here. Damn him, I'll get a gun and  
shoot him;” never once holding up his head.  
‘Whereat the old man stood up and said in a  
lond voice, as if he was accustomed to command,  
and this was not the first time he had been  
obliged to exert his authority there: “John, go  
sit down, mind your business, —we’ve heard  
you talk before, — precious little you’ll do, —

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 107  
  
your bark is worse than your bite.” But, with-  
out minding, John muttered the same gibberish  
over again, and then sat down at the table  
which the old folks had left. He ate all there  
was on it, and then turned to the apples, which  
his aged mother was paring, that she might  
give her guests some apple-sauce for breakfast,  
but she drew them away and sent him off.  
  
‘When I approached this house the next sum-  
mer, over the desolate hills between it and the  
shore, which are worthy to have been the birth-  
place of Ossian, I saw the wizard in the midst  
of 9 cornfield on the hillside, but, as usual, he  
loomed so strangely, that I mistook him for a  
scarecrow.  
  
‘This was the merriest old man that we had  
ever seen, and one of the best preserved. His  
style of conversation was coarse and plain  
enough to have suited Rabelais. He would  
have made a good Panurge. Or rather he was  
sober Silenus, and we were the boys Chromis  
and Mnasilus, who listened to his story.  
  
“Not by Haemonian hills the Thracian bard,  
‘Nor awfol Phabus was on Pindaa heard  
‘With dooper silence or with more rogard.”  
  
‘There was a strango mingling of past and  
present in his conversation, for he had lived  
under King George, and might have remem-  
bored when Napoleon and the moderns generally

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108 CAPE CoD  
  
were born. He said that one day, when the  
troubles between the Colonies and the mother  
country first broke out, as he, a boy of fifteen,  
‘waa pitching hay out of a cart, one Donne, an  
old Tory, who was talking with his father, a  
good Whig, said to him, “Why, Unde Bill,  
you might as well undertake to pitch that pond  
into the ocean with a pitchfork, as for the Col-  
‘onies to undertake to gain their independence.”  
He remembered well General Washington, and  
how he rode his horse along the streets of Bos-  
ton, and he stood up to show us how he looked.  
  
“He was a r—a—ther large and portly-  
looking man, a manly and resolute-looking offi-  
cer, with a pretty good leg as he sat on his  
horse.” — “There, I'll tell you, this was the  
way with Washington.” ‘Then he jumped up  
again, and bowed gracefully to right and left,  
making show as if he were waving his hat.  
Said he, “ That was Washington.”  
  
He told us many anecdotes of the Revolution,  
and was much pleased when we told him that we  
hhad read the same in history, and that his ac-  
count agreed with the written.  
  
“Oh,” he said, “I know, I know! I was a  
young fellow of sixteen, with my ears wide  
open; and a fellow of that age, you know, is  
pretty wide awake, and likes to know everything  
that’s going on. Oh, I know!”

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 109  
  
He told us the story of the wreck of the  
Franklin, which took place there the previous  
spring; how » boy came to his house early in  
the morning to know whose boat that was by  
the shore, for there was a vessel in distress, and  
he, being an old man, first ate his breakfast,  
and then walked over to the top of the hill by  
the shore, and sat down there, having found a  
comfortable seat, to see the ship wrecked. She  
was on the bar, only a quarter of mile from  
him, and still nearer to the men on the beach,  
who had got s boat ready, but could render no  
assistance on account of the breakers, for there  
was a pretty high sea running. ‘There were the  
passengers all crowded together in the forward  
part of the ship, and some were getting out of  
the cabin windows and were drawn on deck by  
the others.  
  
“Tsaw the captain got out his boat,” said he;  
“he had one little one; and then they jumped  
into it one after another, down as straight as an  
arrow. I counted them. There were nine.  
‘One was a woman, and she jumped as straight  
as any of them. Then they shoved off. ‘The  
sea took them back, one wave went over them,  
and when they came up there were six still  
clinging to the boat; I counted them. The  
next wave turned the boat bottom upward, and  
emptied them all out. None of them ever came

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110 CAPE COD  
  
ashore alive. There were the rest of them all  
crowded together on the forecastle, the other  
parts of the ship being under water. ‘They had  
seen all that happened to the boat. At length a  
heavy sea separated the forecastle from the rest  
of the wreck, and set it inside of the worst  
breaker, and the boat was able to reach them,  
and it saved all that were left, but one woman.”  
  
‘He also told us of the steamer Cambria’s get-  
ting aground on this shore a few months before  
we were there, and of her English passengers  
who roamed over his grounds, and who, he said,  
thought the prospect from the high hill by the  
shore, “the most delightsome they had ever  
seen,” and also of the pranks which the ladies  
played with his scoop-net in the ponds. He  
spoke of these travelers with their purses full  
of guineas, just as our provincial fathers used  
to speak of British bloods in the time of King  
George the Third.  
  
Quid loquar? Why repeat what he told us?  
  
“ Ant Seyllam Nii, quam fama sata eet,  
Candida mecintam Iatrntibus inguin monatea,  
Dalichian vex rato, ot gungite in alto  
‘Ah! timidon manta caniboslaertase mania?”  
  
In the course of the evening I began to feel  
the potency of the clam which I had eaten, and  
I was obliged to confess to our host that T was  
no tougher than the eat he told of; but he

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 111  
  
answered, that he was a plain-spoken man, and  
he could tell me that it was all imagination.  
‘At any rate, it proved an emetic in my case,  
and I was made quite sick by it fora short time,  
while he laughed at my expense. I was pleased  
to read afterward, in Mourt’s Relation of the  
landing of the Pilgrims in Provincetown Har-  
bor, these words: “We found great muscles  
(the old editor says that they were undoubtedly  
sea-clams) and very fat and full of sea-pearl;  
but we could not eat them, for they made us all  
sick that did eat, as well sailors as passengers,  
... but they were soon well again.” It  
brought me nearer to the Pilgrims to be thus  
reminded by a similar experience that I was s0  
like them. Moreover, it was a valuable con-  
firmation of their story, and I am prepared now  
to believe every word of Mourt’s Relation. I  
‘was also pleased to find that man and the clam  
lay still at the same angle to one another. But  
I did not notice sea-pearl. Like Cleopatra, I  
must have swallowed it. I have since dug these  
clams on a flat in the Bay and observed them.  
They could squirt full ten feet before the wind,  
as appeared by the marks of the drops on the  
sand.  
  
“Now TI am going to ask you a question,” said  
the old man, “and I don’t know as you can tell  
me; but you are a learned man, and I never

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112 CAPE COD  
  
had any learning, only what I got by natur.”  
—It was in vain that we reminded him that he  
could quote Josephus to our confusion. — “I’ve  
thought, if I ever met a learned man I should  
like to ask him this question. Can you tell me  
how Acy is spelt, and what it means? ay,”  
says he; “there’s a girl over here is named  
Azy. Now what is it? What does it mean?  
Is it Scripture? I've read my Bible twenty-five  
years over and over, and I never came across  
he  
  
   
  
“Did you read it twenty-five years for this  
object? "I asked.  
  
“Well, how is it spelt? Wife, how is it  
spelt?”  
  
Sho said, “It is in the Bible; I’ve seen it.”  
  
“Well, how do you spell it?”  
  
“I don’t know. A ch, ach,s e h, seh, —  
Achseb.  
  
“Does that spell Axy? Well, do you know  
what it means?” asked he, turning to me.  
  
“No,” I replied, “I never heard the sound  
before.”  
  
“There was a schoolmaster down here once,  
and they asked him what it meant, and he said  
it had no more meaning than a bean-pole.””  
  
I told him that I held the same opinion with  
the schoolmaster. I had been a schoolmaster  
myself, and had had strange names to deal with.

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 118  
  
I also heard of such names as Zoheth, Beriah,  
Amaziah, Bothuel, and Shearjashub, here-  
abouts.  
  
‘At length the little boy, who had a seat quite  
in the chimney-corner, took off his stockings  
and shoes, warmed his feet, and having had his  
sore leg freshly salved, went off to bed; then  
the fool made bare, his knotty-looking feet and  
legs, and followed him; and finally the old man  
exposed his calves also to our gaze. We had  
never had the good fortune to seo an old man’s  
legs before, and were surprised to find them  
fair and plump as an infant’s, and we thought  
that he took a pride in exhibiting them. He  
then proceeded to make preparations for retir-  
ing, discoursing meanwhile with Panurgie plai  
ness of speech on the ills to which old humanity  
is subject. We were a rare haul for him. He  
could commonly get none but ministers to talk  
to, though sometimes ten of them at once,  
‘and he was glad to meet some of the laity at  
leisure. The evening was not long enough for  
him. As I had been sick, the old Indy asked  
if I would not go to bed, —it was getting late  
for old people; but the old man, who had not  
yetdone his stories, said, “You ain’t particular,  
‘are you?”  
  
“Oh, no,” said I, “I am in no hurry. I be-  
Tieve I have weathered the Clam cape.”

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14 CAPE oD  
“They are good,” said he; “I wish I had  
  
some of them now.”  
  
“They never hurt me,” said the old lady.  
  
“But then you took out the part that killed a  
cat,” said I.  
  
‘At last we cut him short in the midst of his  
stories, which he promised to resume in tho  
morning. Yet, after all, one of the old ladies  
‘who came into our room in the night to fasten  
  
+ the fire-board, which rattled, as sho went out  
took the precaution to fasten us in. Old women  
are by nature more suspicious than old men.  
However, the winds howled around the house,  
and made the fire-boards as well as tho ease-  
ments rattle well that night. It was probably  
a windy night for any locality, but we could  
not distinguish the roar which was proper to the  
ocean from that which was due to the wind  
alone.  
  
‘The sounds which the ocean makes must be  
very significant and interesting to those who live  
near it. When I was leaving the shore at this  
place the next summer, and had got a quarter  
of a mile distant, ascending a hill, T was startled  
by a sudden, loud sound from the sea, as if a  
large steamer were letting off steam by the shore,  
so that T caught my breath and felt my blood  
run cold for an instant, and I turned about, ex-  
pecting to see one of the Atlantic steamers thus

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 115  
  
far out of her course, but there was nothing un-  
usual to be seen. There was a low bank at the  
entrance of the Hollow, between me and the  
ocean, and suspecting that I might have risen  
into another stratum of air in ascending the  
hill, — which had wafted to me only the ordi-  
nary roar of the sea, — I immediately descended  
again, to sce if I lost hearing of it; but, with-  
out regard to my ascending or descending, it  
died away in a minute or two, and yet there was  
searcely any wind all the while. The old man  
said that this was what they called the “rut,” a  
peculiar roar of the sea before the wind changes,  
which, however, he could not account for. He  
thought that he could tell all about the weather  
from the sounds which the sea made.  
  
Ola Josselyn, who came to New England in  
1688, has it among his weather-signs, that “the  
resounding of the sea from the shore, and mur-  
muring of the winds in the woods, without ap-  
parent wind, sheweth wind to follow.  
  
Being on another part of the coast one night  
since this, I heard the roar of the surf a mile  
distant, and the inhabitants said it was a sign  
that the wind would work round east, and we  
should have rainy weather. The ocean was  
heaped up somewhere at the eastward, and this  
roar was occasioned by its effort to preserve its  
equilibrium, the wave reaching the shore before

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116 CAPE COD  
  
the wind. Also the captain of a packet between  
this country and England told me that he some-  
times met with a wave on the Atlantic coming  
against the wind, perhaps in a calm sea, which  
indicated that at a distance the wind was blow-  
ing from an opposite quarter, but the undula-  
tion had traveled faster than it. Sailors tell of  
“tide-rips” and “ground-swells,” which they  
suppose to have been occasioned by hurricanes  
and earthquakes, and to have traveled many  
hundred, and sometimes even two or three thou-  
sand miles.  
  
Before sunrise the next morning they let us  
out again, and I ran over to the beach to see the  
sun come out of the ocean. The old woman of  
eighty-four winters was already out in the cold  
morning wind, bare-headed, tripping about like  
‘a young girl, and driving up the cow to milk.  
She got the breakfast with dispatch, and with-  
out noise or bustle; and meanwhile the old man  
resumed his stories, standing before us, who were  
ing, with his back to the chimney, and eject-  
ing his tobacco-juice right and left into the fire  
behind him, without regard to the various dishes  
which wore there preparing. At breakfast wo  
had eels, buttermilk cake, cold bread, green  
beans, doughnuts, and tea. ‘The old man talked  
‘a steady stream; and when his wife told him he  
had better eat his breakfast, he said: “Don’t

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 117  
  
hurry mes T have lived too long to be hurried.”  
I ate of the apple-sauce and the doughnuts,  
which I thought had sustained the least detri-  
ment from the old man’s shots, but my compan-  
ion refused the apple-sauce, and ate of the hot  
cake and green beans, which had appeared to  
him to occupy the safest part of the hearth.  
But on comparing notes afterward, I told him  
that the buttermilk cake was particularly ex-  
posed, and I saw how it suffered repeatedly,  
and therefore I avoided it; but he declared that,  
however that might be, he witnessed that the  
apple-sauce was seriously injured, and had there-  
fore declined that. After breakfast wo looked  
at his clock, which was out of order, and oiled  
it with some “hen’s grease,” for want of sweet  
oil, for he scarcely could believe that we were  
not tinkers or pedlers; meanwhile, he told a story  
about visions, which had reference to a crack in  
the clock-case made by frost one night. He was  
curious to know to what religious sect we be-  
Ionged. He said that he had been to hear thi  
teon kinds of preaching in one month, when he  
was young, but he did not join any of them, —  
he stuck to his Bible. There was nothing like  
any of them in his Bible. While I was shaving  
in the next room, I heard him ask my compan-  
ion to what sect he belonged, to which he an-  
swered, —

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118 CAPE COD  
  
“Ob, I belong to the Universal Brotherhood.”  
  
“What ’s that?” he asked, “Sons o’ Temper-  
ance?”  
  
Finally, filling our pockets with doughnuts,  
which he was pleased to find that we called by  
the same name that he did, and paying for our  
entertainment, we took out departure; but he  
followed us out of doors, and made us tell him  
the names of the vegetables which he had raised  
from seeds that came out of the Franklin.  
‘They were cabbage, broccoli, and parsley. As  
Thad asked him the names of so many things,  
he tried me in turn with all the plants which  
grew in his garden, both wild and cultivated.  
It was about half an acre, which he cultivated  
wholly himself. Besides the common garden  
vegetables, there were yellow-dock, lemon balm,  
hyssop, Gill -go-over-the-ground, mouse-ear,  
chick-weed, Roman wormwood, elecampane, and  
other plants. As we stood there, I saw a fish-  
hawk stoop to pick a fish out of his pond.  
  
“There,” said I, “he has got a fish.”  
  
“Well,” said the old man, who -was looking  
all the while, but could see nothing, “he didn’t  
dive, he just wet his claws.””  
  
‘And, sure enough, he did not this time,  
though it is said that they often do, but he  
merely stooped low enough to pick him out with  
his talons; but as he bore his shining prey over

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THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN 119  
  
the bushes, it fell to the ground, and we did not  
s00 that he recovered it. ‘That is not their prac-  
tice.  
  
‘Thus, having had another crack with the old  
man, he standing bareheaded under the eaves,  
he directed us “athwart the fields,” and we took  
to the beach again for another day, it being now  
late in the morning.  
  
Tt was but a day or two after this that the  
safe of the Provincetown Bank was broken open  
and robbed by two men from the interior, and  
we learned that our hospitable entertainers did  
at least transiently harbor the suspicion that we  
were the men.

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VL  
‘THE BEACH AGAIN  
  
Our way to the high sand-bank, which I  
have described.as extending all along the coast,  
led, as usual, through patches of bayberry  
‘Dushes, which straggled into the sand. . This,  
next to the shrub-oak, was perhaps the most  
common shrub thereabouts. I was much at-  
tracted by its odoriferous leaves and small gray  
berries which are clustered about the short  
twigs, just below the last year’s growth. I  
know of but two bushes in Concord, and they,  
being staminate plants, do not bear fruit. ‘The  
berries gave it a venerable appearance, and they  
smelled quite spicy, like small confectionery.  
Robert Beverley, in his “History of Virginia,”  
published in 1705, states that “at the mouth of  
their rivers, and all along upon the sea and bay,  
and near many of their crecks and swamps,  
grows the myrtle, bearing a berry, of which  
they make a hard, brittle wax, of a curious green  
color, which by refining becomes almost trans-  
parent. Of this they make candles, which are  
never greasy to the touch nor melt with lying in

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THE BEACH AGAIN 21  
  
tho hottest: weather; neither does the snuff of  
these ever offend the smell, like that of a tallow  
candle; but, instead of being disagreeable, if  
an accident puts a candle out, it yields a pleas-  
ant fragrancy to all that are in the room; inso-  
much that nice people often put them out on pur-  
pose to have the incense of the expiring snuff.  
‘The -melting of these berries is said to have  
been first found out by a surgeon in New Eng-  
land, who performed wonderful things with a  
salve made of them.” From the abundance of  
berries still hanging on the bushes, we judged  
that the inhabitants did not generally collect  
them for tallow, though we had seen a piece in  
the house we had just left. I have since made  
some tallow myself. Holding a basket beneath  
the bare twigs in April, I rubbed them together  
‘between my hands and thus gathered about a  
quart in twenty minutes, to which were added  
enough to make three pints, and I might have  
gathered them much faster with a suitable rake  
and a large shallow basket. They have little  
prominences like those of an orange all creased  
in tallow, which also fills the interstices down  
to the stone. The oily part rose to the top,  
making it look like a savory black broth, which  
smelled much like balm or other herb tea. You  
let it cool, then skim off the tallow from the  
surface, melt this again and strain it. I got

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122, CAPE CoD  
  
about a quarter of a pound weight from my three  
pints, and more yet remained within the berries.  
‘A small portion cooled in the form of small flat-  
tish hemispheres, like erystallizations, the size of  
a kernel of com (nuggets I called them as I  
picked them out from amid the berries). Lou-  
don says, that “cultivated trees are said to yield  
more wax than those that are found wild.” If  
you get any pitch on your hands in the pine-  
‘woods you have only to rub some of these ber-  
ries between your hands to start it off. But the  
‘ocean was the grand fact there, which made us  
forget both bayberries and men.  
  
‘To-day the air was beautifully clear, and the  
sea no longer dark and stormy, though the  
‘waves still broke with foam along the beach,  
but sparkling and full of life. Already that  
morning I had seen the day break over the sea  
as if it came out of its bosom: —  
  
“The aafronzobod Daven roma in asta from the stream  
  
OF Osean, thatthe might bring light to immortala and to  
  
mortal,”  
  
‘The sun rose visibly at such a distance over  
the sea, that the cloud-bank in the horizon,  
which at first concealed him, was not perceptible  
until he had risen high behind it, and plainly  
broke and dispersed it, like an arrow. But as  
yet I looked at him as rising over land, and  
  
1 See Duplessy, Végtausr Résineus, vol ip. 60.

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THE BEACH AGAIN 128  
  
could not, without an effort, realize that he was  
rising over the sea. Already I saw some vessels  
on the horizon, which had rounded the Cape in  
the night, and were now well on their watery  
way to other lands.  
  
‘We struck the beach again in the south part  
of Truro. In the early part of the day, while  
it was flood tide, and the beach was narrow and  
soft, we walked on the bank, which was very  
high here, but not so level as the day before,  
being more interrupted by slight hollows. ‘The  
author of the Description of the Eastern Coast  
says of this part, that “the bank is very high  
and steep. From the edge of it west, there is  
a strip of sand a hundred yards in breadth.  
‘Then succeeds low brushwood, a quarter of a  
mile wide, and almost impassable. After which  
comes a thick perplexing forest, in which not a  
house is to be discovered. Seamen, therefore,  
though the distance between these two vallies  
(Newcomb’s and Brush Hollows) is great, must  
not attempt to enter the wood, as in a sno  
storm they must undoubtedly perish.” ‘This is  
still a true description of the country, except  
that there is not much high wood left.  
  
‘There were many vessels, like gulls, skim-  
ming over the surface of the sea, now half con-  
cealed in its troughs, their dolphin-strikers  
ploughing the water, now tossed on the top of

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124 CAPE CoD  
  
the billows. One, a barque standing down par-  
allel with the coast, suddenly furled her sails,  
came to anchor, and swung round in the wind,  
near us, only half a mile from the shore. At  
first we thought that her captain wished to com-  
municate with us, and perhaps we did not re-  
gard the signal of distress, which a mariner  
would have understood, and he cursed us for  
cold-hearted wreckers who turned our backs on  
him. For hours we could still see her anchored  
there behind us, and we wondered how she could  
afford to loiter so long in her course. Or was  
she a smuggler who had chosen that wild beach  
to land her cargo on? Or did they wish to  
catch fish, or paint their vessel? Exelong other  
barques, and brigs, and schooners, which had in  
the meanwhile doubled the Cape, sailed by her  
in the smacking breeze, and our consciences  
were relieved. Some of these vessels lagged  
behind, while others steadily went ahead. Wo  
narrowly watched their rig and the cut of their  
jibs, and how they walked the water, for there  
wwas all the difference between them that there  
is between living creatures. But we wondered  
that they should be remembering Boston and  
Now York and Liverpool, steering for them, out  
there; as if the sailor might forget his peddling  
business on such a grand highway. ‘They had  
perchance brought oranges from the Western

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THE BEACH AGAIN 125  
  
Isles; and were they carrying back the peel?  
‘We might as well transport our old traps across  
the ocean of eternity. Is that but another  
“trading flood,” with its blessed isles? Is  
Heaven such a harbor as the Liverpool docks?  
Still held on without a break the inland bar-  
rens and shrubbery, the desert and the high  
sand-bank with its even slope, the broad white  
beach, the breakers, the green water on the bar,  
and the Atlantic Ocean; and we traversed with  
delight new reaches of the shore; we took an-  
other lesson in sea-horses’ manes and sea-cows?  
tails, in sea-jellies and sea-clams, with our new-  
gained experience. The sea ran hardly less  
than the day before. Tt scomed with every  
wave to be subsiding, because such was our ex-  
pectation, and yet when hours had elapsed we  
could see no difference. But there it was, bal-  
ancing itself, the restless ocean by our side,  
lurching in ite gait. Each wave left the sand  
all braided or woven, as it were with a coarse  
woof and warp, and a distinct raised edge to its  
rapid work. We made no haste, since we  
wished to see the ocean at our leisure, and in-  
eed. that soft sand was no place in which to be  
in a hurry, for one mile there was as good as  
two elsewhere. Besides, we were obliged fre-  
quently to empty our shoes of the sand which  
one took in in climbing or descending the bank.

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126 CAPE COD  
  
‘As wo were walking closo to the water’s edge  
this morning, we turned round, by chance, and  
saw a lange black object which the waves had  
just cast up on the beach behind us, yet too far  
off for us to distinguish what it was; and when  
we were about to return to it, two men came  
running from the bank, where no human beings  
hhad appeared before, as if they had come out of  
the sand, in order to save it before another wave  
took it. As we approached, it took successively  
the form of a huge fish, a drowned man, a sail  
or a net, and finally of a mass of tow-cloth, part  
of the cargo of the Franklin, which the men  
loaded into a cart.  
  
Objects on the beach, whether men or inani-  
mato things, look not only exceedingly gro-  
tesque, but much larger and more wonderful  
than they actually are. Lately, when approach-  
ing the sca-shore several degroes south of this,  
T saw before me, seemingly half a mile distant,  
what appeared like bold and rugged cliffs on  
the beach, fifteen feet high, and whitened by  
the sun and waves; but after a few steps it  
proved to be low heaps of rags, — part of the  
cargo of a wrecked vessel, — scarcely more than  
a foot in height. Once also it was my business  
to go in search of the relics of a human body,  
mangled by sharks, which had just been cast  
up, a week after a wreck, having got the direc-

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THE BEACH AGAIN 127  
  
tion from a light-house: T should find it a mile  
or two distant over the sand, a dozen rods from  
the water, covered with a cloth, by a stick stuck  
up. I expected that I must look very narrowly  
to find so small an object, but the sandy beach, .  
half a mile wide, and stretching farther than  
the eye could reach, was so perfectly smooth  
and bare, and the mirage toward the sea so  
magnifying, that when I was half a mile distant  
the insignificant sliver which marked the spot  
looked like a bleached spar, and the relics were  
as conspicuous as if they lay in state on that  
sandy plain, or a generation had labored to pile  
up their cairn there. Close at hand they were  
simply some bones with a little flesh adhering  
to them, in fact, only a slight inequality in the  
sweep of the shore. There was nothing at all  
remarkable about them, and they were singu-  
larly inoffensive both to the senses and the im-  
agination, But as I stood there they grew  
more and more imposing. They were alone  
with the beach and the sea, whose hollow roar  
seemed addressed to them, and I was impressed  
as if there was an understanding between them  
and the ocean which necessarily left me out,  
with my snivelling sympathies. That dead  
body had taken possession of the shore, and  
reigned over it as no living one could, in the  
name of a certain majesty which belonged to it.

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128 CAPE CoD  
  
‘We afterward saw many small pieces of tow-  
cloth washed up, and I learn that it continued  
to be found in good condition, even as late as  
November in that year, half a dozen bolts at a  
time.  
  
‘We eagerly filled our pockets with the smooth  
round pebbles which in some places, even here,  
were thinly sprinkled over the sand, together  
with flat circular shells (Scutellee?); but, as we  
had read, when they were dry they had lost  
their beauty, and at each sitting we emptied our  
pockets again of the least remarkable, until our  
collection was well culled. Every material was  
rolled into the pebble form by the waves; not:  
only stones of various kinds, but the hard coal  
which some vessel had dropped, bits of glass,  
and in one instance a mass of peat three fect  
long, where there was nothing like it to be seen  
for many miles. All the great rivers of the  
globe are annually, if not constantly, discharg-  
ing great quantities of lumber, which drifts to  
distant shores. I have also seen very perfect  
pebbles of brick, and bars of Castile soap from  
‘a wreck rolled into perfect cylinders, and still  
spirally streaked with red, like a barber's pole.  
‘When a cargo of rags is washed ashore, every  
‘old pocket and bag-like recess will be filled to  
‘bursting with sand by being rolled on the beach;  
‘and on one occasion, the pockets in the clothing

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THE BEACH AGAIN 129  
  
. of the wrecked being thus puffed up, even after  
they had been ripped open by wreckers, deluded  
me into the hope of identifying them by the  
contents. A pair of gloves looked exactly as if  
filled by a hand. The water in such clothing is  
soon wrung out and evaporated, but the sand,  
which works itself into every seam, is not so  
easily got rid of. Sponges, which are picked  
up on the shore, as is well known, retain some  
of the sand of the beach to the latest day, in  
spite of every effort to extract it.  
  
T found one stone on the top of the bank, of  
a dark gray color, shaped exactly like a giant  
clam (Mactra solidissima), and of the same size;  
and, what was more remarkable, one half of the  
outside had shelled off and lay near it, of the  
same form and depth with one of the valves of  
this clam, while the other half was loose, leav-  
ing a solid core of a darker color within it. I  
afterward saw a stone resembling a razor clam,  
but it was a solid one. It appeared as if the  
stone, in the process of formation, had filled the  
mould which a clam-shell furnished; or the  
same law that shaped the clam had made a clam  
of stone. Dead clams, with shells full of sand,  
are called sand clams. There were many of tho  
large clam-shells filled with sand; and some-  
times one valve was separately filled exactly  
even, as if it had been heaped and then scraped.

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180 CAPE CoD  
  
Even among the many small stones on the top  
of the bank, I found one arrow-head.  
  
Beside the giant clam and barnacles, we  
found on the shore a small clam (Mesodesma  
arctata), which I dug with my hands in num-  
‘bers on the bars, and which is sometimes eaten  
by the inhabitants, in the absence of the Mya  
arenaria, on this side. Most of their empty  
shells had been perforated by some foe. Also,  
the  
  
Astarte castanea.  
  
The Edible Mussel (Mytilus edulis) on the  
few rocks, and washed up in curious bunches of  
forty or fifty, held together by its rope-like  
byssus.  
  
‘Tho Scollop Shell (Pecten concentricus), used  
for card-racks and pin-cushions.  
  
Cockles, or Cuckoos (Watiea heros), and  
their remarkable nidus, called “sand-circle,”  
looking like the top of a stone jug without the  
stopple, and broken on one side, or like a flar-  
ing dickey made of sand-paper. Also, —  
  
Cancellaria Couthouyi (?), and —  
  
Periwinkles (2) (Fusus decemcostatua).  
  
‘We afterward saw some other kinds on the  
Bay side. Gould states that this Cape “has  
hitherto proved a barrier to the migrations of  
many species of Mollusca.” — “Of the one hun-  
dred and ninety-seven species [which he de-

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THE BEACH AGAIN 181  
  
scribed in 1840 as belonging to Massachusetts],  
eighty-three do not pass to the South shore, and  
fifty are not found on the North shore of the  
Cape.”  
  
Among Crustacea there were the shells of  
Crabs and Lobsters, often bleached quite white  
high up the beach; Sea or Beach Fleas (Am-  
phipoda); and the cases of the Horse-shoo  
Crab, or Saucepan Fish (Limulus Polyphe-  
mus), of which we saw many alive on the Bay  
side, where they feed pigs on them. Their  
tails were used as arrow-heads by the Indians.  
  
Of Radiata, there were the Sea Chestnut or  
Egg (Zchinus granulatus), commonly divested  
of its spines; flat circular shells (Scutella  
parma?) covered with chocolate-colored spines,  
but becoming smooth and white, with five petal-  
like figures; a few Star-fishes or Five-fingers  
(Asterias rubens); and Sun-fishes or Sea-jellios  
(Aurelia).  
  
‘There was also at least one species of Sponge.  
  
‘The plants which I noticed here and there on  
the pure sandy shelf, between the ordinary  
high-water mark and the foot of the bank, were  
Sea Rocket (Cakile Americana), Saltwort  
(Salsola kali), Sea Sandwort (Honkenya pep-  
Toides), Sea Burdock (Xanthium echinatum),  
Seaside Spurge (Euphorbia polygonifolia);  
also, Beach Grass (Arundo, Psamma, or

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182 CAPE COD  
  
Calamagrostis arenaria), Seaside Golden-rod  
(Solidago sempervirens), and the Beach Pea  
(Lathyras maritimus).  
  
Sometimes we helped a wrecker turn over a  
larger log than usual, or we amused ourselves  
with rolling stones down the bank, but we rarely  
could make one reach the water, the beach was  
0 soft and wide; or we bathed in some shallow  
within a bar, where the sea covered us with  
sand at every flux, though it was quite cold and  
windy. The ocean there is commonly but a  
tantalizing prospect in hot weather, for with all  
that water before you, there is, as we were af-  
terward told, no bathing on the Atlantic side,  
on account of the undertow and the rumor of  
sharks. At the light-house both in Eastham  
and Truro, the only houses quite on the shore,  
they declared, the next year, that they would  
not bathe there “for any sum,” for they some-  
times saw the sharks tossed up and quiver for a  
‘moment on the sand. Others laughed at these  
stories, but perhaps they could afford to because  
they never bathed anywhere. One old wrecker  
told us that he killed a regular man-eating shark  
fourteen feet long, and hauled him out with his  
‘oxen, where we had bathed; and another, that  
his father caught a smaller one of the same kind  
that was stranded there, by standing him up on  
hhis snont so that the waves could not take him.

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THE BEACH AGAIN 138  
  
They will tell you tough stories of sharks all  
over the Cape, which I do not presume to doubt  
utterly, —how they will sometimes upset a  
boat, or tear it in pieces, to get at the man in  
it. Tecan easily believe in the undertow, but I  
‘have no doubt that one shark in a dozen years  
is enough to keep up the reputation of a beach  
ahundred miles long. I should add, however,  
that in July we walked on the bank here a  
quarter of a mile parallel with a fish about six  
feet in length, possibly a shark, which was  
prowling slowly along within two rods of the  
shore. It was of a pale brown color, singularly  
film-like and indistinct in the water, as if all  
nature abetted this child of ocean, and showed  
many darker transverse bars or rings whenever  
‘it came to the surface. It is well known that  
different fishes even of the same species are col-  
cored by the water they inhabit. We saw it go  
into a little cove or bathing-tub, where we had  
just been bathing, where the water was only  
four or five feet deep at that time, and after ex-  
ploring it go slowly out again; but we continued  
to bathe there, only observing first from the  
bank if the cove was preoccupied. We thought  
that the water was fuller of life, more aerated  
perhaps than that of the Bay, like soda-water,  
for we were as particular as young salmon, and  
the expectation of encountering a shark did not

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184 CAPE CoD  
subtract anything from its life-giving quali-  
ties.  
  
Sometimes we sat on the wet beach and  
watched the beach birds, sand-pipers, and oth-  
ers, trotting along close to each wave, and wait~  
ing for the sea to cast up their breakfast. The  
former (Charadrius melodus) ran with great  
rapidity, and then stood stock still, remarkably  
erect, and hardly to be distinguished from the  
beach. The wet sand was covered with small  
skipping Sea Fleas, which apparently made a  
part of their food. ‘These last are the little  
scavengers of the beach, and are so numerous  
that they will devour large fishes, which have  
been cast up, in a very short time. One little  
bird not larger than a sparrow—it may have  
been a Phalarope—would alight on the tur-  
bulent surface where the breakers were five or  
six feot high, and float buoyantly there like a  
duck, cunningly taking to its wings and lifting  
itself a few feet through the air over the foam-  
ing erest of each breaker, but sometimes outrid-  
ing safely a considerable billow which hid it  
some seconds, when its instinct told it that it  
would not break. It was a little creature thus  
to sport with the ocean, but it was as perfect a  
success in its way as the breakers in theirs,  
‘There was also an almost uninterrupted line of  
coots rising and falling with the waves, a few

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THE BEACH AGAIN 135  
  
rods from the shore, the whole length of the  
Cape. ‘They made as constant a part of the  
‘ocean’s border as the pads or pickerel-woed do  
of that of a pond. We read the following as to  
the Storm Petrel (Thalassidroma Wilsonii),  
which is soon in the Bay as well as on the out-  
side. “The feathers on the breast of the Storm  
Petrel are, like those of all swimming birds,  
water-proof; but substances not: susceptible of  
being wetted with water are, for that very rea-  
son, the best fitted for collecting oil from its  
surface. That function is performed by the  
feathers on the breast of the Storm Petrels as  
they touch on the surface; and though that  
may not be the only way in which they procure  
their food, it is certainly that in which they ob-  
tain great part of it. ‘They dash along till they  
hhave loaded their feathers and then they pause  
upon the waves and remove the oil with their  
bills.”  
  
‘Thus we kept on along the gently curving  
shore, seeing two or threo miles ahead at once,  
—along this ocean sidewalk, where there was  
none to turn out for, with the middle of the  
road, the highway of nations, on our right, and  
the sand cliffs of the Cape on our left. We  
saw this forenoon a part of the wreck of a ves-  
sel, probably the Franklin, a large piece fifteen  
feet square, and still freshly painted. With a

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136 CAPE COD  
  
grapple and line we could have saved it, for  
the waves repeatedly washed it within east, but  
they as often took it back. Tt would have been  
‘a lucky haul for some poor wrecker, for I have  
been told that one man who paid threo or four  
dollars for a part of the wreck of that vessel,  
sold fifty or sixty dollars’ worth of iron out of  
it. Another, the same who picked up the cap-  
tain’s valise with the memorable letter in it,  
showed me, growing in his garden, many pear  
and plum trees which washed ashore from her,  
all nicely tied up and labeled, and he said that  
he might have got five hundred dollars’ worth;  
for a Mr. Bell was importing the nucleus of a  
nursery to be established near Boston. His  
turnip-seed came from the same source. Also  
valuable spars from the same vessel and from  
the Cactus lay in his yard. In short the inhab-  
itants visit the beach to sco what they have  
‘caught as regularly as a fisherman his weir or a  
Jumberer his boom; the Cape is their boom.  
I heard of one who had recently picked up  
twenty barrels of apples in good condition,  
probably a part of a deck load thrown over in a  
storm.  
  
Though there are wreck-masters appointed to  
look after valuable property which must be ad-  
vertised, yet undoubtedly a great deal of value  
is secretly carried off. But are we not all

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THE BEACH AGAIN 137  
  
wreckers contriving that some treasure may be  
washed up on our beach, that we may secure it,  
and do we not infer the habits of these Nauset  
and Barnegat wreckers, from the common  
modes of getting a living?  
  
‘The sea, vast and wild as it is, bears thus the  
waste and wrecks of human art to its remotest  
shore. There is no telling what it may not  
vomit up. It lets nothing lie; not even the  
giant clams which cling to its bottom. It  
still heaving up the tow-cloth of the Franklin,  
and perhaps a piece of some old pirate’s ship,  
wrecked more than a hundred years ago, comes  
ashore to-day. Some years since, when a vessel  
was wrecked here which had nutmegs in her  
cargo, they were strewn all along the beach, and  
for a considerable time were not spoiled by the  
salt water. Soon afterward, a fisherman caught  
a ood which was full of them. Why, then,  
might not the Spice-Islanders shake their nut  
meg-trees into the ocean, and let all nations who  
stand in need of them pick them up? How-  
ever, after a year, I found that the nutmegs  
from the Franidin had become soft.  
  
You might make a curious list of articles  
which fishes have swallowed, —sailors’ open  
clasp - knives, and bright tin snuff-boxes, not  
Knowing what was in them, — and jugs, and  
jewels, and Jonah. The other day I came  
‘across the following sorap in newspaper.

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138 CAPE CoD  
  
“A Ratsor0cs Fin. — A short time ago, mine host Stewart,  
fof the Denton Hotal, purchased a rock-fsh, weighing about  
‘sixty pounds, On opening it he found in it m cortifcate of  
memberahip of the M. E. Church, which we read as follows:—  
  
   
  
Member  
Methodist E. Charch,  
Pounded A.D. 1784.  
Quarterly Ticket. 8  
Minister.  
  
‘For our ight afletion, which aba for moment, workath for ua 8  
far mors excodlng and stra weight of glory'—2 Car...  
+0 wha reall my euterings here,  
1, Lard, thou count me mack  
‘With that ‘neepeured owt © appear,  
‘And worhip at thy fat?  
  
"Tho paper was, of course in a cramped and wet condition,  
Dut on exposing i to the sm, and ironing the Kinks ont of it  
St became quite legible, Denton (Bf) Journal.”  
  
‘From time to time we saved a wreck ourselves,  
a box or barrel, and set it on its end, and ap-  
propriated it with crossed sticks; and it will lie  
there perhaps, respected by brother wreckers,  
until some more violent storm shall take it,  
really lost to man until wrecked again. We  
also saved, at the cost of wet feet only, a valu-  
able cord and buoy, part of a seine, with which  
the sea was playing, for it seemed ungracious  
to refuse the least gift which so great a person-  
age offered you. We brought this home and  
still use it for a garden line. I picked up a  
bottle half buried in the wet sand, covered with  
barnacles, but stoppled tight, and half full of

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THE BEACH AGAIN 189  
  
red ale, which still smacked of juniper, —all  
that remained I fancied from the wreck of @  
rowdy world, —that great salt sea on tho one  
hand, and this little sea of ale on the other, pre-  
serving their separate characters. What if it  
could tell us its adventures over countless ocean  
waves! Man would not be man through such  
ordeals as it had passed. But as I poured it  
slowly out on to the sand, it seemed to me that  
man himself was like a half-emptied bottle of pale  
ale, which Time had drunk so far, yet stoppled  
tight for a while, and drifting about in the ocean  
of circumstances, but destined erelong to mingle  
with the surrounding waves, or be spilled amid  
the sands of a distant shore.  
  
In the summer I saw two men fishing for Bass  
hereabouts. Their bait was a bullfrog, or sev-  
eral small frogs in a bunch, for want of squid.  
‘They followed a retiring wave, and whirling  
their lines round and round their heads with in-  
creasing rapidity, threw them as far as they  
could into the sea; then retreating, sat down flat  
on the sand, and waited fora bite. Tt was liter-  
ally (or littorally) walking down to the shore,  
and throwing your line into the Atlantic. I  
should not have known what might take hold of  
the other end, whether Proteus or another. At  
any rate, if you could not pull him in, why, you  
might let him go without being pulled in your-

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140 CAPE COD  
  
self, And they knew by experience that it  
would be a Striped Bass, or perhaps a Cod, for  
these fishes play along near the shore.  
  
From time to time we sat under the leo of a  
sand-hill on the bank, thinly covered with coarse  
beach-grass, and steadily gazed on the sea, or  
watched the vessels going south, all Blessings of  
the Bay of course. We could see a little more  
than half a circle of ocean, besides the glimpses  
of the Bay which we got behind us; the sea  
there was not wild and dreary in all respects,  
for there were frequently a hundred sail in sight  
at once on the Atlantic. You can commonly  
count about eighty in a favorable summer day,  
and pilots sometimes land and ascend the bank  
to look out for those which require their ser-  
vices. ‘These had been waiting for fair weather,  
and had come out of Boston Harbor together.  
‘The same is the case when they have been as-  
sembled in the Vineyard Sound, so that you may  
see but few one day, and a large flect the next.  
Schooners with many jibs and stay-sails crowded  
all the sea road; square-rigged vessels with their  
great height and breadth of canvas were ever  
and anon appearing out of the far horizon, or  
disappearing and sinking into it; here and there  
a pilot-boat was towing its little boat astern to-  
‘ward some distant foreigner who had just fired  
a gun, the echo of which along the shore

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THE BEACH AGAIN 141  
  
sounded like the caving of the bank. We could  
see the pilot looking through his glass toward  
the distant ship which was putting back to speale  
with him. He sails many a mile to meet her;  
and now she puts her sails aback, and communi-  
cates with him alongside, — sends some import  
ant message to the owners, and then bids fare-  
well to these shores for good and all; or, por=  
chance a propeller passed and made fast to some  
disabled craft, or one that had been becalmed,  
whose cargo of fruit might spoil. Though  
lently, and for the most part incommunicatively,  
going about their business, they were, no doubt,  
a source of cheerfulness and a kind of society to  
one another.  
  
To-day it was tho Purple Sea, an epithet  
which I should not before have accepted. There  
were distinct patches of the color of a purple  
grape with the bloom rubbed off. But first and  
last the sea is of all colors. Well writes Gilpin  
concerning “the brilliant hues which are contin-  
ually playing on the surface of a quiet ocean,”  
and this was not too turbulent at a distance from  
the shore. “Beautiful,” says he, “no doubt in  
a high degree are those glimmering tints which  
often invest the tops of mountains; but they are  
mere coruscations compared with these marine  
colors, which aro continually varying and shift-  
ing into each other in all the vivid splendor of

Page-8600

142 CAPE COD  
  
the rainbow, through the space often of several  
Jeagues.” Commonly, in calm weather, for half  
a mile from the shore, where the bottom tinges  
it, the sea is green, or greenish, as are some  
ponds; then blue for many miles, often with  
purple tinges, bounded in the distance by a light,  
almost silvery stripes beyond which there is gen-  
erally a dark blue rim, like a mountain ridge in  
the horizon, as if, like that, it owed its color to  
the intervening atmosphere. On another day, it  
will be marked with long streaks, alternately  
smooth and rippled, light-colored and dark, even  
Jike our inland meadows in a freshet, and show-  
ing which way the wind sets.  
  
Thus we sat on the foaming shore, looking on  
the wine-colored ocean, —  
  
O17 U9 Ande rodshs, dpher bt elyora xbyror.  
  
Here and there was a darker spot on its surface,  
the shadow of a cloud, though the sky was s0  
clear that no cloud would have been noticed  
otherwise, and no shadow would have been seen  
on the land, where a much smaller surface is  
visible at once. So, distant clouds and showers  
‘may be seen on all sides by a sailor in the course  
of a day, which do not necessarily portend rain  
where he is. In July we saw similar dark blue  
patches where schools of Menhaden rippled the  
surface, scarcely to be distinguished from the

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THE BEACH AGAIN 148  
  
shadows of clouds. Sometimes the sea was  
spotted with them far and wide, such is its in-  
exhaustible fertility. Close at hand you see  
their back fin, which is very long and sharp,  
projecting two or three inches above water.  
From time to time also we saw the white bellies  
of the Bass playing along the shore.  
  
Tt was a poetic recreation to watch those dis-  
tant sails steoring for half fabulous ports, whose  
‘very names are a mysterious music to our ears;  
Fayal, and Babel-mandel, ay, and Chagres, and  
Panama, —bound to the famous Bay of San  
‘Francisco, and the golden streams of Sacramento  
and San Joaquin, to Feather River and the  
American Fork, where Sutter's Fort. presides,  
and inland stands the City de los Angeles. It  
is remarkable that men do not sail the sea with  
more expectation. Nothing remarkable was  
ever accomplished in a prosaic mood. The  
heroes and discoverers have found true more  
than was previously believed, only when they  
were expecting and dreaming of something more  
than their contemporaries dreamed of, or even  
themselves discovered, that is, when they were  
in a frame of mind fitted to behold the truth.  
Referred to the world’s standard, they are al-  
ways insane. Even savages have indirectly sur-  
mised as much. Humboldt, speaking of Colum-  
bus approaching the New World, says: “The

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144 CAPE COD  
  
grateful coolness of the evening air, the ethereal  
purity of the starry firmament, the balmy fra-  
grance of flowers, wafted to him by the land  
breeze, all led him to suppose (as we are told by  
Herrera, in the Decades) that he was approach-  
ing the garden of Eden, the sacred abode of our  
first parents. The Orinoco seemed to him one  
of the four rivers which, according to the ven-  
erable tradition of the ancient world, flowed  
from Paradise, to water and divide the surface  
of the earth, newly adorned with plants.” So  
even the expeditions for the discovery of El  
Dorado, and of the Fountain of Youth, led to  
real, if not compensatory discoveries.  
  
‘Wo discerned vessels so far off, when once  
we began to look, that only the tops of their  
masts in the horizon were visible, and it took a  
strong intention of the eye, and its most favor-  
able side, to see them at all, and sometimes wo  
doubted if we were’ not: counting our eyelashes.  
Charles Darwin states that he saw, from the base  
of the Andes, “the masts of the vessels at anchor  
in the bay of Valparaiso, although not less than  
twenty-six geographical miles distant,” and that  
Anson had been surprised at the distance at  
which his vessels were discovered from the coast,  
without knowing the reason, namely, the great  
height of the land and the transparency of the  
air. Steamers may be detected much farther

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THE BEACH AGAIN 145  
  
than sailing vessels, for, as one says, when their  
hulls and masts of wood and iron are down,  
their smoky masts and streamers still betray  
them; and the same writer, speaking of tho  
‘comparative advantages of bituminous and an-  
thracite coal for war-steamers, states that “from  
‘the ascent of the columns of smoke above the  
horizon, the motions of the steamers in Calais  
Harbor [on the coast of France] are at all times  
observable at Ramsgate [on the English coast),  
from the first lighting of the fires to the putting  
out at sea; and that in America the steamers  
burning the fat bituminous coal can be tracked  
‘at sea at least seventy miles before the hulls be-  
come visible, by the dense columns of black  
smoke pouring out of their chimneys, and trail-  
ing along the horizon.”  
  
‘Though there were numerous vessels at this  
great distance in the horizon on every side, yet  
the vast spaces between them, like the spaces  
between the stars,—far as they wore distant  
from us, so were they from one another—nay,  
some were twice as far from each other as from  
‘us, — impressed us with a sense of the immensity  
of the ocean, the “unfruitful ocean,” as it has  
been called, and we could see what proportion  
man and his works bear to the globe. As wo  
Jooked off, and saw the water growing darker  
and darker and deeper and deoper the farther

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146 CAPE CoD  
  
we looked, till it was awful to consider, and it  
appeared to have no relation to the friendly  
land, either as shore or bottom, — of what use is  
a bottom if it is out of sight, if it is two or  
three miles from the surface, and you are to be  
drowned 20 long before you get to it, though it  
were made of the same stuff with your native  
soil?—over that ocean where, as the Veda  
says, “there is nothing to give support, nothing  
to rest upon, nothing to cling to,” I felt that I  
was a land animal. The man in a balloon even  
may commonly alight on the earth in a few mo-  
ments, but the sailor’s only hope is that he may  
reach the distant shore. I could then appre-  
ciate the heroism of the old navigator, Sir  
Humphrey Gilbert, of whom it is related, that  
being overtaken by a storm when on his return  
from America, in the year 1583, far northeast-  
ward from where we were, sitting abaft with a  
book in his hand, just before he was swallowed  
up in the deep, he cried out to his comrades in  
the Hind, as they came within hearing, “We  
are as near to Heaven by sea as by land.” I  
saw that it would not be easy to realize.  
  
On Cape Cod the next most eastern land you  
hear of is St. George’s Bank (the fishermen tell  
of “Georges,” “Cashus,” and other sunken  
lands which they frequent). Every Cape man  
has a theory about George’s Bank having been

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THE BEACH AGAIN aT  
  
an island once, and in their accounts they grad-  
ually reduce the shallowness from six, five, four,  
two fathoms, to somebody’s confident assertion  
that he has scen a mackerel-gull sitting on a  
piece of dry land there. It reminded me, when  
I thought of the shipwrecks which had taken  
place there, of the Isle of Demons, laid down off  
this coast in old charts of the New World.  
‘There must be something monstrous, methinks,  
in , vision of the sea bottom from over some  
  
a thousand miles from the shore, more  
awful than its imagined bottomlessness; a  
drowned continent, all livid and frothing at the  
nostrils, like the body of a drowned man, which  
is better sunk deep than near the surface.  
  
T have been surprised to discover from a  
steamer the shallowness of Massachusetts Bay  
itself. Off Billingsgate Point I could have  
touched the bottom with a pole, and I plainly  
saw it variously shaded with seaweed, at five or  
six miles from the shore. This is “The Shoal-  
ground of the Cape,” it is true, but elsewhere  
  
“the Bay is not much deeper than a country  
pond. We are told that the deepest water in  
the English Channel between Shakespeare's  
Cliff and Cape Gris-Neg, in France, is one hun-  
ared and eighty feet; and Guyot says that “the  
Baltic Sea has a depth of only one hundred and  
twenty feet between the coasts of Germany and

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148 CAPE COD  
  
those of Sweden,” and “the Adriatic between  
‘Venice and Trieste has a depth of only one hun-  
red and thirty feet.” A pond in my native  
town, only half a mile long, is more than one  
hundred fect deep.  
  
‘The ocean is but a larger lake. At midsum-  
mer you may sometimes see a strip of glassy  
smoothness on it, a few rods in width and many  
miles long, as if the surface there were covered  
with a thin pellicle of oil, just as on a country  
pond; a sort of stand-still, you would say, at  
the meeting or parting of two currents of air (if  
‘it does not rather mark the unrippled steadiness  
of a current of water beneath), for sailors tell  
of the ocean and land breeze meeting between  
the fore and aft sails of a vessel, while the latter  
are full, the former being suddenly taken aback.  
Daniel Webster, in one of his letters describing  
blue-fishing off Martha’s Vineyard, referring to  
those smooth places, which fishermen and sailors  
call “slicks,” says: “We met with them yester-  
day, and our boatman made for them, whenever  
discovered. He said they were caused by the  
blue-fish chopping up their prey. That is to  
say, those voracious fellows get into a school of  
menhaden, which are too large to swallow  
whole, and they bite them into pieces to suit  
their tastes. And the oil from this butchery,  
rising to the surface, makes the ‘slick ’.”

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THE BEACH AGAIN 149  
  
‘Yot this camo placid Ocean, as civil now as a  
city’s harbor, a place for ships and commerce,  
will erelong be lashed into sudden fury, and all  
its caves and cliffs will resound with tumult. It  
will ruthlessly heave these vessels to and fro,  
break them in pieces in its sandy or stony jaws,  
and deliver their crews to sea-monsters. It will  
play with them like seaweed, distend them like  
dead frogs, and carry them about, now high,  
now low, to show to the fishes, giving them »  
nibble, ‘This gentle -Ocean will toss and tear  
the rag of a man’s body like the father of mad  
bulls, and his relatives may be seen seeking the  
remnants for weeks along tho strand. From  
some quiet inland hamlet they have rushed weep-  
ing to the unheard-of shore, and now stand un-  
certain where a sailor has recently been buried  
amid the sand-bills,  
  
It is generally supposed that they who have  
Jong been conversant with the Ocean can fore-  
‘tell, by certain indications, such as its roar and  
the notes of sea-fowl, when it will change from  
calm to storm; but probably no such ancient  
mariner as we dream of exists; they know no  
‘more, at least, than the older sailors do about  
this voyage of life on which we are all embarked.  
Nevertheless, we love to hear the sayings of old  
sailors, and their accounts of natural phenomena  
  
which totally ignore, and are ignored by,

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150 CAPE COD  
  
science; and possibly they have not always  
looked over the gunwale so long in vain. Kalm  
repeats a story which was told him in Philadel-  
phia by a Mr. Cock, who was one day sailing to  
tho West Indies in a small yacht, with an old  
man on board who was well acquainted with  
those seas, “The old man sounding the depth,  
called to the mate to tell Mr. Cock to launch  
the boats immediately, and to put a sufficient  
number of men into them, in order to tow the  
yacht during the calm, that they might reach  
the island before them as soon as possible, as  
within twenty-four hours there would be a  
strong hurricane. Mr. Cock asked him what  
reasons he had to think so; the old man replied,  
that on sounding, he saw the lead in the water  
at a distance of many fathoms more than he had  
seen it before; that therefore the water was be-  
come clear all of a sudden, which he looked upon  
as acertain sign of an impending hurricane in  
the sea.” The sequel of the story is, that by  
good fortune, and by dint of rowing, they man-  
aged to gain a safe harbor before the hurricane  
hhad reached its height; but it finally raged with  
0 much violence, that not only many ships were  
lost and houses unroofed, but even their own  
‘vessel in harbor was washed so far on shore that  
several weeks elapsed before it could be got off.  
  
‘The Greeks would not have called the ocean

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THE BEACH AGAIN 151  
  
arpiyeros, or unfruitful, though it does not pro-  
uco wheat, if they had viewed it by the light of  
modern science, for naturalists now assert that  
“the sea, and not the land, is the principal seat  
of life,” —though not of vegetable life. Dar-  
win affirms that “our most. thickly inhabited  
forests appear almost as deserts when we come  
to compare them with the corresponding regions  
of the ocean.” Agassiz and Gould tell us that  
“tho sea tems with animals of all classes, far  
beyond the extreme point of flowering plants;””  
but they add, that “experiments of dredging in  
very deep water have also taught us that the  
abyss of the ocean is nearly a desert;” — “so  
that modern investigations,” to quote the words  
of Desor, “merely go to confirm the great idea  
which was vaguely anticipated by the ancient  
poets and philosophers, that the Ocean is the  
origin of all things.” Yet marine animals and  
plants hold a lower rank in the scale of being  
than land animals and plants. “There is no  
instance known,” says Desor, “of an animal  
becoming aquatic in its perfect state, after hav-  
ing lived in its lower stage on dry land,” but a  
in the case of the tadpole, “the progress invari-  
ably points towards the dry land.” In short,  
the dry land itself came through and ont of the  
water in its way to the heavens, for, “in going  
back through the geological ages, we come to

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152 CAPE COD  
  
an epoch when, according to all appearances,  
the dry land did not exist, and when the surface  
of our globe was entirely covered with water.”  
We looked on the sea, then, once more, not as  
drpéyeros, or unfruitful, but as it has been more  
‘truly called, the “laboratory of continents.”  
‘Though we have indulged in some placid re-  
flections of late, the reader must not forget that  
‘the dash and roar of the waves were incessant.  
Indeed, it would be well if he were to read wit  
a large conch-shell at his ear. But notwith-  
standing that it was very cold and windy to-day,  
it was such cold as we thought would not cause  
cone to take cold who was exposed to it, owing  
to the saltness of the air and the dryness of the  
soil. Yet the author of the old “Description of  
Wellfleet” says, “The atmosphere is very much  
impregnated with saline particles, which, per-  
haps, with the great use of fish, and the neglect  
of cider and spruce-beer, may be a reason why  
‘the people are more subject to sore mouths and  
throats than in other places,

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vi  
ACROSS THE CAPE  
  
‘Wurex we have returned from the seaside,  
we sometimes ask ourselves why we did not  
spend more time in gazing at the sea; but very  
oon the traveler does not look at the sea more  
than at the heavens. As for the interior, if the  
elevated sand-bar in the midst of the ocean can  
be said to have any interior, it was an excood-  
ingly desolate landscape, with rarely a cultivated  
or cultivable field in sight. We saw no villages,  
and seldom a house, for these are generally on  
the Bay side. It was a succession of shrubby  
bills and valleys, now wearing an autumnal tint.  
‘You would frequently think, from the character  
of the surface, the dwarfish trees, and the bear-  
berries around, that you were on the top of a  
mountain. The only wood in Eastham was on  
the edge of Wellfleet. The pitch-pines were  
not commonly more than fifteen or eighteen feet  
high. ‘The larger ones were covered with  
lichens, — often hung with the long gray Usnea.  
‘There is scarcely a white-pine on the forearm of  
the Cape. Yet in the northwest part of East-

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154 CAPE COD  
  
ham, near the Camp Ground, we saw, the next  
summer, some quite rural, and even sylvan re-  
treats, for the Cape, where small rustling groves  
of oaks and locusts and whispering pines, on  
perfectly level ground, made\_a little paradise.  
‘The locusts, both transplanted and growing nat-  
urally about the houses there, appeared to flour-  
ish better than any other tree. There were  
thin belts of wood in Wellfleet and Truro, a  
mile or more from the Atlantic, but, for the  
moat part, we could see the horizon through  
them, or, if extensive, the trees were not large.  
Both oaks and pines had often the same flat look  
with the apple-trees. Commonly, the oak woods  
twenty-five years old were a mere seraggy shrub-  
bery nine or ten feet high, and we could fre-  
quently reach to their topmost leaf. Much that  
‘is called “woods” was about half as high as this,  
—only patches of shrub-oak, bayberry, beach-  
plum, and wild roses, overrun with woodbine.  
‘When the roses were in bloom, these patches in  
the midst of the sand displayed such a profusion  
of blossoms, mingled with the aroma of the bay-  
berry, that no Italian or other artificial rose-  
garden could equal them. They were perfectly  
Elysian, and realized my idea of an oasis in the  
desert. Huckleberry bushes were very abun-  
dant, and the next summer they bore a remark-  
able quantity of that kind of gall called Huckle-

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ACROSS THE CAPE 155  
  
berry-apple, forming quite handsome though  
monstrous blossoms. But it must be added,  
that this shrubbery swarmed with wood-ticks,  
sometimes very troublesome parasites, and  
which it takes very horiy fingers to crack.  
  
‘The inhabitants of these towns have a great  
regard for a tree, though their standard for one  
is necessarily neither large nor high; and when  
they tell you of the large trees that once grew  
here, you must think of them, not as absolutely  
largo, but large compared with the present gen-  
eration. Their “brave old oaks,” of which  
they speak with so much respect, and which  
they will point out to you as relies of the primi-  
tive forest, one hundred or one hundred and  
fifty, ay, for aught they know, two hundred  
years old, have a ridiculously dwarfish appear-  
ance, which excites a smile in the beholder.  
‘The largest and most venerable which they will  
show you in such a case are, perhaps, not more  
than twenty or twenty-five feet high. I was  
especially amused by the Liliputian old oaks in  
the south part of Truro. To the inexperienced  
eye, which appreciated their proportions only,  
they might appear vast as the tree which saved  
his royal majesty, but measured they were  
dwarfed at once almost into lichens which a deer  
might eat up ina morning. Yet they will tell  
you that large schooners were once built of tim-

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156 CAPE CoD  
  
ber which grew in Wellfleet. The old houses  
also are built of che timber of the Cay but  
instead of the forests in the midst of which they  
originally stood, barren heaths, with poverty-  
grass for heather, now stretch away on every  
side. The modern houses are built of what is  
called “dimension timber,” imported from  
Maine, all ready to be set up, so that commonly  
-they do not touch it again with an axe. Almost  
all the wood used for fuel is imported by vessels  
or currents, and of course all the coal. I was  
told that probably a quarter of the fuel and a  
considerable part of the lumber used in North  
‘Truro was drift-wood. Many get all their fuel  
from the beach.  
  
Of birds not found in the interior of the  
State,— at least in my neighborhood,— I heard,  
in the summer, the Black-throated Bunting  
(Fringilla Americana) amid the shrubbery, and  
in the open land the Upland Plover (Zotanus  
Bartramius), whose quivering notes were ever  
‘and anon prolonged into a clear, somewhat  
plaintive yet hawk-like scream, which sounded  
at a very indefinite distance. ‘The bird may  
have been in the next field, though it sounded a  
mile off.  
  
To-day we were walking through Truro, a  
town of about eighteen hundred inhabitants.  
‘We had already come to Pamet River, which

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ACROSS THE CAPE 187  
  
‘empties into the Bay. This was the limit of the  
Pilgrims’ journey up the Cape from Provinee-  
town, when secking a place for settlement. It  
rises in a hollow within a few rods of the Atlan-  
tic, and one who lives near its souree told us  
that in high tides the sea leaked through, yet  
the wind and waves preserve intact the barrier  
between them, and thus the whole river is stead-  
ily driven westward butt-end foremost, —foun-  
tain-head, channel, and light-house, at the  
mouth, all together.  
  
Early in the afternoon we reached the High-  
land Light, whose white tower we had seen ris-  
ing out of the bank in front of us for the last  
mile or two. It is fourteen miles from tho  
Nauset Lights, on what is called the Clay  
Pounds, an immense bed of clay abutting on the  
Atlantic, and, as the keoper told us, stretching  
quite across the Cape, which is here only about  
‘two miles wide. We perceived at once a differ-  
‘ence in the soil, for there was an interruption of  
the desert, and a slight appearance of a sod un-  
der our feet, such as we had not seen for the last  
‘two days,  
  
‘After arranging to lodge at the light-house,  
we rambled across the Cape to the Bay, over a  
singularly bleak and barren-looking country,  
consisting of rounded hills and hollows, called  
by geologists diluvial elevations and depressions,

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158 CAPE COD  
  
—akind of scenery which has been compared  
to a chopped sea, though this suggests too sud-  
den a transition. ‘There is a delineation of this  
very landscape in Hitchcock's Report on the  
Geology of Massachusetts, a work which, by its  
size at least, reminds one of a diluvial elevation  
itself. Looking southward from the light-  
house, the Cape appeared like an elevated pla-  
teau, sloping very regularly, though slightly,  
downward from the edge of the bank on the  
Atlantic side, about one hundred and fifty feet  
above the ocean, to that on the Bay side. On  
traversing this we found it to be interrupted by  
broad valleys or gullies, which become the hol-  
Jows in the bank when the sea has worn up to  
them. They are commonly at right angles with  
the shore, and often extend quite across the  
Cape. Some of the valleys, however, are cireu-  
lar, a hundred feet deep, without any outlet, as  
if the Cape had sunk in those places, or its  
sands had run out. ‘The few scattered houses  
which wo passed, being placed at the bottom of  
the hollows, for shelter and fertility, were, for  
the most part, concealed entirely, as much as if  
they had been swallowed up in the earth. Even  
a village with its meeting-house, which we had  
left little more than a stone’s throw behind, had  
sunk into the earth, spire and all, and we saw  
only the surface of the upland and the sea on

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ACROSS THE CAPE 159  
  
either band. When approaching it, we had  
mistaken the belfry for a summer-house on the  
plain. We began to think that we might tum-  
ble into a village before we were aware of it, as  
into an ant-lion’s hole, and be drawn into the  
sand irrecoverably. The most conspicuous ob-  
jects on the land were a distant windmill, or a  
meeting-house standing alone, for only they  
could afford to occupy an exposed place. A  
great part of the township, however, is a bar-  
en, heath-like plain, and perhaps one third of  
it lies in common, though the property of indi-  
viduals. The author of the old “Description of  
‘Truro,” speaking of the soil, says, “The snow,  
which would be of essential service to it pro-  
vided it lay level and covered the ground, is  
blown into drifts and into the sea.” ‘This pecu-  
liar open country, with here and there a patch  
of shrubbery, extends as much as seven miles,  
or from Pamet River on the south to High  
Head on the north, and from Ocean to Bay.  
‘To walk over it makes on a stranger such an im-  
pression as being at sea, and he finds it impos-  
sible to estimate distances in any weather. A  
windmill or a herd of cows may seem to be far  
away in the horizon, yet, after going a few rods,  
he will be close upon them. He is also deluded  
by other kinds of mirage. When, in the sum-  
mer, I saw a family a-blueberrying a mile off,

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160 CAPE COD  
  
walking about amid the dwarfish bushes which  
did not come up higher than their ankles, they  
seemed to me to be a race of giants, twenty feet  
high at least,  
  
‘The highest and sandiest portion next the  
Atlantic was thinly covered with beach - grass  
and indigo-weed. Next to this the surface of  
the upland generally consisted of white sand  
and gravel, like coarse salt, through which a  
scanty vegetation found its way up. It will  
give an ornithblogist some idea of its barrenness  
if I mention that the next June, the month of  
grass, I found a night-hawk’s eggs there, and  
that almost any square rod thereabouts, taken,  
at random, would be an eligible site for such a  
deposit. ‘The kildeer-plover, which loves a sim-  
ilar locality, also drops its eggs there, and fills  
the air above with its din. ‘This upland also  
produced Cladonia lichens, \_poverty-grass,  
savory-leaved aster (Diplopappus linariifolius),  
mouse-ear, bearberry, ete. On a few hillsides  
the savory-leaved aster and mouse-ear alone  
made quite a dense sward, said to be very pretty  
when the aster is in bloom. In some parts the  
two species of poverty-grass (Hudsonia tomen-  
tosa and ericoides), which deserve a better  
name, reign for miles in little hemispherical  
‘tufts or islets, like moss, scattered over the  
waste. They linger in bloom there till the mid-

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ACROSS THE CAPE 161  
  
dle of July. Occasionally near the beach these  
rounded beds, as also those of the sea-sandwort  
(Honkenya peploides), were filled with sand  
within an inch of their tops, and were hard, like  
large ant-hills, while the surrounding sand was  
soft. In summer, if the poverty-grass grows at  
the head of a Hollow looking toward the sea, in  
a bleak position where the wind rushes up, the  
northern or exposed half of the tuft is some-  
times all black and dead like an oven-broom,  
while the opposite half is yellow with blossoms,  
the whole hillside thus presenting a remarkable  
contrast when seen from the poverty-stricken  
and the flourishing side. ‘This plant, which in  
many places would be esteemed an ornament, is  
here despised by many on account of its being  
associated with barrenness. It might well be  
adopted for the Barnstable coat-of-arms, in a  
field sableux. I should be proud of it. Here  
‘and there were tracts of beach-grass mingled  
with the seaside golden -rod and beach - pea,  
which reminded us still more forcibly of the  
ovean.  
  
‘We read that there was not a brook in Truro.  
Yet there were deer here once, which must often  
have panted in vain; but I am pretty sure that  
T afterward saw a small fresh-water brook emp-  
tying into the south side of Pamet River, though  
Twas so heedless as not to taste it. At any

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162 CAPE COD  
  
rate, a little boy near by told me that he drank  
at it, There was not a tree as far as we could  
see, and that was many miles each way, the  
general level of the upland being about the same  
everywhere. Even from the Atlantic side we  
overlooked the Bay, and saw to Manomet Point  
in Plymouth, and better from that side because  
it was the highest. The almost universal bare-  
ness and smoothness of the landscape were a8  
agreeable as novel, making it so much the more  
Tike the deck of a vessel. We saw vessels  
ing south into the Bay, on the one hand, and  
north along the Atlantic shore, on the other, all  
with an aft wind.  
  
‘The single road which runs lengthwise the  
Cape, now winding over the plain, now through  
the shrubbery which scrapes the wheels of the  
stage, was a mere cart-track, in the sand, com-  
monly without any fences to confine it, and con-  
tinually changing from this side to that, to  
harder ground, or sometimes to avoid the tide.  
But the inhabitants travel the waste here and  
there pilgrim-wise and staff in hand, by narrow  
footpaths, through which the sand flows out and  
reveals the nakedness of the land. We shud-  
dered at the thought of living there and taking  
our afternoon walks over those barren swells,  
where we could overlook every step of our walk  
before taking it, and would have to pray for a

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ACROSS THE CAPE 168  
  
fog or a snow-storm to conceal our destiny.  
‘The walker there must soon eat his heart.  
  
In the north part of the town there is no  
house from shore to shore for several miles, and  
it is as wild and solitary as the Western Prai-  
—used to be. Indeed, one who has seen  
every house in Truro, will be surprised to hear  
of the number of the inhabitants, but perhaps  
five hundred of the men and boys of this small  
town were then abroad on their fishing-grounds.  
Only a few men stay at home to till the sand or  
watch for blackfish. ‘The farmers are fisher-  
men-farmers and understand better ploughing  
the sea than the land. ‘They do not disturb their  
sands much, though there is a plenty of sea-weed.  
in the creeks, to say nothing of blackfish occa  
sionally rotting on the shore. Between the  
Pond and East Harbor Village there was an in-  
teresting plantation of pitch- pines, twenty or  
thirty acres in extent, like those which we had  
already seen from the stage. Ono who lived  
near said that the land was purchased by two  
men for a shilling or twenty-five cents an acre.  
Some is not considered worth writing a deed for.  
This soil or sand, which was partially covered  
with poverty and beach grass, sorrel, ete., was  
furrowed at intervals of about four feet and the  
seed dropped by a machine. The pines had  
come up admirably and grown the first year

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164 CAPE COD  
  
three or four inches, and the second six inches  
and more. Where the seed had been lately  
planted the white sand was freshly exposed in  
‘an endless furrow winding round and round the  
sides of the deep hollows in a vortical, spiral  
manner, which produced a very singular effect,  
1s if you were looking into the reverse side of a  
vast banded shield. This experiment, so im-  
portant to the Cape, appeared very successful,  
and perhaps the time will come when the greater  
part of this kind of land in Barnstable County  
will be thus covered with an artificial pine-for-  
est, as has been done in some parts of France.  
In that country 12,500 acres of downs had been  
thus covered in 1811 near Bayonne. They are  
called pignadas, and according to Loudon “con-  
stitute the principal riches of the inhabitants,  
where there was a drifting desert before.” It  
seemed a nobler kind of grain to raise than corn  
even. :  
  
‘A few years ago Truro was remarkable among  
the Cape towns for the number of sheep raised  
in it; but I was told that at this time only two  
men kept sheep in the town, and in 1855, a  
‘Truro boy ten years old told me that he had  
never seen one. ‘They were formerly pastured  
on the unfenced lands or general fields, but now  
tho owners were more particular to assert their  
rights, and it cost too much for fencing. ‘The

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ACROSS THE CAPE 165  
  
rails are cedar from Maine, and two rails will  
answer for ordinary purposes, but four are re-  
quired for shop. ‘This was the reason assigned  
by one who had formerly kept them for not  
‘keeping them any longer. Fencing stuff is so  
expensive that I saw fences made with only one  
rail, and very often the rail when split was  
carefully tied with a string. In one of the vil-  
lages I saw the next: summer a cow tethered by  
a rope six rods long, the rope long in proportion,  
‘as the feed was short and thin. Sixty rods, ay,  
all the cables of the Cape, would have been no  
more than fair, Tethered in the desert for fear  
that she would got into Arabia Felix! Ibelped  
aman weigh a bundle of hay which he was sell-  
ing to his neighbor, holding one end of a pole  
from which it swung by a stecl-yard hook, and  
this was just half his whole crop. In short, the  
country looked so barren that I several times  
refrained from asking the inhabitants for a  
string or a piece of wrapping-paper, for fear I  
should rob them, for they plainly were obliged  
to import these things as well as rails, and where  
there were no news-boys, I did not see what they  
‘would do for waste paper.  
  
The objects around us, the makeshifts of fish-  
ermen ashore, often made us look down to see if  
‘we were standing on terra firma. In the wells  
everywhere a block and tackle were used to raise

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166 CAPE COD  
  
the bucket, instead of a windlass, and by almost  
every house was laid up a spar or a plank or two  
full of auger-holes, saved from a wreck. ‘The  
windmills were partly built of these, and they  
were worked into the public bridges. The light-  
house keeper, who was having his barn shingled,  
told me casually that he had made three thou-  
sand good shingles for that purpose out of a mast.  
You would sometimes see an old oar used for a  
rail. Frequently also some fair-weather finery  
ripped off a vessel by a storm near the coast was  
nailed up against an outhouse. I saw fastened  
to a shed near the light-house a long new sign  
with the words “ANGLO Saxon” on it in large  
gilt letters, as if it were a useless part which the  
ship could afford to lose, or which the sailors  
hhad discharged at the same time with the pilot.  
But it interested somewhat as if it had been a  
part of the Argo, clipped off in passing through  
the Symplogades.  
  
To the fisherman, the Cape itself is a sort of  
store-ship laden with supplies, —a safer and  
larger raft which carries the women and chil-  
dren, the old men and the sick, and indeed sea-  
phrases are as common on it as on board a vessel.  
‘Thus is it ever with a sea-going poople. ‘The  
‘old Northmen used to speak of the ‘keel-ridge””  
of the country, that is, the ridge of the Doffra-  
field Mountains, as if the land were a boat turned

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ACROSS THE CAPE 167  
  
bottom up. I was frequently reminded of the  
Northmen here. ‘The inhabitants of the Cape  
are often at once farmers and sea-rovers; they  
are more than vikings or kings of the bays, for  
their sway extends over the open sea also. A  
farmer in Wellflect, at whose house I afterward  
spent a night, who had raised fifty bushels of  
potatoes the previous year, which is a large crop  
for the Cape, and had extensive salt-works,  
pointed to his schooner, which lay in sight, in  
which he and his man and boy occasionally ran  
down the coast a-trading as far as the Capes of  
Virginia. This was his market-cart, and his  
hired man knew how to steer her. Thus he  
rove two teams a-field,  
‘ora the high seas appeared  
  
‘Under the opening eyelide of the morn.”  
‘Though probably he would not hear much of the  
“ gray-fly” on his way to Virginia.  
  
‘A. great proportion of the inhabitants of the  
Cape are always thus abroad about their team-  
ing on some ocean highway or other, and tho  
history of one of their ordinary trips would cast,  
the Argonautic expedition into the shade. I  
have just heard of a Cape Cod captain who was  
expected home in the beginning of the winter  
from the West Indies, but was long since given  
up for lost, till his relations at length have  
heard with joy, that, after getting within forty

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168 CAPE COD  
  
miles of Cape Cod light, he was driven back by  
nine successive gales to Key West, between  
Florida and Cuba, and was once again shaping  
his course for home. ‘Thus he spent his winter.  
In ancient times the adventures of these two or  
three men and boys would have been made the  
basis of» myth, but now such tales are crowded  
into a line of shorthand signs, like an algebraic  
formula in the shipping news. ‘Wherever  
over the world,” said Palfrey in his oration at  
Barnstable, “you seo the stars and stripes float-  
ing, you may have good hope that beneath them  
some one will be found who can tell you the  
soundings of Barnstable, or Wellfleet, or  
Chatham Harbor.”  
  
passed by the home of somebody's (or every-  
body’s) Uncle Bill, one day over on the Ply-  
mouth shore. It was a schooner half keeled up  
on the mud; we aroused the master out of a.  
sound sleep at noonday, by thumping on the  
bottom of his vessel till he presented himself at  
the hatchway, for we wanted to borrow his  
clam-digger. Meaning to make him a call, I  
looked out the next morning, and lo! he had.  
run over to “the Pines” the evening before,  
fearing an easterly storm. He outrode the  
great gale in the spring of 1851, dashing about  
alone in Plymouth Bay. He goes after rock-  
weed, lighters vessels, and saves wrecks. I still

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ACROSS THE CAPE 169  
  
saw him lying in the mud over at “the Pines”  
in the horizon, which place he could not leave if  
he would, till flood tide. But he would not  
then probably. ‘This waiting for the tide is a  
singular feature in life by the seashore. A  
frequent answer is, “Well! you can’t start for  
two hours yet.” It is something new to a lands-  
man, and at first he is not disposed to wait.  
History says that “two inhabitants of Truro  
were the first who adventured: to the Falldand  
Isles in pursuit of whales. This voyage was  
undertaken in the year 1774, by the advice of  
Admiral Montague of the British navy, and was  
crowned with success.”  
  
‘At the Pond Village wo saw a pond three  
eighths of a mile long densely filled with eat-tail  
flags, seven feet high, —enongh for all the  
coopers in New England.  
  
‘The western shore was nearly as sandy as the  
eastern, but the water was much smoother, and  
tthe bottom was partially covered with the slender  
grass-like seaweed (Zostera), which wo had not  
seen on the Atlantic side; there were also a few  
rude sheds for trying fish on the beach there,  
which made it appear less wild. In the few  
marshes on this side we afterward saw Sam-  
phire, Rosemary, and other plants new to us in-  
landers.  
  
In the summer and fall sometimes, hundreds

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170 CAPE COD  
  
of blackfish (the Social Whale, Globicephalus  
melas of De Kay; called also Black Whale-fish,  
Howling Whale, Bottle-head, ete.), fifteen feet  
or more in length, are driven ashore in a single  
achool here. I witnessed such a scene in July,  
1855. A carpenter who was working at tho  
ight-house arriving early in the morning re-  
marked that he did not know but he had lost  
fifty dollars by coming to his work; for as he  
came along the Bay side he heard them driving  
a school of blackfish ashore, and he had debated  
with himself whether he should not go and join  
them and take his share, but had concluded to  
come to his work. After breakfast I came over  
‘to this place, about two miles distant, and near  
the beach met some of the fishermen returning  
from their chase. Looking up and down the  
shore, I could see about a mile south some largo  
black masses on the sand, which I knew must be  
Dlackfish, and a man or two about them, As I  
walked along towards them I soon came to a  
large carcass whose head was gone and whose  
blubber had boen stripped off some weeks be-  
fore; the tide was just beginning to move it,  
and the stench compelled me to go a long way  
round. When I came to Great Hollow I found  
fisherman and some boys on the watch, and  
counted sbout thirty blackish, just killed, with  
many lance wounds, and the water was more or

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ACROSS THE CAPE 11  
  
less bloody around. They were partly on shore  
and partly in the water, held by a rope round  
their tails till the tide should leave them. A.  
boat had been somewhat stove by the tail of  
one. They were a smooth, shining black, like  
India-rubber, and had remarkably simple and  
lumpish forms for animated creatures, with a  
blunt round snout or head, whale-like, and simple  
stiff-looking- flippers. ‘The largest were about  
fifteen feet long, but one or two were only five  
feot long, and still without teeth. ‘The fisher-  
man slashed one with his jackknife, to show mo  
how thick the blubber was,—about three  
inches; and as I passed my finger through the  
cut it was covered thick with oil. ‘The blubber  
looked like pork, and this man said that when  
they were trying it the boys would sometimes  
come round with a piece of bread in one hand,  
and take a picce of blubber in the other to eat  
with it, preferring it to pork scraps. He also  
cut into the flesh beneath, which was firm and  
red like beef, and he said that for his part ho  
preferred it when fresh to beef. It is stated  
that in 1812 blackfish were used as food by tho  
poor of Bretagne. They were waiting for the  
tide to leave these fishes high and dry, that they  
might strip off the blubber and carry it to their  
try-works in their boats, where they try it on  
the beach. They get commonly a barrel of oil,

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172 CAPE COD  
  
worth fifteen or twenty dollars, to a fish, ‘There  
were many lances and harpoons in the boats, —  
much slenderer instruments than I had expected.  
‘An old man came along the beach with a horse  
and wagon distributing the dinners of the fisher-  
men, which their wives had put up in little pails  
and jugs, and which he had collected in the  
Pond Village, and for this service, I suppose,  
he received a share of the ofl. If one could not  
tell his own pail, he took the first he came to.  
‘As I stood there they raised the ery of “an-  
other school,” and we could see their black  
backs and their blowing about a mile north-  
ward, as they went leaping over the sea like  
horses. Some boats were already in pursuit  
there, driving them toward the beach. Other  
fishermen and boys running up began to jump  
into the boats and push them off from where I  
stood, and I might have gone too had I chosen.  
Soon there were twenty-five or thirty boats in  
pursuit, some large ones under sail, and others  
rowing with might and main, keeping outside of  
the school, those nearest to the fishes striking on  
the sides of their boats and blowing horns to drive  
them on to the beach. It was an exciting race,  
If they succeed in driving them ashore each boat  
takes one share, and then each man, but if they  
are compelled to strike them off shore each  
boat's company take what they strike. I

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ACROSS THE CAPE 118  
  
walked rapidly along the shore toward the north,  
while the fishermen were rowing still more  
swiftly to join their companions, and a little boy  
‘who walked by my side was congratulating him-  
self that his father’s boat was beating another  
one. An old blind fisherman whom we met,  
inquired, “Where are they, I can’t see. Have  
they got them?” In the mean while the fishes  
had turned and were escaping northward toward  
Provincetown, only occasionally the back of one  
being seen. So the nearest crews were com-  
pelled to strike them, and we saw several boats  
soon made fast, each to its fish, which, four or  
five rods ahead, was drawing it like a race-horse  
straight toward the beach, leaping half out of  
water blowing blood and water from its hole,  
and leaving a streak of foam behind. But they  
went ashore too far north for us, though we  
could see the fishermen leap out and lance them  
on the sand. It was just like pictures of whal-  
ing which I have seen, and a fisherman told me  
that it was nearly as dangerous. In his first  
trial he had been much excited, and in his haste  
had used a lance with its scabbard on, but nev-  
ertheless had thrust it quite through his fish.  
  
T learned that a few days before this one hun-  
dred and eighty blackfish had been driven ashore  
in one school at Eastham, a little farther south,  
and that the keeper of Billingsgate Point light

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114 CAPE CoD  
  
‘went out one morning about the same time and  
cut his initials on the backs of a lange school  
which had run ashore in the night, and sold his  
rright to them to Provincetown for one thousand  
dollars, and probably Provincetown made as  
much more, Another fisherman told me that  
nineteen years ago threo hundred and eighty  
were driven ashore in one school at Great Hol-  
low. In the Naturalists’ Library, it is said  
that, in the winter of 1809-10, one thousand  
‘one hundred and ten “approached the shore of  
Hvalfiord, Iceland, and were captured.” Do  
Kay says it is not known why they are stranded.  
But one fisherman declared to me that they ran  
ashore in pursuit of squid, and that they gener-  
ally came on the coast about the last of July.  
‘About a week afterward, when I came to this  
shore, it was strewn, as far as T could see with a  
glass, with the carcasses of blackfish stripped  
of their blubber and their heads cut off; the  
latter lying higher up. Walking on the beach  
‘was out of the question on account of the stench.  
Between Provincetown and Truro they lay in  
the very path of the stage. Yet no stops were  
taken to abate the nuisance, and men were  
catching lobsters as usual just off the shore, I  
was told that they did sometimes tow them out  
and sink them; yet I wondered where they got  
the stones to sink them with. Of course they

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ACROSS THE CAPE 115  
  
might be made into guano, and Cape Cod is not  
so fertile that her inhabitants can afford to do  
without this manure,—to say nothing of the  
diseases they may produce.  
  
After my return home, wishing to learn what  
was known about the Blackfish, I had recourse to  
the reports of the zodlogical surveys of the State,  
and I found that Storer had rightfully omitted  
it in his Report on the Fishes, since it is not a  
fish; 80 I turned to Emmons’s Report of the  
Mammalia, but was surprised to find that the  
seals and whales were omitted by him because  
he had had no opportunity to observe them.  
Considering how this State has risen and thriven  
by its fisheries, — that the legislature which au-  
thorized the Zodlogical Survey sat under the  
emblem of a codfish, — that Nantucket and New  
Bedford are within our limits, —that an early  
riser may find a thousand or fifteen hundred  
dollars’ worth of blackfish on the shore in a  
morning, — that the Pilgrims saw the Indians  
cutting up a blackfish on the shore at Eastham,  
and called a part of that shore “Grampus Bay,”  
from the number of blackfish they found there,  
before they got to Plymouth, —and that from  
that time to this these fishes have continued to  
enrich one or two counties almost annually, and  
that their decaying carcasses were now poison-  
ing the air of one county for more than thirty

Page-8634

176 CAPE COD  
  
miles, —I thought it remarkable that neither  
the popular nor scientific name was to be found  
in a report on our mammalia, —a catalogue of  
the productions of our land and water.  
  
‘We had here, as well as all across the Cape,  
a fair view of Provincetown, five or six miles  
distant over the water toward the west, under  
‘its shrubby sand-hills, with its harbor now full  
of vessels whose masts mingled with tho spires  
of its churches, and gave it the appearance of a  
quite lange seaport town.  
  
‘The inhabitants of all the lower Cape towns  
enjoy thus the prospect of two seas. Standing  
on the western or larboard shore, and looking  
across to where the distant mainland looms,  
they can say, This is Massachusetts Bay; and  
then, after an hour’s sauntering walk, they may  
stand on the starboard side, beyond which no  
land is seen to loom, and say, This is the Atlan-  
tic Ocean.  
  
On our way back to the light-house, by whose  
whitewashed tower we steered as securely as  
the mariner by its light at night, we passed  
through a graveyard, which apparently was  
saved from being blown away by its slates, for  
they had enabled a thick bed of huckleberry  
‘bushes to root themselves amid the graves. We  
thought it would be worth the while to read the  
epitaphs where so many were lost at sea; how-

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ACROSS THE CAPE 17  
  
ever, as not only their lives, but commonly  
their bodies also, were lost or not identified,  
there were fewer epitaphs of this sort than we  
expected, though there were nota few. Their  
graveyard is the ocean. Near the eastern side  
we started up a fox in a hollow, the only kind  
of wild quadruped, if I except a skunk in a salt-  
marsh, that we saw in all our walk (unless  
painted and box tortoises may be called quad-  
rupeds). He was a large, plump, shaggy fel-  
low, like a yellow dog, with, as usual, a white.  
tip to his tail, and looked as if he had fared well  
on the Cape. He cantered away into the shrub-  
oaks and bayberry bushes which chanced to  
grow there, but were hardly high enough to con-  
ceal him. I saw another the next summer leap-  
ing over the top of a beach-plum a little farther  
north, a small are of his course (which I trust is  
not yet run), from which I endeavored in vain  
to calculate his whole orbit; there were too  
many unknown attractions to be allowed for. I  
also saw the exuviso of a third fast sinking into  
the sand, and added the skull to my collection.  
Hence, I concluded that they must be plenty  
thereabouts; but a traveler may meet with more  
than an inhabitant, since he is more likely to  
take an unfrequented route across the country.  
They told me that in some years they died off  
in great numbers by a kind of madness, under

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178 CAPE COD  
  
the effect of which they were seen whinling  
round and round as if in pursuit of their tails,  
In Crantz’s actount of Greenland, he says,  
“They (the foxes) live upon birds and their eggs,  
and, when they can’t get them, upon crow-ber-  
rries, mussels, crabs, and what the sea casts up.”  
  
Just before reaching the light-house, we saw  
‘the sun set in the Bay,—for standing on that  
narrow Cape was, as I have said, like being on  
the deck of a vessel, or rather at the masthead  
of a man-of-war, thirty miles at sea, though we  
knew that at the same moment the sun was set-  
ting behind our native hills, which were just be-  
low the horizon in that direction. This sight  
rove everything else quite out of our heads,  
and Homer and the Ocean came in again with a  
rush, —  
  
“Er 8 bred "Oueang Aaurpb plas Ho,  
  
the shining torch of the sun fell into the ocean.

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vo  
THE HIGHLAND LIGHT  
  
‘Ture light-house, known to mariners as the  
Cape Cod or Highland Light, is one of our  
“primary sea-coast lights,” and is usually the  
first seen by those approaching the entrance of  
Massachusetts Bay from Europe. It is forty-  
three miles from Cape Ann Light, and forty-  
one from Boston Light. It stands about twenty  
rods from the edge of the bank, which is here  
formed of clay. I borrowed the plane and  
square, level and dividers, of a carpenter who  
was shingling a barn near by, and, using one of  
those shingles made of a mast, contrived a rude  
sort of quadrant, with pins for sights and pivots,  
and got the angle of elevation of the Bank op-  
posite the light-house, and with a couple of cod-  
ines the length of its slope, and so measured ite  
height on the shingle. It rises one hundred and  
ten feet above its immediate base, or about one  
hundred and twenty-three feet above mean low  
water. Graham, who has carefully surveyed  
the extremity of the Cape, makes it one hundred.  
and thirty fect. Tho mixed sand and clay lay

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180 CAPE COD  
  
at an angle of forty degrees with the horizon,  
where I measured it, but the clay is generally  
much steeper. No cow nor hen ever gets down  
it, Half a mile farther south the bank is fif-  
teen or twenty-five feet higher, and that ap-  
peared to be the highest land in North Truro.  
Even this vast clay bank is fast wearing away.  
Small streams of water trickling down it at in-  
tervals of two or three rods, have left the inter-  
mediate clay in the form of steep Gothic roofs  
fifty feet high or more, the ridges as sharp and  
rugged-looking as rocks; and in one place the  
bank is curiously eaten out in the form of a  
large semi-circular crater.  
  
‘According to the light-house keeper, the Cape  
is wasting here on both sides, though most on the  
eastern, In some places it had lost many rods  
within the last year, and, erelong, the light-  
house must be moved. We calculated, from  
is data, how soon the Cape would be quite  
worn away at this point, “for,” said he, “T ean  
remember sixty years back.” We were even  
more surprised at this last announcement—  
that at the slow waste of life and energy in  
our informant, for we had taken him to be not  
more than forty—than at the rapid wasting of  
the Cape, and we thought that he stood a fair  
chance to outlive the former.  
  
Between this October and June of the next

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 181  
  
year, I found that the bank had lost about forty  
feot in one place, opposite the light-house, and  
it was cracked more than forty feet farther from  
the edge at the last date, the shore being strewn  
with the recent rubbish. But I judged that  
generally it was not wearing away here at the  
rate of more than six feet annually. Any con-  
clusions drawn from the observations of a few  
‘years, or one generation only, are likely to prove  
false, and the Cape may balk expectation by its  
durability. Tn some places even a wrecker's  
foot-path down the bank lasts several years.  
One old inhabitant told us that when the light-  
house was built, in 1798, it was calculated that  
it would stand forty-five years, allowing the  
‘bank to waste one length of fence each year,  
“at,” said he, ‘there it is” (or rather another  
near the same site, about twenty rods from the  
edge of the bank).  
  
‘The sea is not gaining on the Cape every-  
where, for one man told me of a vessel wrecked  
long ago on the north of Provincetown whose  
“bones” (this was his word) are still visible  
many rods within the present line of the beach,  
hhalf buried in sand. Perchance they lie along-  
side the timbers of a whale. ‘The general state-  
ment of the inhabitants is, that the Cape is  
wasting on both sides, but extending itself on  
particular points on the south and west, as at

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182 CAPE CoD  
  
Chatham and Monomoy Beaches, and at Bil-  
Tingsgate, Long, and Raco Points. James Free-  
‘man stated in his day that above three miles  
hhad been added to Monomoy Beach during the  
previous fifty years, and it is said to be still ex-  
tending as fast as ever. A writer in the Massa-  
chusetts Magazine, in the last century, tells us  
that “when the English first settled upon the  
Cape, there was an island off Chatham, at three  
leagues’ distance, called Webb’s Island, con-  
taining twenty acres, covered with red-codar or  
savin. The inhabitants of Nantucket used to  
carry wood from it;” but he adds that in his  
day a lange rock alone marked the spot, and the  
water was six fathoms deep there. The en-  
trance to Nauset Harbor, which was once in  
Eastham, has now traveled south into Orleans.  
‘The islands in Wellfiget Harbor once formed a  
continuous beach, though now small vessels pass  
‘between them. And so of many other parts of  
this coast.  
  
Perhaps what the Ocean takes from one part  
of the Cape it gives to another, —robs Peter to  
pay Paul. On the eastern side the sea appears  
to be everywhere encroaching on the land. Not  
only the land is undermined, and its ruins car-  
ried off by currents, but the sand in blown from  
the beach directly up the steep bank, where it is  
one hundred and fifty foct high, and covers the

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 188  
  
original surface there many feet deep. If you  
sit on the edge you will have ocular demonstra  
tion of this by soon getting your eyes full.  
‘Thus the bank preserves its height as fast as it  
is worn away. ‘This sand is steadily traveling  
westward at a rapid rate, “more than a hundred  
yards,” says one writer, within the memory of  
inhabitants now living; so that in some places  
peat-meadows are buried deep under the sand,  
and the peat is cut through it; and in one placo  
large peat-meadow has made its appearance  
on the shore in the bank covered many feet deep,  
and peat has been cut there. This accounts for  
that great pebble of peat which we saw in the  
surf. The old oysterman had told us that many  
years ago he lost a “crittur” by her being  
mired in a swamp near the Atlantic side east of  
hhis house, and twenty years ago he lost the  
swamp itself entirely, but has since seen signs  
of it appearing on the beach. He also said that  
he had seen cedar stumps “as big as cart-  
wheels” (1) on the bottom of the Bay, three  
miles off Billingsgate Point, when leaning over  
‘the side of his boat in pleasant weather, and  
that that was dry land not long ago. Another  
told us that a log canoe known to have been  
buried many years before on the Bay side at  
East Harbor in Truro, where the Cape is ex-  
tremely narrow, appeared at length on the At-

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184 CAPE COD  
  
lantio side, the Cape having rolled over it, and  
an old woman said, —“‘Now, you se, it is true  
what I told you, that the Cape is moving.”  
  
‘The bars along the coast shift with every  
storm, and in many places there is occasionally  
none at all. We ourselves observed the effect  
of a single storm with high tide in the night,  
‘in July, 1855. It moved the sand on the beach  
opposite the light-house to the depth of six feet,  
and three rods in width as far as we could seo  
north and south, and carried it bodily off no one  
knows exactly where, laying bare in one place a  
large rock five fect high which was invisible be-  
fore, and narrowing the beach to that extent.  
There is usually, as I have said, no bathing on  
the back side of the Cape, on account of the un-  
dertow, but when we were there last, the sea  
had, three months before, east up a bar near this  
light-house, two miles long and ten rods wide,  
over which the tide did not flow, leaving a nar-  
‘row cove, then a quarter of a mile long, between  
it and the shore, which afforded excellent bath-  
ing. This cove had from time to time been  
closed up as the bar traveled northward, in one  
instance imprisoning four or five hundred whit-  
ing and cod, which died there, and the water as  
often turned fresh and finally gave place to  
sand. This bar, the inhabitants assured us,  
might be wholly removed, and the water six feet  
deep there in two or three days,

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 185  
  
‘Tho light-house keeper said that when the  
wind blowed strong on to the shore, the waves  
ate fast into the bank, but when it blowed off  
they took no sand away; for in the former case  
the wind heaped up the surface of the water next  
to the beach, and to preserve its equilibrium a  
strong undertow immediately set back again into  
the sea which carried with it the sand and what-  
ever else was in the way, and left the beach  
hard to walk on; but in the latter case the un-  
dertow set on, and carried the sand with it, so  
that it was particularly difficult for shipwrecked  
men to get to land when the wind blowed on to  
the shore, but easior when it blowed off. ‘This  
undertow, meeting the next surface wave on the  
bar which itself has made, forms part of the dam  
over which the latter breaks, as over an upright  
wall. ‘The sea thus plays with the land, holding  
a.sand-bar in its mouth awhile before it swallows  
it, as a cat plays with a mouse; but the fatal  
gripe is sure to come at last. The sea sends its  
rapacious east wind to rob the land, but before  
the former has got far with its prey, the land  
sends its honest west wind to recover some of its  
own. But, according to Lieutenant Davis, the  
forms, extent, and distribution of sand:bars and  
banks are principally determined, not by winds  
and waves, but by tides.  
  
Our host said that you would be surprised if

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186 CAPE CoD  
  
you were on the beach when the wind blew a  
hurricane directly on to it, to see that none of  
the drift-wood came ashore, but all was carried  
directly northward and parallel with the shore  
as fast as a man can walk, by the inshore cur-  
rent, which sets strongly in that direction at  
flood tide. The strongest swimmers also are  
carried along with it, and never gain an inch  
toward the beach. Even a large rock has been  
moved half a mile northward along the beack.  
He assured us that the sea was nover still on  
tho back side of the Cape, but ran commonly as,  
high as your head, so that a great part of the  
time you could not launch a boat there, and  
‘oven in the calmest weather the waves run six  
or eight feet up the beach, though then you  
‘ould get off on a plank. Champlain and Pour-  
trincourt could not land here in 1606, on ac-  
count of the swell (la houlle), yet the savages  
came off to them in acanoe. In the Sieur de  
Ja Borde’s “Relation des Caraibes,” my edition  
of which was published at Amsterdam in 1711,  
‘at page 580 he says: —  
  
“Couroumon, a Caraibe, also a star [i.e a  
god], makes the great lames a la mer, and over-  
turns canoes. Lames & la mer are the long  
vagues which are not broken (entrecoupées), and  
such a8 one sees come to land all in one piece,  
from one end of a beach to another, so that,

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 187  
  
however little wind there may be, a shallop or  
canoe could hardly land (adorder terre) with-  
out turning over, or being filled with water.”  
  
But on the Bay side the water even at its edge  
is often as smooth and still as in a pond. Com-  
monly there are no boats used along this beach.  
‘There was a boat belonging to the Highland  
Light which the next keeper after he had been  
there @ year had not launched, though he said  
that there was good fishing just off the shore.  
Generally the life boats cannot be used when  
needed. When the waves run very high it is  
impossible to get a boat off, however skillfully  
you steer it, for it will often be completely cov-  
ered by the curving edge of the approaching  
breaker as by an arch, and so filled with water,  
or it will be lifted up by its bows, turned di-  
rectly over backwards and all the contents  
spilled out. A spar thirty feet long is served  
in the same way.  
  
Theard of a party who went off fishing back  
of Wellfleet some years ago, in two boats, in  
calm weather, who, when they had laden their  
boats with fish, and approached the land again,  
found such a swell breaking on it, though there  
‘was no wind, that they were afraid to enter it.  
At first they thought to pull for Provincetown,  
but night was coming on, and thet was many  
miles distant. ‘Their case seemed a desperate

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188 CAPE CoD  
  
one. As often as they approached the shore and  
saw tho terrible breakers that intervened, they  
were deterred, in short, they were thoroughly  
frightened. Finally, having thrown their fish  
overboard, those in one boat chose a favorable  
opportunity, and succeeded, by skill and good  
luck, in reaching the land, but they were unwill-  
ing to take the responsibility of telling the  
others when to come in, and as the other helms-  
‘man was inexperienced, their boat was swamped  
at once, yet all managed to save themselves.  
Much smaller waves soon make a boat “nail-  
sick,” as the phrase is. ‘The keeper said that  
after a long and strong blow there would be  
three large waves, each successively larger than  
the last, and then no large ones for some time,  
and that, when they wished to land in a boat,  
they came in on the last and largest wave. Sir  
Thomas Browne (as quoted in Brand’s Popular  
Antiquities, vol. iii, p. 872), on the subject of  
the tenth wave being “greater or more danger-  
ous than any other,” after quoting Ovid, —  
“Qui venit hic fluctus, fluctus supereminet omnes  
Posterior nono est andesimogue prior!" —  
says, “Which, notwithstanding, is evidently  
false; nor can it be made out by observation  
either upon the shore or the ocean, as we have  
with diligence explored in both. And surely in  
vain we expect regularity in the waves of the

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 189  
  
sea, or in the particular motions thereof, as we  
may in its general reciprocations, whose causes  
are constant, and effects therefore correspond-  
ent; whereas its fluctuations are but motions  
subservient, which winds, storms, shores, shelves,  
‘and every interjacency, irregulates.”  
  
‘We read that the Clay Pounds were so called,  
“because vessels have had the misfortune to be  
pounded against it in gales of wind,” which we  
regard at a doubtful derivation. ‘There are  
small ponds here, upheld by the clay, which  
were formerly called the Clay Pits. Perhaps  
this, or Clay Ponds, is the origin of the name,  
‘Water is found in the clay quite near the sur-  
face; but we heard of one man who had sunk  
awell in the sand close by, “till he could see  
irs at noonday,” without finding any. Over  
this bare Highland the wind has full sweep.  
Even in July it blows the wings over the heads  
of the young turkeys, which do not know enough  
to head against it; and in gales the doors and  
windows are blown in, and you must hold on to  
the light-house to prevent being blown into the  
Atlantic. They who merely keep out on the  
beach in a storm in the winter are sometimes  
rewarded by the Humane Society. If you  
‘would feel the full force of a tempest, take up  
your residence on the top of Mount Washington,  
or at the Highland Light, in Truro.

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190 CAPE CoD  
  
It was said in 1794 that more vessels were  
cast away on the east shore of Truro than any-  
where in Barnstable County. Notwithstanding  
that this light-house has since been erected, after  
almost every storm we read of one or more ves-  
sels wrecked here, and sometimes more than a  
dozen wrecks are visible from this point at one  
time. ‘The inhabitants hear the crash of vessels  
going to pieces as they sit round their hearths,  
and they commonly date from some memorable  
shipwreck. If the history of this beach could  
‘be written from beginning to end, it would be a  
thrilling page in the history of commerce.  
  
‘Truro was settled in the year 1700 as Danger-  
field. This was a very appropriate name, for I  
afterward read on a monument in the grave-  
yard, near Pamet River, the following inscrip-  
tion: —  
: Sacred  
  
to tho memory of  
51 citizens of Tro,  
‘who wore lot in seven  
veal, which  
foundered at oa ia  
  
the memorable gale  
of Oot. 34, 1841.  
  
‘Their names and ages by families were recorded  
on different sides of the stone. They are said  
to have been lost on George's Bank, and I was  
told that only one vessel drifted ashore on the

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 191  
  
back side of the Cape, with the boys locked into  
the cabin and drowned. It is said that the  
homes of all were “within a circuit of two  
miles.” Twenty-eight inhabitants of Dennis  
were lost in the same gale; and I read that “in  
one day, immediately after this storm, nearly or  
quite one hundred bodies were taken up and  
buried on Cape Cod.” The Truro Insurance  
Company failed for want of skippers to take  
charge of its vessels. But the surviving inhab-  
itants went a-fishing again the next year as  
usual. I found that it would not do to speak  
of shipwrecks there, for almost every family  
has lost some of its members at sea. “Who  
lives in that house?” I inquired. “Three wi  
ows,” was the reply. ‘The stranger and the  
habitant view the shore with very different eyes.  
‘The former may have come to see and admire  
the ocean in a storm; but the latter looks on it  
as the scene where his nearest relatives were  
wrecked. When I remarked to an old wrecker  
partially blind, who was sitting on the edge of  
‘the bank smoking a pipe, which he had just lit  
with a match of dried beach-grass, that I sup-  
posed he liked to hear the sound of the surf, he  
answered, “No, I do not like to hear the sound  
of the surf.” He had lost at least one son in  
“the memorable gale,” and could tell many a  
tale of the shipwrecks which he had witnessed  
there.

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192 CAPE COD  
  
In the year 1717, a noted pirate named Bel-  
lamy was led on to the bar off Wellfleet by the  
captain of a snow which he had taken, to whom  
he had offered his vessel again if he would pilot  
him into Provincetown Harbor. ‘Tradition says  
that the latter threw over a burning tar barrel  
in the night, which drifted ashore, and the pi-  
rates followed it. A storm coming on, their  
whole fleet was wrecked, and more than a hun-  
dred dead bodies lay along the shore. Six who  
escaped shipwreck were executed. “At times  
to this day,” (1798), says the historian of Well-  
fleet, “there are King William and Queen  
Mary's coppers picked up, and pieces of silver  
called cob-money. The violence of the seas  
moves the sands on the outer bar, so that at  
times the iron caboose of the ship [that is, Bel-  
lamy’s] at low ebbs has been seen.” Another  
tells us that, “For many years after this ship-  
wreck, a man of a very singular and frightful  
aspect used every spring and autumn to be seen  
traveling on the Cape, who was supposed to  
have been one of Bellamy’s crew. ‘The pre-  
sumption is that he went to some place where  
money had been seereted by the pirates, to get  
such a supply as his exigencies required.  
‘When he died, many pieces of gold were found  
in a girdle which he constantly wore.  
  
As I was walking on the beach here in my

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 198  
  
last visit looking for shells and pebbles, just  
after that storm which I have mentioned as  
moving the sand to a great depth, not knowing  
but I might find some cob-money, I did actually  
pick up a French crown piece, worth about ono  
dollar and six cents, near high-water mark, on  
the still moist sand, just under the abrupt, cav-  
ing base of the bank. It was of a dark slate  
color, and looked like a flat pebble, but still  
bore a very distinct, and handsome head of Louis  
XYV., and the usual legend on the reverse, Sit  
Nomen Domini Benedictum (Blessed be the  
‘Name of the Lord), a pleasing sentiment to read  
in the sands of the seashore, whatever it might  
be stamped on, and I also made out the date,  
1741. OF course, I thought at first that it was  
that same old button which I have found so  
many times, but my knife soon showed the sil-  
ver. Afterward, rambling on the bars at low  
tide, I cheated my companion by holding up  
round shells (Scutell@) between my fingers,  
whereupon he quickly stripped and came off to  
me. z  
  
In the Revolution, a British ship of war called  
the Somerset was wrecked near the Clay  
Pounds, and all on board, some hundreds in  
number, were taken prisoners. My informant  
said that he had never seen any mention of this  
in the histories, but that at any rate he knew of

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194 CAPE CoD  
  
a silver watch, which one of those prisoners by  
accident left there, which was still going to tell  
the story. But this event is noticed by some  
writers.  
  
‘The next summer I saw a sloop from Chatham  
dragging for anchors and chains just off this  
shore. She had her boats out at the work while  
she shuffled about on various tacks, and, when  
anything was found, drew up to hoist it on  
board. It isa singular employment, at which  
men are regularly hired and paid for their in-  
dustry, to hunt to-day in pleasant weather for  
anchors which have been lost,— the sunken  
faith and hope of mariners, to which they  
trusted in vain; now, perchance, it is the rusty  
one of some old pirate’s ship or Norman fisher-  
‘man, whose cable parted here two hundred years  
ago, and now the best bower anchor of a Canton  
or a California ship, which has gone about her  
business. If the roadsteads of the spiritual  
ocean could be thus dragged, what rusty flukes  
of hope deceived and parted chain-cables of  
faith might again be windlassed aboard! enough  
to sink the finder’s craft, or stock new navies  
to the end of time. The bottom of the sea is  
strewn with anchors, some deeper and some shal-  
lower, and alternately covered and uncovered  
by the sand, perchance with a small length of  
iron cable still attached, —to which where is

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 195  
  
the other end? So many unconcluded tales to  
be continued another time. So, if we had div-  
ing-bells adapted to the spiritual deeps, we  
should see anchors with their cables attached, as  
thick as eels in vinegar, all wriggling vainly  
toward their holding-ground. But that is not  
treasure for us which another man has lost;  
rather it is for us to seek what no other man has  
found or can find,—not be Chatham men,  
dragging for anchors.  
  
‘The annals of this voracious beach! who could  
write them, unless it were a shipwrecked sailor?  
‘How many who have seen it have seen it only in  
the midst of danger and distress, the last strip  
of earth which their mortal eyes beheld. ‘Think  
of the amount of suffering which a single strand  
has witnessed! ‘The ancients would have repre-  
sented it as a sea-monster with open jaws, more  
terrible than Scylla and Charybdis. An inhabi-  
tant of Truro told me that about fortnight af-  
ter the St. John was wrecked at Cohasset he  
found two bodies on the shore at the Clay  
Pounds. They wore those of a man and a cor-  
pulent woman. ‘The man had thick boots on,  
though his head was off, but “it was alongside.”  
Tt took the finder some weeks to get over tho  
sight. Perhaps they were man and wife, and  
whom God had joined the ocean currents had  
not put asunder. Yet by what slight accidents

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196 CAPE COD  
  
at first may they have been associated in their  
drifting. Some of the bodies of those passen-  
gers were picked up far out at sea, boxed up  
‘and sunk; some brought ashore and buried.  
‘There are more consequences to a shipwreck  
than the underwriters notice, ‘The Gulf Stream  
may return some to their native shores, or drop  
them in some out-of-the-way cave of Ocean,  
where time and the elements will write new rid-  
des with their bones. — But to return to land  
again.  
  
Tn this bank, above the clay, I counted in the  
summer, two hundred holes of the Bank Swallow  
within a space six rods long, and there were at  
least one thousand old birds within three times  
that distance, twittering over the surf. I had  
never associated them in my thoughts with the  
‘beach before. One little boy who had been a-  
birds’-nesting had got eighty swallows’ eggs for  
his share! Tell it not to the Humane Society!  
‘There were many young birds on the clay be-  
neath, which had tumbled out and died. Also  
there were many Crow-blackbirds hopping about  
in the dry fields, and the Upland Plover were  
breeding close by the light-house. ‘The.keeper  
had once cut off one’s wing while mowing, as  
she sat on her eggs there. This is also a favor-  
ite resort for gunners in the fall to shoot the  
Golden Plover. As around the shores of a

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 197  
  
pond are seen devil’s-needles, butterflies, ete.,  
so here, to my surprise, I saw at the same season  
great devil’s-needios of a size proportionably  
larger, or nearly as big as my finger, incessantly  
coasting up and down the edge of the bank, and  
butterflies also were hovering over it, and I  
never saw so many dorr-bugs and beetles of va-  
rious kinds as strewed the beach. They had  
apparently flown over the bank jn the night,  
and could not get up again, and Some had per-  
haps fallen into the sea and were washed ashore.  
They may have been in part attracted by the  
light-house lamps.  
  
‘The Clay Pounds are a more fertile tract  
than usual. We saw some fine patches of roots  
and com here. As generally on the Cape, the  
plants had little stalk or leaf, but ran remark-  
ably to seed. The corm was hardly more than  
half as high as in the interior, yet the ears were  
Jarge and full, and one farmer told us that he  
could raise forty bushels on an acre without  
manure, and sixty with it. ‘The heads of the  
rye also were remarkably large. The Shadbush  
(Amelanchier), Beach Plums, and Blueberries  
Vaccinium Pennsyloanicum), like the apple-  
‘trees and oaks, were very dwarfish, spreading  
over the sand, but at the same time very fruit-  
ful. Tho blueberry was but an inch or two  
high, and its fruit often rested on the ground,

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198 CAPE CoD  
  
0 that you did not suspect the presence of the  
bushes, even on those bare hills, until you were  
treading on them. I thought that this fertility  
must be owing mainly to the abundance of mois-  
ture in the atmosphere, for I observed that what  
le grass there was was remarkably laden with  
dew in the morning, and in summer dense im-  
prisoning fogs frequently last till midday, turn-  
ing one’s beard into a wet napkin about his  
‘throat, and the oldest inhabitant may lose his  
way within a stone's throw of his house or be  
obliged to follow the beach for a guide. Tho  
brick house attached to the light-house was ex-  
ceedingly damp at that season, and writing-  
paper lost all its stiffness in it. It was impos-  
sible to dry your towel after bathing, or to press  
flowers without their mildewing. ‘The air was  
‘80 moist that we rarely wished to drink, though  
‘we could at all times taste the salt on our lips.  
Salt was rarely used at table, and our host told  
us that his cattle invariably refused it when it  
was offered them, they got so much with their  
grass and at every breath, but he said that a  
sick horse or one just from the country would  
sometimes take a hearty draught of salt water,  
and seemed to like it and be the better for it.  
  
It was surprising to see how much water was  
contained in the terminal bud of the seaside  
golden-rod, standing in the sand early in July,

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 199  
  
and also how turnips, beets, carrots, ete., flour-  
ished even in pure sand. A man traveling by  
the shore near there not long before us noticed  
something green growing in the pure sand of the  
each, just at high-water mark, and on ap-  
proaching found it to be a bed of beets flourish-  
ing vigorously, probably from seed washed out  
of the Franklin. Also beets and turnips came  
up in the seaweed used for manure in many  
parts of the Cape. This suggests how various  
plants may have been dispersed over the world  
to distant islands and continents. Vessels, with  
seeds in their cargoes, destined for particular  
ports, where perhaps they were not needed, have  
been cast away on desolate islands, and though  
their crews perished, some of their seeds have  
‘been preserved. Out of many kinds a few  
would find a soil and climate adapted to them,  
—become naturalized and perhaps drive out the  
native plants at last, and so fit the land for the  
habitation of man. It is an ill wind that blows  
nobody any good, and for the time Jamentable  
shipwrecks may thus.contribute a new vegetable  
to a continent's stock, and prove on the whole a  
lasting blessing to its inhabitants. Or winds  
and currents might effect the same without the  
intervention of man. What indeed are the  
various succulent plants which grow on the  
beach but such beds of boots and turnips, sprung

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200 CAPE COD  
  
originally from seeds which perhaps were cast  
con the waters for this end, though we do not  
know the Franklin which they came out of? In  
ancient times some Mr. Bell (7) was sailing this  
way in his ark with seeds of rocket, saltwort,  
sandwort, beach-grass, samphire, bayberry, pov-  
erty-grass, ote., all nicely labeled with directions,  
intending to establish a nursery somewhere;  
and did not a nursery get established, though  
he thought that he had failed?  
  
About the light-house I observed in the st  
mer the pretty Polygala polygama, spreading  
ray-wise flat on the ground, white pasture this-  
tles (Cirsium pumilum), and amid the shrub-  
bery the Smilax glauea, which is commonly  
said not to grow so far north; near the edge of  
the banks about half a mile southward, the  
‘broom crowberry (Empetrum Conradii), for  
which Plymouth is the only locality in Massa-  
chusetts usually named, forms pretty’ green  
mounds four or five feet in diameter by one foot  
high, —soft, springy beds for the wayfarer. I  
saw it afterward in Provincetown, but prettiest  
of all the scarlet pimpernel, or poor-man's  
‘weather-glass (Anagallis arvensis), greets you  
in fair weather on almost every square yard of  
sand. From Yarmouth, I havo received the  
Chrysopsis falcata (golden aster), and Vacei-  
nium stamineum (Deerberry or Squaw Huckle-

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 201  
  
berry), with fruit not edible, sometimes as large  
as a cranberry (Sept. 7).  
  
‘The Highland Light-house,! where we were  
staying, is a substantiallooking building of  
brick, painted white, and surmounted by an  
iron cap. Attached to it is the dwelling of the  
keeper, one story high, also of brick, and built  
by government. As we were going to spend  
the night in a light-house, we wished to make  
the most of so novel an experience, and there-  
fore told our host that we would like to accom-  
pany him when he went to light up. At rather  
early candle-light he lighted a small Japan  
lamp, allowing it to smoke rather more than we  
like on ordinary occasions, and:told us to follow  
him, He led the way first through his bed-  
room, which was placed nearest to the light-  
house, and then through a long, narrow, covered  
passage-way, between whitewashed walls like a  
prison entry, into the lower part of the light-  
hhouse, where many great butts of oil were ar-  
ranged around; thence we ascended by a wind-  
ing and open iron stairway, with a steadily  
increasing scent of oil and lamp-smoke, to a  
trap-door in an iron floor, and through this into  
the lantern, It was a neat building, with every-  
thing in apple-pie order, and no danger of any-  
  
   
  
4 The light-house has since heen rebuilt, and shows a Fres  
al Tight.

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202 . CAPE COD  
  
thing rusting there for want of oil. ‘The light  
consisted of fifteen argand lamps, placed within  
‘smooth concave reflectors twenty-one inches in  
diameter, and arranged in two horizontal circlés  
‘one above the other, facing every way excepting  
directly down the Cape. These were sur-  
rounded, at a distance of two or three feet, by  
large plate-glass windows, which defied the  
storms, with iron sashes, on which rested the  
iron ap. All the iron work, except the floor,  
was painted white. And thus the light-house  
was completed. We walked slowly round in  
that narrow space as the keeper lighted each  
Jamp in succession, conversing with him at the  
same moment that many a sailor on the deep  
witnessed the lighting of the Highland Light.  
His duty was to fill and trim and light his  
lamps, and keep bright the reflectors. He filled  
them every morning, and trimmed them com-  
monly once in the course of the night. He com-  
plained of the quality of the oil which was fur-  
nished. This house consumes about eight hun-  
red gallons in a year, which cost not far from  
one dollar a gallon; but perhaps a few lives  
would be saved if better oil were provided.  
Another light-house keeper said that the same  
proportion of winter-strained oil was sent to the  
southernmost light-house in the Union as to the  
most northern. Formerly, when this light-

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 203  
  
house had windows with small and thin panes,  
a severe storm would sometimes break the glass,  
and then they were obliged to put up a wooden  
shutter in haste to save their lights and reflee-  
tors, —and sometimes in tempests, when the  
mariner stood most in need of their guidance,  
they had thus nearly converted the light-house  
into a dark lantern, which emitted only a few  
feeble rays, and those commonly on the land or  
Jee side. He spoke of the anxiety and sense of  
responsibility which he felt in cold and stormy  
nights in the winter; when he knew that many a  
poor fellow was depending on him, and  
lamps burned dimly, the oil being chilled.  
Sometimes he was obliged to warm the oil in a  
kettle in his house at midnight, and fill his  
lamps over again, —for he could not have a fire  
in the light-house, it produced such a sweat on  
the windows. His successor told me that he  
could not keep too hot a fire in such a case.  
‘All this because the oil was poor. A govern-  
‘ment lighting the mariners on its wintry coast  
with summer-strained oil, to save expense!  
‘That were surely a summer-strained merey.  
‘This keeper’s successor, who kindly enter-  
tained me the next year, stated that one ex-  
tremely cold night, when this and all the neigh-  
boring lights were burning summer oil, but he  
hhad been provident enough to reserve a little

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204 CAPE COD  
  
winter oil against emergencies, he was waked up  
with anxiety, and found that his oil was con-  
gealed, and his lights almost extinguished; and  
when, after many houra’ exertion, he had suc-  
ceeded in replenishing his reservoirs with winter  
oil at the wick end, and with difficulty had made  
them burn, he looked out and found that the  
other lights in the neighborhood, which were  
usually visible to him, had gone out, and he  
heard afterward that the Pamet River and Bil-  
Tingsgate Lights also had been extinguished.  
  
‘Our host said that the frost, too, on the win-  
dows caused him much trouble, and in sultry  
summer nights the moths covered them and  
dimmed his lights; sometimes even small birds  
flew against the thick plate glass, and were  
found on the ground beneath in the morning  
with their necks broken. In the spring of 1855  
he found nineteen small yellow birds, perhaps  
goldfinches or myrtle-birds, thus lying dead  
around the light-house; and sometimes in the  
fall he had seen where a golden plover had  
struck the glass in the night, and left the down  
and the fatty part of its breast on it.  
  
‘Thus he struggled, by every method, to keep  
his light shining before men. Surely the light-  
house keeper has a responsible, if an easy, office.  
When his lamp goes out, he goes out; or, at  
most, only one such accident is pardoned.

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 205,  
  
I thought it a pity that some poor student did  
not live there, to profit by all that light, since  
he would not rob the mariner. “Well,” ho  
said, “I do sometimes come up here and read  
the newspaper when they are noisy down be-  
low.” Think of fifteen argand lamps to read  
the newspaper by! Government oil! —light  
enough, perchance, to read the Constitution by!  
I thought that he should read nothing less than  
his Bible by that light. I had a classmate who  
fitted for college by the lamps of a light-house,  
which was more light, we think, than the Uni-  
versity afforded.  
  
‘When we had come down and walked a dozen  
rods from the light-house, we found that we  
ould not get the full strength of its light on the  
narrow strip of land between it and the shore,  
being too low for the focus, and we saw only 50  
many feeble and rayless stars; but at forty rods  
inland we could see to read though we were still  
indebted to only one lamp. Each reflector sent  
forth a separate “fan” of light, —one shone on  
the windmill, and one in the hollow, while the  
intervening spaces were in shadow. This light  
is said to be visible twenty nautical miles and  
more, from an observer fifteen feet above the  
level of the sea. We could see the revolving  
light at Race Point, the end of the Cape, about  
nine miles distant, and also the light on Long

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206 CAPE COD  
  
Point, at the entrance of Provincetown Harbor,  
and one of the distant Plymouth Harbor lights,  
across the Bay, nearly in a range with the last,  
like a star in the horizon. ‘The keeper thought  
that the other Plymouth light was concealed  
by being exactly in a range with the Long  
Point Light. He told us that the mariner was  
sometimes led astray by a mackerel fisher’s lan-  
tern, who was afraid of being run down in the  
night, or even by a cottager’s light, mistaking  
them for some well-known light on the coast,  
and, when he discovered his mistake, was wont  
to curse th prudent fisher or the wakeful cot-  
tager without reason.  
  
‘Though it was once declared that Providence  
placed this mass of clay here on purpose to  
erect a light-house on, the keeper said that tho  
light-house should have been erected half a mile  
farther south, where the coast begins to bend,  
and where the light could be seen at the samo  
time with the Nauset lights, and distinguished  
from them. They now talk of building one  
there. It happens that the present one is the  
more useless now, so near the extremity of the  
Cape, because other light-houses have since been  
erected there,  
  
Among the many regulations of the Light-  
house Board, hanging against the wall here,  
many of them excellent, perhaps, if there were

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 207  
  
a regiment stationed here to attend to them,  
there is one requiring the keeper to keep an ac-  
count of the number of vessels which pass his  
light during the day. But there are a hundred  
vessels in sight at once, steering in all direc-  
tions, many on the very verge of the horizon,  
and he must have more eyes than Argus, and  
be a good deal farther sighted, to tell which are  
passing his light. It is an employment in some  
respects best suited to the habits of the gulls  
which coast up and down here, and circle over  
the sea.  
  
T was told by the next keeper, that on the 8th  
of June following, a particularly clear and  
beautiful morning, he rose about half an hour  
before sunrise, and having. little time to spare,  
for his custom was to extinguish his lights at  
sunrise, walked down toward the shore to seo  
what he might find. When he got to the edge  
of the bank he looked up, and, to his astonish-  
ment, saw the sun rising, and already part way  
above the horizon. Thinking that his clock was  
wrong, he made haste back, and though it was  
still too early by the clock, extinguished his  
lamps, and when he had got through and come  
down, he looked out the window, and, to his  
still greater astonishment, saw the sun just  
where it was before, two thirds above the hori-  
zon. He showed me where its rays fell on tho

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208 CAPE COD  
  
wall across the room. He proceeded to make a  
fire, and when he had done, there was the sun  
still at the same height. Whereupon, not trust-  
ing to his own eyes any longer, he called up his  
wife to look at it, and she saw it also. There  
were vessels in sight on the ocean, and their  
crews, too, he said, must have seon it, for its  
rays fellon them. It remained at that height  
for about fifteen minutes by the clock, and then  
rose as usual, and nothing else extraordinary  
happened during that day. Though accustomed  
to the coast, he had never witnessed nor heard  
of such a phenomenon before. I suggested that  
‘there might have been a cloud in the horizon in-  
visible to him, which rose with the sun, and his  
clock was only as accurate as the average; or  
perhaps, as he denied the possibility of this, it  
‘was such a looming of the sun as is said to occur  
at Lake Superior and elsewhere. Sir John  
Franklin, for instance, says in hig Narrative,  
that when he was on the shore of the Polar Sea,  
the horizontal refraction varied 90 much one  
morning that ‘the upper limb of the sun twice  
appeared at the horizon before it finally rose.””  
He certainly must be a son of Aurora to  
whom the sun looms, when there are so many  
millions to whom it glooms rather, or who never  
see it till an hour a/ter it has risen. But it be-  
hooves us old stagers to keep our lamps trimmed

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THE HIGHLAND LIGHT 209  
  
and burning to the last, and not trust to the  
sun’s looming.  
  
‘This keoper remarked that the centre of the  
flame should be exactly opposite the contre of  
the reflectors, and that accordingly, if he was  
not careful to turn down his wicks in the morn-  
ing, the sun falling on the reflectors on the  
south side of the building would set fire to  
them, like a burning-glass, in the coldest day,  
and he would look up at noon and see them all  
lighted! When your lamp is ready to give  
light, it is readiest to receive it, and the sun  
will light it. His successor said that he had  
never known them to blaze in such a case, but  
merely to smoke.  
  
I saw that this was a place of wonders, In  
8 sea turn or shallow fog while I was there the  
next summer, it being clear overhead, the edge  
of the bank twenty rods distant appeared like a  
‘mountain pasture in the horizon. I was com-  
pletely deceived by it, and T could then under-  
stand why mariners sometimes ran ashore in  
such cases, especially in the night, supposing it  
to be far away, though they could seo the land.  
Once since this, being in a large oyster boat two  
or three hundred miles from here, in a dark  
night, when there was a thin veil of mist on  
land and water, we came so near to running on  
  
to the land before our skipper was aware of it,

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210 CAPE COD  
  
that the first warning was my hearing the sound  
of the surf under my elbow. I could almost  
have jumped ashore, and we were obliged to go  
about very suddenly to prevent striking. ‘The  
distant light for which we were steering, sup-  
posing it a light-house, five or six miles off,  
‘came through the cracks of a fisherman’s bunk  
not more than six rods distant.  
  
‘The keeper entertained us handsomely in his  
solitary little ocean house. He was a man of  
singular patience and intelligence, who, when  
our queries struck him, rang as clear as a bell in  
response. The light-house lamp a few feet dis-  
tant shone full into my chamber, and made it as  
bright as day, 60 I knew exactly how the High-  
land Light bore all that night, and I was in no  
danger of being wrecked. Unlike the last, this  
was as still asa summer night. I thought as I  
lay there, half awake and half asleep, looking  
upward through the window at the lights above  
my head, how many sleepless eyes from far out  
on the Ocean stream — mariners of all nations  
spinning their yarns through the various watches  
of the night — were directed toward my couch.

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x  
THE SEA AND THE DESERT  
  
THE light-house lamps were still burning,  
though now with a silvery lustre, when I rose to  
see the sun cdme out of the Ocean; for he still  
rose eastward of us; but I was convinced that he  
must have come out of a dry bed beyond that  
stream, though he seemed to come out of tho  
water.  
“The aun onos more touched the fields,  
‘Mounting to heaven from the fait owing  
  
Now we saw countless sails of mackerel fishers  
abroad on the deep, one fleet in the north just  
pouring round the Cape, another standing down  
toward Chatham, and our host’s son went off to  
join some lagging member of the first which had  
not yet left the Bay.  
  
Before we left the light-house we were obliged  
to anoint our shoes faithfully with tallow, for  
walking on the beach, in the salt water and the  
sand, had turned them red and crisp. To coun-  
terbalance this, I have remarked that the sea-  
shore, even where muddy, as it is not here, is

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212 CAPE CoD  
  
singularly clean; for, notwithstanding the spat-  
tering of the water and mud and squirting of the  
clams, while walking to and from the boat, your  
best black pants retain no stain nor dirt, such  
as they would acquire from walking in the  
country.  
  
‘We have heard that a few days after this,  
when the Provincetown Bank was robbed, speedy  
emissaries from Provincetown made particular  
inquiries concerning us at this light-house. In-  
deed, they traced us all the way down the Cape,  
and concluded that we came by this unusual  
route down the back side and on foot, in order  
that we might discover a way to get off with our  
booty when we had committed the robbery.  
‘The Cape is so long and narrow, and so bare  
withal, that it is well-nigh impossible for a  
stranger to visit it without the knowledge of its  
inhabitants generally, unless he is wrecked on to  
it in the night. So, when this robbery oc-  
curred, all their suspicions seem to have at once  
centred on us two travelers who had just passed  
down it. If we had not chanced to leave the  
Cape s0 soon, we should probably have been  
arrested. The real robbers were two young men  
from Woreester County who traveled with a  
centre-bit, and are said to have done their work  
very neatly. But the only bank that we pried  
into was the great Cape Cod sand-bank, and we

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 218  
  
robbed it only of an old French erown piece,  
some shells and pebbles, and the materials of  
this story.  
  
Again we took to the beach for another day  
(etober 13), walking along the shore of the re-  
sounding sea, determined to get it into us.  
‘We wished to associate with the Ocean until it  
lost the pond-like look which it wears to a coun-  
tryman, We still thought that we could see the  
other side. Its surface was still more sparkling  
than the day before, and we beheld “the count-  
Jess smilings of the ocean waves;” though some  
of them were pretty broad grins, for still the  
wind blew and the billows broke in foam along  
the beach, The nearest beach to us on the  
other side, whither we looked, due east, was on  
the coast of Galicia, in Spain, whose capital is  
Santiago, though by old poets’ reckoning it  
should have been Atlantis or the Hesperides;  
but heaven is found to be farther west now. At  
first we were abreast of that part of Portugal  
entre Douro e Mifio, and then Galicia and the  
port of Pontevedra opened to us as we walked  
along; but we did not enter, the breakers ran  
so high. ‘The bold headland of Cape Finisterre,  
a little north of east, jutted toward us next,  
with its vain brag, for we flung back, — “Here  
is Cape Cod, — Cape Land’s-Beginning.” A  
little indentation toward the north,— for the land

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214 CAPE COD  
  
loomed to our imaginations by a common mi-  
rage,— we knew was the Bay of Biscay, and we  
san,  
  
   
  
“There wo lay, il next day,  
‘i the Bay of Biscay 01”  
  
‘A little south of east was Palos, where Co-  
Tumbus weighed anchor, and farther yet the  
pillars which Hercules set up; concerning which  
when we inquired at the top of our voices what  
was written on them, —for we had the morning  
sun in our faces, and could not see distinctly, —  
the inhabitants shouted Ne plus ultra (no more  
beyond), but the wind bore to us the truth only,  
plus ultra (more beyond), and over the Bay  
westward was echoed ultra (beyond). We  
spoke to them through the surf about the Far  
West, the true Hesperia, fos nipas or end of the  
day, the This Side Sundown, where the sun was  
extinguished in the Pacific, and we advised them  
to pull up stakes and plant those pillars of theirs  
‘on the shore of California, whither all our folks  
were gone, —the only ne plus ultra now.  
‘Whereat they looked crestfallen on their cliffs,  
for we had taken the wind out of all their sails.  
  
‘We could not perceive that any of their leav-  
ings washed up here, though we picked up a’  
child’s toy, a small dismantled boat, which may  
have been lost at Pontevedra  
  
‘The Cape became narrower and narrower as

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 216  
  
we approached its wrist between Truro and  
Provincetown and the shore inclined more de-  
cidedly to the west. At the head of East Har-  
bor Creek, the Atlantic is separated but by half  
a dozen rods of sand from the tide-waters of the  
Bay. From the Clay Pounds the bank flatted  
off for the last ten miles to the extremity at  
Race Point, though the highest parts, which are  
called “islands” from their appearance at a dis-  
tance on the sea, were still seventy or eighty fect  
above the Atlantic, and afforded good view of  
the latter, as well as a constant view of the Bay,  
there being no trees nor a hill sufficient to in-  
termupt it. Also the sands began to invade the  
land more and more, until finally they had en-  
tire possession from sea to sea, at the narrowest  
part. For three or four miles between Truro  
and Provincetown there were no inhabitants  
from shore to shore, and there were but three  
or four houses for twice that distance.  
  
‘As we plodded along, either by the edgo of  
the ocean, where the sand was rapidly drinking  
up the last wave that wet it, or over the sand-  
hills of the bank, the mackerel fleet. continued  
to pour round the Cape north of us, ten or ff  
teen miles distant, in countless numbers,  
schooner after schooner, till they made a city  
‘on the water. They were so thick that many  
appeared to be afoul of one another; now all

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216 CAPE COD  
  
standing on this tack, now on that. We saw  
how well the New-Englanders had followed up  
Captain John Smith's suggestions with regard  
to the fisheries, made in 1616,—to what a  
pitch they had carried “this contemptible trade  
of fish,” as he significantly styles it, and were  
now equal to the Hollanders whose example he  
holds up for the English to emulate; notwith-  
standing that “in this faculty,” as he says, “the  
former are s0 naturalized, and of their vents so  
certainly acquainted, as there is no likelihood  
they will ever be paralleled, having two or three  
thousand busses, flat-bottoms, sword-pinks,  
todes, and such like, that breeds them sailors,  
mariners, soldiers, and merchants, never to be  
wrought out of that trade and fit for any other.””  
‘We thought that it would take all these names  
and more to describe the numerous craft which  
we saw. Even then, some years before our “‘re-  
nowned sires” with their “peerless dames”  
stepped on Plymouth Rock, he wrote, “New-  
foundland doth yearly fraught near eight hun-  
dred sail of ships with a silly, lean, skinny  
poor-john, and cor fish,” though all their sup-  
plies must be annually transported from Europe.  
‘Why not plant a colony here then, and raise  
those supplies on the spot? “Of all the four  
parts of the world,” says he, “that I have yet  
seen, not inhabited, could I have but means to

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 21T  
  
‘transport a colony, I would rather live here than  
anywhere. And if it did not maintain itself,  
‘were we but once indifferently well fitted, let us  
starve.” Then “fishing before your doors,”  
you “may every night sleep quietly ashore, with  
good cheer and what fires you will, or, when  
you please, with your wives and family.” Al-  
ready he anticipates “the new towns in New  
England in memory of their old,”—and who  
knows what may be discovered in the “heart  
and entrails” of the land, “seeing even the very  
edges,” ete., otc.  
  
‘All this has been accomplished, and more,  
and where is Holland now? Verily the Dutch  
have taken it. There was no long interval be-  
tween’ the suggestion of Smith and the eulogy  
of Burke.  
  
Still one after another the mackerel schooners  
hove in sight round the head of the Cape,  
“whitening all the sea road,” and we watched  
each one for a moment with an undivided inter-  
est. It seemed a pretty sport. Here in the  
country it is only a few idle boys or loafers that  
go a-fishing on a rainy day; but there it ap-  
peared as if every able-bodied man and helpful  
boy in the Bay had gone out on a pleasure ex-  
cursion in their yachts, and all would at last  
Tand and have a’ chowder on the Cape. The  
gazetteer tells you gravely how many of the men

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218 CAPE CoD  
  
and boys of these towns are engaged in the  
whale, cod, and mackerel fishery, how many go  
to the banks of Newfoundland, or the coast of  
Labrador, the Straits of Belle Isle or the Bay  
of Chaleurs (Shalore, the sailors call it); as if. I  
were to reckon up the number of boys in Con-  
cord who are engaged during the summer in  
the perch, pickerel, bream, horn-pout, and  
shiner fishery, of which no one keops the statis-  
tics, —though I think that it is pursued with  
as much profit to the moral and intellectual man  
(or boy), and certainly with less danger to the  
physical one,  
  
‘One of my playmates, who was apprenticed  
toa printer, and was somewhat of a wag, asked  
his master one afternoon if he might go a-fish-  
ing, and his master consented. He was gone  
three months. When he came back, he said  
that he had been to the Grand Banks, and went  
to setting type again as if only an afternoon had  
intervened.  
  
T confess I was surprised to find that so many  
men spent their whole day, ay, their whole lives  
almost, a-fishing. It is remarkable what a se-  
rious business men make of getting their din-  
ners, and how universally shiftlessness and a  
groveling taste take refuge in a merely ant-like  
industry. Better go without your dinner, 1  
thought, than be thus everlastingly fishing for

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 219  
  
it like @ cormorant. Of course, viewed from  
the shore, our pursuits in the country appear  
not a whit less frivolous.  
  
T once sailed three miles on a mackerel cruise  
myself. Tt was a Sunday evening after a very  
warm day in which there had been frequent  
thunder-showers, and I had walked along the  
shore from Cohasset to Duxbury. I wished to  
get over from the last place to Clark’s Island,  
‘but no boat could stir, they said, at that stage  
of the tide, they being left high on the mud.  
‘At length T learned that the tavern-keoper,  
Winsor, was going out mackereling with seven  
men that evening, and would take me. When  
there had beon due delay, we one after another  
straggled down to the shore in a leisurely man-  
ner, as if waiting for the tide still, and in India-  
rubber boots, or carrying our shoes in our  
hands, waded to the boats, each of the crew  
bearing an armful of wood, and one a bucket of  
new potatoes besides. ‘Then they resolved that  
each should bring one more armful of wood, and  
that would be enough. ‘They had already got  
a barrel of water, and had some more in the  
schooner, We shoved the boats a dozen rods  
over the mud and water till they floated, then  
rowing half a mile to the vessel climbed aboard,  
and there we were in a mackerel schooner, a  
fine stout vessel of forty-three tons, whose name

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220 CAPE CoD  
  
I forget. The baits were not dry on the hooks.  
There was the mill in which they ground the  
mackerel, and the trough to hold it, and the  
long-handled dipper to cast it overbéard with;  
and already in the harbor we saw the surface  
rippled with schools of small mackerel, the real  
Scomber vernalis. ‘The crew proceeded  
surely to weigh anchor and raise their two sails,  
there being a tair but very slight wind; —and  
the sun now setting clear and shining on the  
vessel after the thunder-showers, I thought that  
Tould not have commenced the voyage under  
more favorable auspices. They had four dories  
and commonly fished in them, else they fished  
on the starboard side aft where their lines hung  
ready, two toa man. The boom swung round  
‘once or twice, and Winsor cast overboard the  
foul juice of mackerel mixed with rain-water  
which remained in his trough, and then wo  
gathered about the helmsman and told stories.  
T remember that the compass was affected by  
iron in its neighborhood and varied a few de-  
grees. There was one among us just returned  
from California, who was now going as pas-  
senger for his health and amusement. They  
‘expected to be gone about a week, to begin fish-  
ing the next morning, and to carry their fish  
fresh to Boston. They landed me at Clark’s  
Island, where the Pilgrims landed, for my com-

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 221  
  
panions wished to get some milk for the voyage.  
Bat I had seen the whole of it. The rest was  
only going to sea and catching the mackerel.  
‘Moreover, it was as well that I did not remain  
with thom, considering the small quantity of  
supplies they had taken.  
  
‘Now I saw the mackerel fleet on its fishing-  
ground, though I was not at first: aware of it,  
So my experience was complete,  
  
Tt was even more cold and windy to-day than  
before, and we were frequently glad to take  
shelter behind a sand-hill. None of the ele-  
ments were resting. On the beach there is a  
ceaseless activity, always something going on,  
in storm and in calm, winter and summer, night  
and day. Even the sedentary man here enjoys  
a breadth of view which is almost equivalent to  
motion, In clear weather the laziest may look  
across the Bay as far as Plymouth at a glance,  
or over the Atlantic as far as human vision  
reaches, merely raising his eyelids; or if he is  
too lazy to look after all, he can hardly help  
Hearing the ceaseless dash and roar of the  
breakers. The restless ocean may at any mo-  
ment cast up a whale or a wrecked vessel at  
your feet. All the reporters in the world, the  
‘most rapid stenographers, could not report the  
news it brings. No creature could move slowly  
where there was so much life around. The few

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222 CAPE COD  
  
wreckers were either going or coming, and the  
ships and the sand-pipers, and the screaming  
gulls overhead; nothing stood still but the  
shore. The little beach-birds trotted past close  
to the water’s edge, or pansed but an instant to  
swallow their food, keeping time with the ele-  
ments. I wondered how they ever got used to  
the sea, that they ventured so near the waves.  
Such tiny inhabitants the land brought forth!  
except one fox. And what could a fox do,  
looking on the Atlantic from that high bank?  
‘What is the sea to a fox? Sometimes we met a  
wrecker with his cart and dog, —and his dog’s  
faint bark at us wayfarers, heard through the  
roaring of the surf, sounded ridiculously faint.  
‘To see a little trembling dainty-footed cur stand  
on the margin of the ocean, and ineffectually  
bark at a beach-bird, amid the roar of the At-  
lantic! Come with design to bark at a whale,  
perchance! ‘That sound will do for farmyards.  
‘All the dogs looked out of place there, naked  
and as if shuddering at the vastness; and I  
thought that they would not have been there had  
it not been for the countenance of their masters.  
‘Still less could you think of a cat bending her  
steps that way, and shaking her wet foot over  
the Atlantic; yet even this happens sometimes,  
they tell me. In summer I saw the tender  
young of the Piping Plover, like chickens just

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 223  
  
hatched, mere pinches of down on two legs,  
running in troops, with a faint peep, along the  
edge of the waves. I used to see packs of half-  
wild dogs haunting the lonely beach on tho  
south shore of Staten Island, in New York Bay,  
for the sake of the carrion there cast up; and I  
remember that once, when for a long time I had  
heard a furious barking in the tall grass of the  
marsh, a pack of half a dozen large dogs burst  
forth on to the beach, pursuing a little one  
which ran straight to me for protection, and I  
afforded it with some stones, though at some  
risk to myself; but the next day the little one  
was the first to bark at me. Under these cir-  
cumstances I could not but remember the words  
of the poet: —  
  
“Blow, Mow, thoa winter wind,  
  
‘Thon art not vo nakind  
  
‘Ae is ingratitnds 5  
‘Thy tooth isnot so een,  
Became thos art not woe,  
“Although thy breath be rade,  
  
   
  
“Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,  
‘Thon dont not bite oo nigh  
"As benefits forgot  
  
   
  
Sometimes, when I was approaching the car-  
cass of a horse or ox which lay on the beach

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224 CAPE COD  
  
there, where there was no living creature in  
sight, a dog would unexpectedly emerge from it  
and slink away with a mouthful of offal.  
  
‘The seashore is a sort of neutral ground, a  
‘most advantageous point from which to contem-  
plate this world. It is even a trivial place.  
‘The waves forever rolling to the land are too  
far-traveled and untamable to be familiar.  
Creeping along the endless beach amid the sun-  
squall and the foam, it occurs to us that we,  
too, are the product of sea-slime.  
  
It is a wild, rank place, and there is no flat-  
tery in it. Strewn with erabs, horse-shoes, and  
razor-clams, and whatever the sea casts up, —a  
vast morgue, where famished dogs may range in  
packs, and crows come daily to glean the pit-  
tance which the tide leaves them. The carcasses  
of men and beasts together lie stately up upon  
ite shelf, rotting and bleaching in the sun and  
waves, and each tide turns them in their beds,  
and tucks fresh sand under them. There is  
naked Nature, — inbumanly sincere, wasting no  
thought on man, nibbling at the cliffy shore  
where gulls wheel amid the spray.  
  
‘We saw this forenoon what, at a distance,  
looked like a bleached log with a branch  
loft on it. It proved to be one of the principal  
ones of a whale, whose careass, having been  
stripped of blubber at sea and cut adrift, had

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 225  
  
been washed up some months before. It  
chanced that this was the most conclusive evi-  
dence which we met with to prove, what the  
Copenhagen antiquaries assert, that these shores  
were the Furdustrandas, which Thorhall, the  
companion of Thorfinn during his expedition to  
‘Vinland in 1007, sailed past in disgust. It ap-  
pears that after they had left the Cape and ex-  
plored the country about Straum-Fiordr (Buz-  
zard’s Bay!), Thorhall, who was disappointed  
at not getting any wine to drink there, deter-  
mined to sail north again in search of Vinland,  
‘Though the antiquaries have given us the origi-  
nal Icelandic, I prefer to quote their translation,  
since theirs is the only Latin which I know to  
havo been aimed at Cape Cod.  
“Cum parti erant,eblato  
elo, cocnit Thorhallon:  
Ed redeamas, whi conterrnei  
sont nostril faciam aitem,  
‘expan arnosiperitem,  
lata navisoxplorare curicala:  
dum procellam incitanten gladit  
more impatients, qui terrum  
collandant, Furdoatrandae  
{inhabitant et coquant bales.”  
In other words, “When they were ready and  
their sail hoisted, Thorhall sang: Let us return  
thither where our fellow-countrymen are. Let  
us make a bird! skillful to fly through tho  
  
1 Ley a vomel

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226 CAPE COD  
  
heaven of sand,? to explore the broad track of  
ships; while warriors who impel to the tempest,  
of swords,? who praise the land, inhabit Won-  
der Strands, und cook whales.” And so he  
sailed north past Cape Cod, as the antiquaries  
say, “and was shipwrecked on to Ireland.”  
‘Though once therg were more whales cast up  
hore, I think that it’ was never more wild than  
now. We do not associate the idea of antiquity  
with the ocean, nor wonder how it looked a  
thousand years ago, as we do of the land, for it  
was equally wild and unfathomable always.  
‘Tho Indians have left no traces on its surface,  
but it is the same to the civilized man and the  
savage. The aspect of the shore only has  
changed. The ocean is a wilderness reaching  
round the globe, wilder than a Bengal jungle,  
and fuller of monsters, washing the very  
wharves of our cities and the gardens of our  
seaside residences. Serpents, bears, hyenas,  
tigers, rapidly vanish as civilization advances,  
but the most populous and civilized city cannot,  
scare a shark far from its wharves. It is no  
further advanced than Singapore, with its  
‘gers, in this respect. The Boston papers had  
never told me that there were seals in the har-  
  
   
  
   
  
1 The sea, which is arched over its sandy bottom Uke @  
eaven.  
2 Battle,

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 227  
  
or. I had always associated these with the  
Esquimaux and other outlandish people. Yet  
from the parlor windows all along the coast you  
may see families of them sporting on the flats.  
‘They were as strange to me as the merman  
would be. Ladies who never walk in the woods,  
sail over the sea. To go to seal Why, it is to  
have the experience of Noah, —to realize the  
deluge. Every vessel is an ark.  
  
‘We saw no fences as wo walked the beach,  
no birchen riders, highest of rails, projecting  
into the sea to keep the cows from wading  
round, nothing to remind us that man was pro-  
prietor of the shore. Yet a Truro man did tell  
us that owners of land on the east side of that  
town were regarded as owning the beach, in or-  
der that they might have the control of it so far  
as to defend themselves against the encroach  
ments of the sand and the beach-grass, —for  
even this friend is sometimes regarded as a foe;  
‘but he said that this was not the case on the  
Bay side. Also I have seen in sheltered parts  
of the Bay, temporary fences running to low-  
water mark, the posts being set in sills or sleep-  
ers placed transversely.  
  
‘After we had been walking many hours, the  
mackerel fleet still hovered in the northern hori-  
zon nearly in the same direction, but farther off,  
hull down. Though their sails were set they

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228 CAPE COD  
  
never sailed away, nor yet came to anchor, but  
stood on various tacks as close together as ves-  
sels in a haven, and we, in our ignorance,  
thought that they were contending patiently  
with adverse winds, beating eastward; but we  
Jearned afterward that they were even then on  
their fishing-ground, and that they caught mack-  
erel without taking in their mainsails or coming  
to anchor, “a smart breeze” (thence called a  
mackerel breeze) “being,” as one says, “con-  
sidered most favorable” for this purpose. We  
‘counted about two hundred sail of mackerel  
fishers within one small arc of the horizon, and  
a nearly equal number had disappeared south-  
ward. Thus they hovered about the extremity  
of the Cape, like moths round a candle; the  
Tights at Race Point and Long Point being  
bright candles for them at night, —and at this  
distance they looked fair and white, as if they  
had not yet flown into the light, but nearer at  
hand afterward, we saw how some had formerly  
singed their wings and bodies.  
  
A village seems thus, where its able-bodied  
men are all ploughing the ocean together, a8 a  
common field. In North Truro the women‘and  
girls may sit at their doors, and see where their  
husbands and brothers are harvesting their  
mackerel fifteen or twenty miles off, on the sea,  
with hundreds of white harvest wagons, just as

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 229  
  
in the country the farmers’ wives sometimes see  
their husbands working in a distant hillside  
field. But the sound of no dinner-horn can  
reach the fisher’s ear.  
  
Having passed the narrowest part of the waist  
of the Cape, though still in ‘Truro, for this  
township is about twelve miles long on the  
shore, we crossed over to the Bay side, not half  
mile distant, in order to spend the noon on  
the nearest: shrubby sand-hill in Provincetown,  
called Mount Ararat, which rises one hundred  
feot above the ocean. On our way thither we  
hhad occasion to admire the various beautiful  
forms and colors of the sand, and we noticed an  
interesting mirage, which I have since found  
that Hitchcock also observed on the sands of the  
Cape. We were crossing a shallow valley in  
the desert, where the smooth and spotless sand  
sloped upward by a small angle to the horizon  
on every side, and at the lowest part was a long  
chain of clear but shallow pools. As wo were  
approaching these for a drink, in a diagonal di-  
rection across the valley, they appeared inclined  
at a slight but decided angle to the horizon,  
though they were plainly and broadly connected  
with one another, and there was not tho least  
ripple to suggest a current; so that by the time  
we had reached a convenient part of one we  
seemed to have ascended several fect. They

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280 CAPE COD  
  
appeared to lie by magic on the side of the vale,  
like a mirror left in a slanting position. It was  
a very pretty mirage for a Provincetown desert,  
but not amounting to what, in Sanscrit, is  
called “‘the thirst of the gazelle,” as there was  
real water here for a base, and we were able to  
quench our thirst after all.  
  
Professor Rafn, of Copenhagen, thinks that  
the mirage which I noticed, but which an old  
inhabitant of Provincetown, to whom I men-  
tioned it, had never seen nor heard of, had  
something to do with the name “Furdustrandas,””  
i. e,, Wonder Strands, given, as I have said, in  
the old Icelandic account of Thorfinn’s expedi-  
tion to Vinland in the year 1007, to a part of  
the coast on which he landed. But these sands  
are more remarkable for their length than for  
their mirage, which is common to all deserts,  
and the reason for the name which the North-  
men themselves give— “because it took a long  
time to sail by them ”— is sufficient and more  
applicable to these shores. However, if you  
should sail all the way from Greenland to Buz-  
zard’s Bay along the coast, you would get sight  
of a good many sandy beaches. But whether  
‘Thor-finn saw the mirage here or not, Thor-eau,  
one of the samo family, did; and perchance it  
was because Leif the Lucky had, ina previous  
voyage, taken Thor-er and his people off the

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 281  
  
rock in the middle of the sea, that Thor-eau  
was born to see it.  
  
‘This was not the only mirage which I saw on  
the Cape. That half of the beach next the bank  
is commonly level, or nearly so, while the other  
slopes downward to the water. As I was walk-  
ing upon the edge of the bank in Wellfleet at  
sundown, it seemed to me that the inside Lalf of  
the beach sloped upward toward the water to  
meet the other, forming a ridge ten or twelve  
feet high the whole length of the shore, but  
higher always opposite to where I stood; and I  
was not convinced of the contrary till I de-  
seended the bank, though the shaded outlines  
left by the waves of a previous tide but halfway  
down the apparent declivity might have taught  
me better. A stranger may easily detect what  
is strange to the oldest inhabitant, for the  
strange is his province. The old oysterman,  
speaking of gull-shooting, had said that you \*  
must aim under, when firing down the bank.  
  
‘A noighbor tells me that one August, looking  
through a glass from Naushon to some vessels  
which were sailing along near Martha’s Vine-  
yard, the water about them appeared perfectly  
‘smooth, so that they were reflected in it, and  
yet their full sails proved that it must be rip-  
pled, and they who were with him thought that  
it was a mirage, i. e., a reflection from a haze.

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282 CAPE CoD  
  
From the above-mentioned sand-hill we over-  
looked Provincetown and its harbor, now emp-  
tied of vessels, and also a wide expanse of  
ocean. As we did not wish to enter Province-  
town before night, though it was cold and windy,  
we returned across the deserts to the Atlantic  
side, and walked along the beach again nearly  
to Race Point, being still greedy of the sea in-  
fluence. All the while it was not so calm as the  
reader may suppose, but it was blow, blow,  
blow, — roar, roar, roar,—tramp, tramp,  
tramp, —without interruption, ‘The shore now  
trended nearly east and west.  
  
‘Before sunset, having already seen the mack-  
erel fleet returning into the Bay, we left the sea~  
shore on the north of Provincetown, and made  
our way across the desert to the eastern extrem-  
ity of the town, From the first high sand-hill,  
covered with beach-grass and bushes to its top,  
on the edge of the desert, we overlooked the  
shrubby hill and swamp country which surrounds  
Provincetown on the north, and protects it, in  
some measure, from the invading sand, Not-  
withstanding the universal barrenness, and the  
contiguity of the desert, I never saw an au-  
tumnal Iandscape so beautifully painted as this  
was. Tt was like the richest rug imaginable  
spread over an uneven surface; no damask nor  
velvet, nor Tyrian dye or stuffs, nor the work

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 238  
  
‘of any loom, could ever match it. There was  
the incredibly bright red of the Huckleberry,  
and the reddish brown of the Bayberry, mingled  
with the bright and living green of small Pitch-  
Pines, and also the duller green of the Bay-  
berry, Boxberry, and Plum, the yellowish green  
of the Shrub-Oaks, and the various golden and  
yellow and fawn-colored tints of the Birch and  
Maple and Aspen, —each making its own fig-  
ure, and, in the midst, tho few yellow sand-  
slides on the sides of the hills looked like the  
white floor seen through rents in the rug. Com-  
ing from the country as T di  
tumnal woods as I had seen,  
the most novel and remarkable sight that T saw  
on the Cape. Probably the brightness of the  
tints was enhanced by contrast with the sand  
which surrounded this tract. This was a part  
of the furniture of Cape Cod. We had for  
days walked up the long and bleak piazza which  
rans along her Atlantic side, then over the  
sanded floor of her halls, and now we were be-  
ing introduced into her boudoir. ‘The hundred  
white sails crowding round Long Point into  
Provincetown Harbor, seen over the painted  
hills in front, looked like toy ships upon a man-  
tel-piece.  
  
‘The peculiarity of this autumnal landscape  
consisted in tho lowness and thickness of tho

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234 CAPE CoD  
  
shrubbery, no less than in the brightness of the  
tints, It was like a thick stuff of worsted or a  
fleece, and looked as if a giant could take it up  
by the hem, or rather the tasseled fringe which  
trailed out on the sand, and shake it, though it,  
needed not to be shaken. But no doubt the  
dust would fly in that case, for not a little has  
accumulated underneath it. Was it not such  
an autumnal landscape as this which suggested  
our high-colored rugs and carpets? Hereafter  
when I look on a richer rug than usual, and  
study its figures, I shall think, there are the  
huckleberry hills, and there the denser swamps  
of boxberry and blueberry; there the shrub-oak.  
patches and the bayberries, there the maples  
and the birches and the pines. What other  
dyes are to be compared to these? They were  
warmer colors than I had associated with the  
New England coast.  
  
‘After threading a swamp full of boxberry,  
and climbing several hills covered with shrub-  
oaks, without a path, where shipwrecked men  
would be in danger of perishing in the night,  
we came down upon the eastern extremity of the  
four planks which run the whole length of Pro-  
vineetown street. This, which is the last town  
on the Cape, lies mainly in one street along the  
curving beach fronting the southeast. ‘The  
sand-hills, covered with shrubbery and inter-

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 235  
  
posed with swamps and ponds, rise immediately  
behind it in tho form of a crescent, which is  
from half a mile to a mile or more wide in the  
middle, and beyond these is the desert, which is  
the greater part of its territory, stretching to  
the sea on the east and west and north. ‘The  
town is compactly built in the narrow space,  
from ten to fifty rods deep, between the harbor  
and the sand-hills, and contained at that time  
about twenty-six hundred inhabitants. ‘The  
houses, in which a more modern and pretending  
style has at length prevailed over the fisher-  
man’s hut, stand on the inner or plank side of  
the street, and the fish and store houses, with  
the picturesque-looking windmills of the Salt-  
works, on the water side. ‘The narrow portion  
of the beach between, forming the street, about  
eighteen feet wide, the only one where one car-  
riage could pass another, if there was more than  
‘one carriage in the town, looked much “heay-  
ier” than any portion of the beach or the desert  
which we had walked on, it being above the  
reach of the highest tide, and the sand being  
kept loose by the occasional passage of a trav-  
eler. We learned that the four planks on which  
we were walking had been bought by the town’s  
share of the Surplus Revenue, the disposition  
of which was a bone of contention between the  
inhabitants, till they wisely resolved thus to put

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236 CAPE COD  
  
it under foot. Yet some, it was said, were so  
provoked because they did not receive their  
particular share in money, that they persisted  
in walking in the sand a long time after the  
sidewalk was built. This is the only instance  
which I happen to know in which the surplus  
revenue proved a blessing to any town. A sur-  
plus revenue of dollars from the treasury to  
stem the greater evil of a surplus revenue of  
sand from the ocean. They expected to make  
a hard road by the time these planks were worn  
out. Indeed, they have already done so since  
we were there, and have almost forgotten their  
sandy baptism.  
  
As we passed along we observed the inhabi-  
tants engaged in curing either fish or the coarse  
salt hay which they had brought home and  
spread on the beach before their doors, looking  
‘as yellow as if they had raked it out of the sea.  
‘The front-yard plots appeared like what indeed  
they were, portions of the beach fenced in, with  
Deach-grass growing in them, as if they were  
sometimes covered by the tide. You might still  
pick up shells and pebbles there. There were a  
few trees among the houses, especially silver  
abeles, willows, and balm-of-Gileads; and one  
‘man showed me a young oak which he had  
transplanted from behind the town, thinking it  
an apple-tree. But every man to his trade,

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 237  
  
‘Though he had little wooderaft, he was not the  
less weatherwise, and gave us one piece of in-  
formation, viz., he had observed that when a  
thunder-cloud came up with a flood-tide it did  
not rain. This was the most completely mari-  
time town that we were ever in. It was merely  
a good harbor, surrounded by land, dry if not  
firm,—an inhabited beach, whereon fishermen  
cured and stored their fish, without any back  
country. When ashore the inhabitants still  
walk on planks, A few small patches have been  
reclaimed from the swamps, containing com-  
monly half a dozen square rods only each, We  
saw one which was fenced with four lengths of  
rail; also a fence made wholly of hogshead  
staves stuck in the ground. These, and such as,  
these, were all the cultivated and cultivable land  
in Provincetown. We were told that there  
were thirty or forty acres in all, but we did not  
discover a quarter part so much, and that was  
well dusted with sand, and looked as if the des-  
ert was claiming it. They are now turning  
some of their swamps into Cranberry Meadows  
on quite an extensive scale.  
  
Yet far from being out of the way, Province-  
town is directly in the way of the navigatoi  
and he is lucky who does not run afoul of it in  
the dark. It is situated on one of the highways  
of commerce, and men from all parts of the  
globe touch there in tho course of a year.

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238 CAPE CoD  
  
‘The mackerel fleet had nearly all got in bo-  
fore us, it being Saturday night, excepting that  
division which had stood down towards Chatham  
in the morning; and from a hill where we went  
to see the sun set in the Bay, we counted two  
hundred goodly looking schooners at anchor in  
the harbor at various distances from the shore,  
and more were yet coming round the Cape. As  
each came to anchor, it took in sail and swung  
round in the wind, and lowered its boat. ‘They  
belonged chiefly to Wellfleet, Truro, and Cape  
‘Ann. This was that city of canvas which we  
‘had seen hull down in the horizon. Near at  
hand, and under bare poles, they were unex-  
pectedly black-looking vessels, néhavas vies. A.  
fisherman told us that there were fifteen hun-  
dred vessels in the mackerel fleet, and that he  
had counted three hundred and fifty in Provinee-  
town Harbor at one time. Being obliged to  
anchor at a considerable distance from the shore  
on account of the shallowness of the water, they  
made the impression of a larger fleet than the  
vessels at the wharves of a large city. As they  
had been manceuvring out there all day seem-  
ingly for our entertainment, while we were walk-  
ing northwestward along the Atlantic, so now  
‘we found them flocking into Provincetown Har-  
bor at night, just as we arrived, as if to mest  
us, and exhibit themselves close at hand. Stand-

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 239  
  
ing by Race Point and Long Point with various  
speed, they reminded me of fowls coming home  
to roost.  
  
‘These were genuine New England vessels. Tt  
is stated in the Journal of Moses Princo, a  
brother of the annalist, under date of 1721, at  
which time he visited Gloucester, that the first  
vessel of the class called schooner was built at  
Gloucester about eight years before, by Andrew  
Robinson; and late in the same century one  
Cotton Tufts gives us the tradition with some  
particulars, which he learned on a visit to the  
samo place. According to the latter, Robinson  
having constructed a vessel which he masted  
and rigged in a peculiar manner, on her going  
off the stocks a by-stander cried out, “ Oh, how  
she scoona!” whereat Robinson replied, “A  
schooner let her be!” “From which time,”  
says Tufts, “vessels thus masted and rigged  
have gone by the name of schooners; before  
which, vessels of this description were not known  
in Enrope.”! Yet I can hardly believe this, for  
‘a schooner has always seemed to me the typical  
vessel.  
  
According to C. E. Potter of Manchester,  
New Hampshire, the very word schooner is of  
New England origin, being from the Indian  
  
3 See Mase. Hist, Coll, vol ix, tat sores, and vol i, 4th  
crea.

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240 CAPE COD  
  
‘schoon or acoot, meaning to rush, as Schoodie,  
from scoot and auke, a place where water rushes.  
N. B. Somebody of Gloucester was to read a  
paper on this matter before a genealogical soci-  
ety in Boston, March 8, 1859, according to the  
Boston Journal, q. v.  
  
Nearly all who come out must walle on the  
  
four planks which I have mentioned, so that  
  
+ you are pretty sure to meet all the inhabitants  
‘of Provincetown who come out in the course of  
a day, provided you keep out yourself. This  
evening the planks were crowded with mackerel  
fishers, to whom we gave and from whom we  
took the wall, as we returned to our hotel. ‘This  
hotel was kept by a tailor, his shop on the one  
side of the door, his hotel on the other, and his  
day seemed to be divided between carving meat  
and carving broadcloth.  
  
‘Tho next morning, though it was still more  
cold and blustering than the day before, we took  
to the deserts again, for we spent our days  
wholly out of doors, in the sun when there was,  
any, and in the wind which never failed. After  
threading the shrubby hill-country at the south-  
west end of the town, west of the Shank-Painter  
Swamp, whose expressive name— for wo under-  
stood it at first as a landsman naturally would  
—gave it importance in our eyes, we crossed  
the sands to the shore south of Race Point and

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 41  
  
three miles distant, and thence roamed round  
eastward through the desert to where we had  
left the sea the evening before. We traveled  
five or six miles after we got out there, on a curv-  
ing line, and might have gone nine or ten, over  
vast platters of pure sand, from the midst of  
which we could not see particle of vegetation,  
excepting the distant thin fields of beach-grass,  
which crowned and made the ridges toward  
which the sand sloped upward on each sides  
—all the while in the face of a outting wind as  
cold as January; indeed, we experienced no  
weather s0 cold as this for nearly two months  
afterward. ‘This desert extends from the ex-  
tremity of the Cape, through Provincetown into  
‘Truro, and many a time as we were traversing  
‘it we were reminded of “Riley’s Narrative” of  
his captivity in the sands of Arabia, notwith-  
standing the cold. Our eyes magnifitd the  
patches of beach-grass into cornfields, in tho  
horizon, and we probably exaggerated the height  
of the ridges on account of the mirage, I was  
pleased to learn afterward, from Kalm's Travels  
in North America, that the inhabitants of the  
Lower St. Lawrence call this grass (Calama-  
grostis arenaria), and also Sea-lyme grass (Ely-  
‘mus arenarius), seigle de mer; and he adds, “1  
have been assured that these plants grow in  
great plenty in Newfoundland, and on other

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242 CAPE CoD  
  
North American shores; the places covered with  
them looking, at a distance, like cornfields;  
which might explain the passage in our north-  
ern accounts [he wrote in 1749] of the excellent  
wine land { Vinland det goda, Translator], which  
mentions that they had found whole fields of  
wheat growing wild.”  
  
‘The beach-grass is “two to four feet high, of  
a sea-green color,” and it is said to be widely  
diffused over the world. In the Hebrides it is  
used for mats, pack-saddles, bags, hate, etc.;  
paper has been made of it at Dorchester in this  
State, and cattle eat it when tender. It has  
heads somewhat like rye, from six inches toa  
foot in length, and it is propagated both by  
roots and seeds, To express its love for sand,  
some botanists have called it Psamma arenaria,  
which is the Greek for sand, qualified by the  
Latin for sandy,—or sandy sand. As it is  
blown about by the wind, while it is held fast  
by its roots, it describes myriad circles in the  
sand as accurately as if they were made by com-  
pastes.  
  
Te was the dreariest scenery imaginable, ‘The  
only animals which we saw on the sand at that  
e were spiders, which are to be found almost  
everywhere whether on snow or ice, water or  
sand, —and a venomous-looking, long, narrow  
worm, one of the myriapods, or thousand-legs.

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 243  
  
‘We were surprised to see spider-holes in that  
flowing sand with an edge as firm as that of a  
stoned well,  
  
Tn June this sand was scored with the tracks  
of turtles both lange and small, which had been  
out in the night, leading to and from the  
swamps. I was told by a terre filivs who has a  
“farm” on the edge of the desert, and is fami-  
liar with the fame of Provincetown, that one  
man had caught twenty-five snapping-turtles  
there the previous spring. His own method of  
catching them was to put a toad on a mackerel-  
hook and cast it into a pond, tying the line to  
stump or stake on shore. Invariably the turtle  
when hooked crawled up the line to the stump,  
and was found waiting there by his captor, how-  
ever long afterward. He also said that minks,  
muskrats, foxes, coons, and wild mice were  
found there, but no squirrels. We heard of  
seacturtles as large as a barrel being found on  
tho beach and on East Harbor. marsh, but  
whether they were native there, or had been lost  
out of some vessel, did not appear. Perhaps  
they were the Salt-water Terrapin, or else tho  
‘Smooth Terrapin, found thus far north. Many  
toads were met with where there was nothing  
but sand and beach-grass. In Truro I had been  
surprised at the number of large light-colored  
toads everywhere hopping over the dry and

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244 CAPE COD  
  
sandy fields, their color corresponding to that  
of the sand. Snakes also are common on these  
pure sand beaches, and I have never been s0  
much troubled by mosquitoes as in such locali-  
ties. At the same season strawberries grew  
there abundantly in the little hollows on the  
edge of the desert, standing amid the beach-  
grass in the sand, and the fruit of the shad-bush  
or Amelanchier, which the inhabitants call  
Josh-pears (some think from juicy?), is very  
abundant on the hills, I fell in with an oblig-  
ing man who conducted me to the best locality  
for strawberries. He said that he would not  
have shown me the place if he had not seen that  
I was a stranger, and could not anticipate him  
another year; I therefore feel bound in honor  
not to reveal it. When we came to a pond, ho  
being the native did the honors and carried me  
over on his shoulders, like Sindbad. One good  
turn deserves another, and if he ever comes our  
way, I will do as much for him.  
  
In one place we saw numerous dead tops of  
trees projecting through the otherwise uninter-  
rupted desert, where, as we afterward learned,  
thirty or forty years before a flourishing forest  
hhad stood, and now, as the trees were laid bare  
from year to year, the inhabitants cut off their  
tops for fuel.  
  
‘We saw nobody that day outside of the town;

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 245  
  
it was too wintry for such as had seen the Back-  
side before, or for the greater number who never  
desire to see it, to venture out; and we saw  
hardly a track to show that any had ever crossed  
this desert. Yet I was told that some are al-  
‘ways out on the Back-side night and day in so-  
vere weather, looking for wrecks, in order that  
they may get the job of discharging the cargo, ©  
or the like,—and thus shipwrecked men are  
succored. But, generally speaking, the inhabi-  
tants rarely visit these sands, One who had  
lived in Provincetown thirty years told me that  
he had not been through to the north side within  
that time, Sometimes the natives themselves  
come near perishing by losing their way in  
snow-storms behind the town.  
  
‘The wind was not a Sirocco or Simoon, such  
as we associate with the desert, but a New Eng-  
land northeaster, —and we sought shelter in  
vain under the sand-hills, for it blew all about  
them, rounding them into cones, and was sure  
to find us out on whichever side we sat. From  
time to time we lay down and drank at little  
pools in the sand, filled with pure, fresh water,  
all that was left, probably, of a pond or swamp.  
The air was filled with dust like snow, and cut-  
ting sand which made the face tingle, and wo  
saw what it must be to face it when the weather  
was drier, and, if possible, windier still, —to

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246 CAPE CoD  
  
face migrating sand-bar in the air, which has  
picked up its duds and is off, —to be whipped  
with a cat, not 0” nine-tails, but of a myriad of  
tails, and each one a sting to it. A Mr. Whit-  
man, a former minister of Wellfleet, used to  
write to his inland friends that the blowing sand  
seratched the windows so that he was obliged  
to have one new pane set every week, that he  
might see out.  
  
On the edge of the shrubby woods the sand  
had the appearance of an inundation which was  
overwhelming them, terminating in an abrupt  
bank many feet higher than the surface on  
which they stood, and having partially buried  
the outside trees. The moving sand-hills of  
England, called Dunes or Downs, to which  
these have been likened, are either formed of  
sand cast up by the sea, or of sand taken from  
the land itself in the first place by the wind,  
and driven still farther inward. It is here a  
tide of sand impelled by waves and wind, slowly  
flowing from the sea toward the town. The  
northeast winds are said to be the strongest, but  
the northwest to move most sand, because they  
are the driest. On the shore of the Bay of Bis-  
cay, many villages were formerly destroyed in  
this way. Some of the ridges of beach-grass  
which we saw were planted by government many  
years ago, to preserve the harbor of Province-

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 247  
  
town and the extremity of the Cape. I talked  
with some who had been employed in the plant-  
ing. In the “Description of the Eastern  
Coast,” which I have already referred to, it is  
said: “Beach-grass during the spring and sum-  
mer grows about two feet and a half. If sur-  
rounded by naked beach, the storms of autumn  
and winter heap up the sand on all sides, and  
cause it to rise nearly to the top of tho plant,  
In the ensuing spring the grass sprouts anew;  
is again covered with sand in the winter; and  
thus a hill or ridge continues to ascend as long  
aa there is a sufficient base to support it, or till  
the circumscribing sand, being also covered  
with beach-grass, will no longer yield to the  
force of the winds.” Sand-hills formed in this  
‘way are sometimes one hundred feet high and of  
every variety of form, like snow-drifts, or Arab  
tents, and are continually shifting. The grass  
roots itself very firmly. When I endeavored  
to pull it up, it usually broke off ten inches or  
foot below the surface, at what had been the  
surface the year before, as appeared by the  
numerous offshoots there, it being a straight,  
hard, round shoot, showing by its length how  
much the sand bad accumulated the last year;  
and sometimes the dead stubs of a previous  
season were pulled up with it from still deeper  
in the sand, with their own more decayed shoot

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248, CAPE COD  
  
attached, — so that the age of a sand-bill, and  
its rate of increase for several years, are pretty  
accurately recorded in this way.  
  
Old Gerard, the English herbalist, says, p.  
1250: “I find mention in Stowe’s Chronicle, in  
‘Anno 1555, of a certain pulse or pease, as they  
term it, wherewith the poor people at that time,  
there being a great dearth, were miraculously  
helped; he thus mentions it. In the month of  
August (saith he), in Suffolke, at a place by  
the sea side all of hard stone and pibble, called  
in those parts a shelf, lying between the towns  
of Orford and Aldborough, where neither grow  
‘grass nor any earth was ever seen; it chanced  
in this barren place suddenly to spring up with-  
out any tillage or sowing, great abundance of  
peason, whereof the poor gathered (as men  
judged) above one hundred quarters, yet re-  
‘mained some ripe and some blossoming, as many  
‘as ever there were before; to the which place  
rode the Bishop of Norwich and the Lord  
‘Willoughby, with others in great number, who  
found nothing but hard, rocky stone the space  
of three yards under the roots of these peason,  
which roots were great and long, and very  
sweet.” He tells us also that Gemer learned  
from Dr. Cajus that there were enough there to  
supply thousands of men. He goes on to say  
that “they without doubt grew there many

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 249  
  
years before, but were not observed till hunger  
made them take notice of them, and quickened  
their invention, which commonly in our people  
is very dull, especially in finding out food of  
this nature. My worshipfol friend Dr. Argent  
hath told me that many years ago he was in this  
place, and caused his man to pull among the  
beach with his hands, and follow the roots so  
Jong until he got some equal in length unto his  
height, yet could come to no ends of them.”  
Gerard never saw them, and is not certain what  
kind they were.  
  
In Dwight’s Travels in New England it is  
stated that the inhabitants of Truro were for-  
merly regularly warned under the authority of  
Jaw in the month of April yearly, to plant  
beach-grass, as elsewhere they are warned to re-  
pair the highways. ‘They dug up the grass in  
bunches, which were afterward divided into sev-  
eral smaller ones, and set about three feet apart,  
in rows, so arranged as to break joints and ob  
struct the passage of the wind. It spread itself  
rapidly, the weight of the seeds when ripe bend-  
ing the heads of the grass, and so dropping di-  
rectly by its side and vegetating there. In this  
way, for instance, they built up again that part  
of the Cape between Truro and Provincetown  
where the sea broke over in the last century.  
‘They have now a public road near there, made

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250 CAPE COD  
  
by laying sods, which were full of roots, bottom  
upward and close together on the sand, double  
in the middle of the track, then spreading brush  
evenly over the’ sand on each side for half a  
dozen feet, planting beach-grass on the banks  
in regular rows, as above described, and sticking  
a fence of brush against the hollows.  
  
The attention of the general government was  
first attracted to the danger which threatened  
Cape Cod Harbor from the inroads of the sand,  
about thirty years ago, and commissioners were  
at that time appointed by Massachusetts to ex-  
amine the premises. They reported in June,  
1825, that, owing to “the trees and brush hay-  
ing been cut down, and the beach-grass de-  
stroyed on the seaward side of the Cape, oppo-  
site the Harbor,” the original surface of the  
ground had been broken up and removed by  
the wind toward the Harbor, —during the pre-  
vious fourteen years, —over an extent of “one  
half a mile in breadth, and about four and a  
half miles in length.”—“The space where a  
few years since were some of the highest lands  
con the Cape, covered with troes and bushes,”  
presenting ‘an extensive waste of undulating  
sand;”—and that, during the previous twelve  
months, t%@ sand ‘had approached the Harbor  
an average distance of fifty rods, for an extent  
of four and a half miles!” and unless some

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 251  
  
measures were adopted to check its progress, it  
would in a few years destroy both the harbor  
and the town. They therefore recommended  
that beach-grass be set out on a curving line  
over a space ton rods wide and four and a half  
miles long, and that cattle, horses, and sheep be  
prohibited from going abroad, and the inhabi-  
tants from cutting the brush.  
  
I was told that about thirty thousand dollars  
im all had been appropriated to this object,  
though it was complained that a great part of it  
‘was spent foolishly, as the public money is wont  
to be. Some say that while the government is  
planting beach-grass behind the town for the  
protection of the harbor, the inhabitants are  
rolling the sand into the harbor in wheelbarrows,  
in order to make house-lots. ‘The Patent-Office  
hhas recently imported the seed of this grass  
from Holland, and distributed it over the coun-  
‘ry, but probably we have as much as the Hol-  
landers.  
  
‘Thus Cape Cod is anchored to the heavens,  
as it were, by a myriad little cables of beach-  
‘grass, and, if they should fail, would become a  
total wreck, and erelong go to the bottom.  
Formerly, the cows were permitted to go at  
large, and they ate many strands of the cable  
by which the Cape is moored, and well-nigh set  
it adrift, as the bull did the boat which was

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252 CAPE CoD  
  
‘moored with a grass rope; but now they are not  
permitted to wander.  
  
‘A portion of Truro which has considerable  
taxable property on it has lately been added to  
Provincetown, and I was told by a Truro man  
that his townsmen talked of petitioning the legis  
lature to set off the next mile of their territory  
also to Provincetown, in order that she might  
have her share of the lean as well as the fat,  
and take care of the road through it; for its  
whole value is literally to hold the Cape to-  
gether, and even this it has not always done.  
But Provincetown strenuously declines the gift.  
  
‘The wind blowed so hard from the northeast,  
that, cold as it was, we resolved to sce the break-  
ers on the Atlantic side, whose din we had  
heard all the morning; so we kept on eastward  
through the desert, till we struck the shore  
again northeast of Provincetown, and exposed  
ourselves to the full force of the piercing blast.  
‘There are extensive shoals there over which the  
sea broke with great force. For half a mile  
from the shore it was one mass of white break-  
ers, which, with the wind, made such a din that  
‘we could hardly hear ourselves speak. Of this  
part of the coast it is said: “A northeast storm,  
‘the most violent and fatal to seamen, as it is  
frequently accompanied with’ snow, blows di-  
reotly on tho land: a strong current sets along

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THE SEA AND THE DESERT 253  
  
the shore: add to which that ships, during the  
operation of such a storm, endeavor to work  
northward, that they may get into the bay.  
Should they be unable to weather Race Point,  
the wind drives them on the shore, and a ship-  
wreck is inevitable. Accordingly, the strand is  
everywhere covered with the fragments of ves-  
sels.” But since the Highland Light was  
erected, this part of the coast is less dangerous,  
and it is said that more shipwrecks occur south  
of that light, where they were scarcely known  
before.  
  
‘This was the stormiest sea that we witnessed,  
—more tumultuous, my companion affirmed,  
than the rapids of Niagara, and, of course, on  
afar greater scale. Tt was the ocean in a gale,  
a clear, cold day, with only one sail in sight,  
which labored much, as if it were anxiously  
seeking a harbor. It was high tide when wo  
reached the shore, and in one place, for a con-  
siderable distance, each wave dashed up so high  
that it was difficult to pass between it and the  
bank. Further south, where the bank was  
higher, it would have been dangerous to attempt  
it. A native of the Cape has told me, that  
many years ago, three boys, his playmates, hav-  
ing gone to this beach in Wellfleet to visit a  
wreck, when the sea receded ran down to the  
wreck, and when it came in ran before it to the

Page-8712

254 CAPE COD  
  
bank, but the sea following fast at their heels,  
caused the bank to cave and bury them alive.  
Te was the roaring sea, 6idaova #xyeooa, —  
  
up) 88 Hepat  
‘Widres Bobwcr, tperrepiras AXbs Khe,  
  
‘And the suramits of the bank:  
‘Around resound, the sea being vomited forth.  
  
‘As we stood looking on this scene we were  
gradually convinced that fishing here and in a  
pond were not, in all respects, the same, and  
that he who waits for fair weather and a calm  
sea may never see the glancing skin of a mack-  
erel, and get-no nearer to a cod than the wooden  
emblem in the State House.  
  
Having lingered on the shore till wo were  
well-nigh chilled to death by the wind, and were  
ready to take shelter in a Charity-house, wo  
‘turned our weather-beaten faces toward Pro-  
vincetown and the Bay again, having now more  
than doubled the Cape.

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x  
PROVINCETOWN  
  
Eantx the next morning I walked into a fsh-  
house near our hotel, where three or four men  
‘were engaged in trundling out the pickled fish  
on barrows, and spreading them to dry. They  
told me that a vessel had lately come in from  
the Banks with forty-four thousand codfish.  
‘Timothy Dwight says that, just before he ar-  
rived at Provincetown, “a schooner came in  
from the Great Bank with fifty-six thousand  
fish, almost one thousand five hundred quintals,  
taken in a single voyage; the main deck being,  
on her return, eight inches under water in calm  
weather.” The cod in this fish-house, just out  
of the pickle, lay packed several feet deep, and  
three or four men stood on them in cowhide  
boots, pitching them on to the barrows with an  
instrument which had a single iron point. One  
young man, who chewed tobacco, spat on the  
fish repeatedly. Well, sir, thought I, when  
that older man sees you he will speak to you.  
But presently I saw the older man do the same  
thing. It reminded me of the figs of Smyrna.

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256 CAPE COD  
  
“How long does it take to cure these fish?” I  
asked.  
  
“Two good drying days, sir,”  
swer.  
  
I walked across the street again into the hotel  
to breakfast, and mine host inquired if I would  
take “hashed fish or beans.” I took beans,  
though they never were a favorite dish of mine.  
I found next summer that this was still the only  
alternative proposed here, and the landlord was  
still ringing the changes on these two word:  
In the former dish there was a remarkable pro-  
portion of fish. As you travel inland the potato  
predominates. It chanced that I did not taste  
fresh fish of any kind on the Cape, and I was  
assured that they were not so much used there  
as in the country. That is where they are  
ured, and where, sometimes, travelers are  
cured of eating them. No fresh meat was  
slaughtered in Provincetown, but the little that  
was used at the public houses was brought from  
Boston by the steamer.  
  
A great many of the houses here were sur-  
rounded by fish-flakes close up to the sills on all  
sides, with only a narrow passage two or three  
feet wide, to the front door; so that instead of  
looking out into a flower or grass plot, you  
looked on to so-many square rods of cod turned  
wrong side outwards. ‘These parterres were said  
  
” was the an-

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PROVINCETOWN 25  
  
to be least like a flower-garden in a good dry-  
ing day in midsummer. There were flakes of  
every age and pattern, and some so rusty and  
overgrown with lichens that they looked as if  
they might have served the founders of the fish-  
ery here. Some had broken down under the  
weight of successive harvests. The principal  
employment of the inhabitants at this time  
seemed to be to trundle out their fish and spread  
them in the morning, and bring them in at  
night. I saw how many a loafer who chanced  
to be out early enough, got a job at wheeling  
out the fish of his neighbor who was anxious to  
improve the whole of a fair day. Now then I  
knew where salt fish were caught. They were  
everywhere lying on their backs, their collar-  
bones standing out like the lapels of a man-o'-  
war-man’s jacket, and inviting all things to  
come and rest in their bosoms; and all things,  
with a few exceptions, accepted the invitation,  
I think, by the way, that if you should wrap a  
large salt fish round a small boy, he would have  
a coat of such a fashion as I have seen many a  
‘one wear to muster. Salt fish were stacked up  
on the wharves, looking like corded wood, maple  
and yellow birch with the bark left on. I mis-  
took them for this at first, and such in one sense  
they were, —fuel to maintain our vital fires, —  
an eastern wood which grew on the Grand

Page-8716

258 CAPE CoD  
  
Banks. Some were stacked in the form of huge  
flower-pots, being laid in small circles with the  
tails outwards, each circle successively larger  
than the preceding until the pile was threo or  
four feet high, when the circles rapidly dimin-  
ished, so as to form a conical roof. On the  
shores of New Brunswick this is covered with  
birch-bark, and stones are placed upon it, and,  
being thus rendered impervious to the rain, it is  
left to season before being packed for exporta-  
tion.  
  
It is rumored that in the fall the cows here  
are sometimes fed on cod’s heads! The godlike  
part of the cod, which, like the human head, is  
curiously and wonderfully made, forsooth has  
but little less brain in it, —coming to such an  
end! to be eraunched by cows! I felt my own  
slkull crack from sympathy. What if the heads  
‘of men were to be cut off to feed the cows of a  
superior order of beings who-inhabit the islands  
in the ether? Away goes your fine brain, the  
hhouse of thought and instinct, to swell the cud  
of a ruminant animal! —However, an inhabi-  
tant assured me that they did not make a prac-  
tice of feeding cows on cod’s heads; the cows  
merely would eat them sometimes, but I might  
live there all my days and never see it done.  
‘A cow wanting salt would also sometimes lick  
ut all the soft part of a cod on the flakes.

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PROVINCETOWN 259  
  
This he would have me believe was the founda-  
tion of this fish-story.  
  
It has been a constant traveler’s tale and per-  
haps slander, now for thousands of years, the  
Latins and Grecks have repeated it, that this or  
that nation feeds its cattle, or horses, or sheep,  
on fish, as may be seen in Ailian and Pliny, but  
in the Journal of Nearchus, who was Alexan-  
der’s admiral, and made a voyage from the  
Indus to the Euphrates three hundred and  
twenty-six years before Christ, it is said that the  
inhabitants of a portion of the intermediate  
coast, whom he called Ichthyophagi or Fish-  
eaters, not only ate fishes raw and also dried  
and pounded in a whale’s vertebra for a mortar  
and made into a paste, but gave them to their  
cattle, there being no grass on the coast; and  
several modem travelers, — Braybosa, Niebuhr,  
and others make the same report. ‘Therefore in  
balancing the evidence I am still in doubt about  
the Provincetown cows. As for other domestic  
animals, Captain King, in his continuation of  
Captain Cook’s Journal in 1779, says of the  
dogs of Kamtschatka, “Their food in the winter  
consists entirely of the head, entrails, and back:  
bones of salmon, which are put aside and dried  
for that purpose; and with this diet they are fod  
but sparingly.”!  
  
1 Cook's Journal, vol. vit. p. S15,

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260 CAPE COD  
  
‘As we are treating of fishy matters, let mo  
insert what Pliny says, —that “the command-  
ers of the fleets of Alexander the Great have  
related that the Gedrosi, who dwell on the  
banks of the river Arabis, are in the habit of  
making the doors of their houses with the jaw-  
bones of fishes, and raftering the roofs with  
their bones.” Strabo tells the same of the  
Tehthyophagi. “Hardouin remarks, that the  
Basques of his day were in the habit of fencing  
their gardens with the ribs of the whale, which  
sometimes exceeded twenty fect in length; and  
Cuvier says, that at the present time the jaw-  
‘bone of the whale is used in Norway for the  
purpose of making beams or posts for build-  
ings.” Herodotus says the inhabitants on Lake  
Prasias in Thrace (living on piles), “give fish  
for fodder to their horses and beasts of burden.”  
  
Provincetown was apparently what is called a  
flourishing town. Some of the inhabitants asked.  
me if I did not think that they appeared to be  
well off generally. I said that I did, and asked  
how many there were in the almshouse. “Oh,  
only one or two, infirm or idiotic,” answered  
they. ‘The outward aspect of the houses and  
shops frequently suggested a poverty which  
their interior comfort and even richness dis-  
proved. You might mect a Indy daintily  
  
1 Boha's od. trans. of Pliny, vol fp. 901.

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PROVINCETOWN 261  
  
dressed in the Sabbath morning, wading in  
among the sand-hills, from church, where there  
appeared no house fit to receive her, yet no  
doubt the interior of the house answered to the  
exterior of the lady. As for the interior of the  
inhabitants I am still in the dark about it. I  
had a little intercourse with some whom I met  
in the street, and was often agreeably disap-  
pointed by discovering the intelligence of rough,  
and what would be considered unpromising,  
specimens. Nay, I ventured to call on one ci  
zen the next summer, by special invitation. I  
found him sitting in his front doorway, that  
Sabbath evening, prepared for me to come in  
unto him; but unfortunately for his reputation  
for keeping open house, there was stretched  
across his gateway a circular cobweb of the  
largest kind and quite entire. This looked so  
‘ominous that I actually turned aside and went  
in the back way.  
  
‘This Monday morning was beautifully mild  
and calm, both on land and water, promising us  
a smooth passage across the Bay, and the fisher-  
men feared that it would not be so good a dry-  
ing day as the cold and windy one which pre-  
ceded it. ‘There could hardly have been a  
greater contrast. This was the first of the In-  
dian Summer days, though at a late hour in the  
morning we found the wells in the sand behind

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262 CAPE CoD  
  
the town still covered with ico, which had  
formed in the night. What with wind and sun  
my most prominent feature fairly cast its slough.  
But I assure you it will take more than two  
good drying days to cure me of rambling. Af-  
ter making an excursion among the hills in the  
neighborhood of the Shank-Painter Swamp,  
and getting a little work done in its line, we  
took our seat upon the highest sand-hill over-  
ooking the town, in mid-air, on a long plank  
stretched across between two hillocks of sand,  
where some boys were endeavoring in vain to  
fly their kite; and there we remained the rest  
of that forenoon looking out over the placid  
harbor, and watching for the first appearance  
of the steamer from Wellfleet, that we might be  
in readiness to go on board when we heard the  
whistle off Long Point.  
  
‘We got what we could out of the boys in the  
mean while. Provincetown boys are of course  
all sailors and have sailors’ eyes. When we  
were at the Highland Light the last summer,  
seven or eight miles from Provincetown Har-  
bor, and wished to know one Sunday morning  
if the Olata, a well-known yacht, had got in  
from Boston, so that we could return in her, a  
Provincetown boy about ten years old, who  
chanced to be at the table, remarked that she  
had. I asked him how he knew. “I just saw

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PROVINCETOWN 263  
  
her come in,” said he. Whon I expressed sur-  
prise that he could distinguish her from other  
vessels so far, he said that there were mot 80  
many of those two-topsail schooners about but  
that he could tell her. Palfrey said, in his ora-  
tion at Barnstable, “Tho duck does not take to  
tho water with a surer instinct than the Barn-  
stable boy. [He might have said the Cape Cod  
boy as well] He leaps from his leading-strings  
into the shrouds. It is but a bound from the  
mother’s lap to the masthead. He boxes the  
‘compass in his infant soliloquies. He can hand,  
reef, and steer by the time he flies a kite.”  
  
‘This was the very day one would have chosen  
to sit upon a hill overlooking sea and land, and  
anuse there. The mackerel fleet was rapidly  
taking its departure, one schooner after another,  
and standing round the Cape, like fowls leav-  
ing their roosts in the morning to disperse them-  
selves in distant fields. ‘The turtle-like sheds  
of the salt-works were crowded into every nook  
in the hills, immediately behind the town, and  
their now idle wind-mills lined the shore. It  
‘was worth the while to see by what coarse and  
vimple chemistry this almost necessary of life is  
obtained, with the sun for journeyman, and a  
single apprentice to do the chores for a large  
establishment. It is a sort of tropical labor,  
pursued too in the sunniest season; more inter-

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264 CAPE CoD  
  
esting than gold or diamond-washing, which, I  
fancy, it somewhat resembles at a distance. In  
the production of the necessaries of life Nature  
ia ready enough to assist man. So at the pot-  
ash works which I have seen at Hull, where  
they burn the stems of the kelp and boil the  
ashes. Verily, chemistry is not a splitting of  
haire when you have got half a dozen raw Irish  
men in the laboratory. It is said, that owing  
to the reflection of the sun from the sand-hills,  
and there being absolutely no fresh water emp-  
tying into the harbor, the same number of  
perficial feet yields more salt here than in any  
other part of the country. A little rain is con-  
sidered necessary to clear the air, and make  
salt fast and good, for as paint does not dry, 60  
water does not evaporate, in dog-day weather.  
But they were now, as elsewhere on the Cape,  
breaking up their salt-works and selling them  
for lumber.  
  
‘From that elevation we could overlook the  
operations of the inhabitants almost as com-  
pletely as if the roofs had been taken off.  
‘They were busily covering the wicker-work  
flakes about their houses with salted fish, and  
we now saw that the back yards were improved  
for this purpose as much as the front; where  
‘one man’s fish ended another's began. In al-  
most every yard we detected some little build-

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PROVINCETOWN 265  
  
ing from which theso treasures were being tran-  
died forth and systematically spread, and we  
saw that there was an art as well as a knack  
even in spreading fish, and that a division of  
labor was profitably practiced. One man was  
withdrawing his fishes a few inches beyond the  
nose of his neighbor’s cow which had stretched  
her neck over a paling to get at thom. It  
seemed a quite domestic employment, like dry-  
ing clothes, and indeed in some parts of the  
county the women take part in it.  
  
I noticed in several places on the Cape a sort  
of clothes,flakes. They spread brush on tho  
ground, and fence it round, and then lay their  
clothes on it, to keep them from the sand. ‘This  
is a Cape Cod clothes-yard.  
  
‘The sand is the great enemy here. ‘The tops  
of some of the hills were inclosed and a board  
put up forbidding all persons entering the in-  
closure, lest their feet should disturb the sand,  
and set it a-blowing or a-sliding. The inhabi-  
tants are obliged to get leave from the authori-  
ties to cut wood behind the town for fish-flakes,  
bean-poles, pea-brush, and the like, though, as  
we were told, they may transplant trees from  
one part of the township to another without  
leave. The sand drifts like snow, and some-  
times the lower story of a house is concealed by  
it, though it is kept off by a wall. ‘The houses

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266 CAPE COD  
  
‘were formerly built on piles, in order that the  
riving wand might pass under them. We saw  
‘a few old ones here still standing on their piles,  
Dut they were boarded up now, being protected  
by their younger neighbors. There was a school-  
house, just under the hill on which we sat, filled  
with sand up to the tops of the desks, and of  
course the master and scholars had fled. Per-  
hhaps they had imprudently left the windows  
‘open one day, or neglected to mend a broken  
pane. Yet in one place was advertised “Fine  
sand for sale here,” —I could hardly believe  
my eyes, —probably some of the strect sifted,  
—a good instance of the fact that a man confers  
a value on the most worthless thing by mixing  
himself with it, according to which rule we  
must have conferred a value on the whole back-  
side of Cape Cod; —but I thought that if they  
could have advertised “Fat Soil,” or perhaps  
“Fine sand got rid of,” ay, and “Shoes emptied  
here,” it would have been more alluring. As we  
Tooked down on the town, I thought that I saw  
‘one man, who probably lived beyond the ex-  
tremity of the planking, steering and tacking  
for it in a sort of snow-shoes, but I may have  
been mistaken. In some pictures of Provinee-  
town the persons of the inhabitants are not  
drawn below the ankles, so much being supposed  
to be buried in the sand. Nevertheless, natives

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PROVINCETOWN 267  
  
of Provincetown assured me that they could  
walk in the middle of the road without trouble  
even in slippers, for they had learned how to  
put their feet down and lift them up without  
taking in any sand. One man said that he  
should be surprised if he found half a dozen  
grains of sand in his pumps at night, and  
stated, moreover, that the young ladies had a  
dexterous way of emptying their shoes at each  
step, which it would take a stranger a long time  
to learn. The tires of the stage-wheels were  
about five inches wide; and the wagon-tires gen-  
erally on the Cape are an inch or two wider, as  
the sand is an inch or two deeper than else-  
where. I saw a baby’s wagon with tires six  
inches wide to keep it near the surface. The  
more tired the wheels, the less tired the horses.  
Yet all the time that we were in Provincetown,  
which was two days and nights, we saw only one  
horse and cart, and they were conveying a coffin.  
They did not try such experiments there on  
common occasions. ‘The next summer I saw  
only the two-wheeled horse-cart which conveyed  
me thirty rods into the harbor on my way to the  
steamer. Yet we read that there were two  
horses and two yoke of oxen here in 1791, and  
‘we were told that there were several more when  
wo were there, beside the stage team. In Bar-  
ber’s Historical Collections, it is said, “so

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268 CAPE CoD  
  
rarely are wheel-carriages seen in the place that  
they are a matter of some curiosity to the  
younger part of the community. A lad who  
understood navigating the ocean much better  
than land travel, on seeing a man driving a  
wagon in the street, expressed his surprise at  
his being able to drive so straight without the  
assistance of a rudder.” There was no rattle of  
carta, and there would have been no rattle if  
thore had been any carts. Some saddle horses  
that passed the hotel in the evening merely  
made the sand fly with a rustling sound like a  
writer sanding his paper copiously, but there  
was no sound of their tread. No doubt there  
are more horses and carts there at present. A  
sleigh is never seen, or at least is a great novelty  
on the Cape, the snow being either absorbed by  
the sand or blown into drifts.  
  
Nevertheless, the inhabitants of the Cape  
generally do not complain of their “soil,” but  
will tell you that it is good enough for them to  
ry their fish on.  
  
Notwithstanding all this sand, we counted  
three meeting-houses, and four school-houses  
nearly as large, on this street, though some had  
a tight board fence about them to preserve the  
plot within level and hard. Similar’ fences,  
even within a foot of many of the houses, gave  
the town a less cheerful and hospitable appear-

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PROVINCETOWN 269  
  
ance than it would otherwise have had. They  
told us that, on the whole, the sand had made  
no progress for the last ten years, the cows be-  
ing no longer permitted to go at large, and every  
‘means being taken to stop the sandy tide.  
  
In 1727 Provincetown was “invested with  
peculiar privileges,” for its encouragement.  
Once or twice it was nearly abandoned; but  
now lots on the street fetch a high price, though  
titles to them were first obtained by possession  
and improvement, and they are still transferred  
by quit-claim deeds merely, the township being  
the property of the State. But though lots  
were s0 valuable on the street, you might in  
many places throw a stone over them to where a  
man could still obtain land or sand by squatting  
on or improving it.  
  
Stones are very rare on the Cape. I saw a  
very few small stones used for pavements and  
for bank walls, in one or two places in my walk,  
but they are so scarce, that, as I was informed,  
vessels have been forbidden to take them from  
the beach for ballast, and therefore their crews  
used to land at night and steal them. I did not  
hear of a rod of regular stone wall below Or-  
leans, Yet I saw one man underpinning a new  
house in Eastham with some “rocks,” as ho  
called them, which he said a neighbor had col-  
lected with great pains in the course of years,

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270 CAPE COD  
  
and finally made over to him. ‘This I thought  
was a gift worthy of being recorded, — equal to  
a transfer of California “rocks,” almost. An-  
other man who was assisting him, and who  
seemed to be a close observer of nature, hinted  
to me the locality of a rock in that neighbor-  
hood which was “forty-two paces in circumfer-  
ence and fifteen fect high,” for he saw that I  
was a stranger, and, probably, would not carry  
it off. Yet I suspect that the locality of the few  
large rocks on the forearm of the Cape is well  
known to the inhabitants generally. I even met  
with one man who had got a smattering of min-  
eralogy, but where he picked it up I coutd not  
guess. I thought that he would meet with some  
interesting geological nuts for him to crack, if  
he should ever visit the mainland, — Cohasset  
or Marblehead, for instance.  
  
‘The well stones at the Highland Light were  
brought from Hingham, but the wells and cel-  
lars of the Cape are generally built of brick,  
which also are imported. ‘The cellars, as well  
as the wells, are made in a circular form, to  
prevent the sand from pressing in the wall.  
‘The former are only from nine to twelve feet in  
diameter, and are said to be very cheap, since a  
single tier of brick will suffice for a cellar of  
even larger dimensions. Of course, if you live  
in the sand, you will not require a large cellar

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PROVINCETOWN: 2m  
  
to hold your roots. In Provincetown, when  
formerly they suffered the sand to drive under  
their houses, obliterating all rudiment of a  
cellar, they did not raise a vegetable to put into  
‘one. One farmer in Wellfleet, who raised fifty  
bushels of potatoes, showed me his cellar under  
‘comer of his house, not more than nine feet  
in diameter, looking like a cistern; but he had  
another of the same size under his barn.  
  
You need dig only a few feet almost any-  
where near the shore of the Cape to find fresh  
water. But that which we tasted was invariably  
poor, though the inhabitants called it good, as if  
they were comparing it with salt water. In  
the account of Truro, itis said, “Wells dug near  
the shore are dry at low water, or rather at  
what is called young flood, but are replenished  
with the flowing of the tide,” —the salt water,  
which is lowest in the sand, apparently forcing  
the fresh up. When you express your surprise  
at the greenness of a Provincetown garden on  
the beach, in a dry season, they will sometimes  
tell you that the tide forces the moisture up to  
them. It is an interesting fact that low sand-  
bars in the midst of the ocean, perhaps even  
those which are laid bare only at low tide, are  
reservoirs of fresh water, at which the thirsty  
mariner can supply himself. They appear, like  
Ihuge sponges, to hold the rain and dew which

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272 CAPE coD  
  
fall on them, and which, by capillary attraction,  
are prevented from mingling with the surround-  
ing brine.  
  
‘The Harbor of Provincetown—which, as  
well as the greater part of the Bay, and a wide  
expanse of ocean, we overlooked from our perch  
—is deservedly famous. It opens to the south,  
is free from rocks, and is never frozen over. It  
is said that the only ice seen in it drifts in  
sometimes from Barnstable or Plymouth.  
Dwight remarks that “the storms which prevail  
on the American coast generally come from the  
east; and there is no other harbor on a windward  
shore within two hundred miles.” J. D. Gra-  
ham, who has made a very minute and thorough  
survey of this harbor and the adjacent waters,  
states that “its capacity, depth of water, excel-  
Tent anchorage, and the complete shelter it  
affords from all winds, combine to render it one  
of the most valuable ship harbors on our coast.””  
It is the harbor of the Cape and of the fisher-  
men of Massachusetts generally. It was known  
to navigators several years at least before the  
settlement of Plymouth. In Captain Jobn  
Smith’s map of New England, dated 1614, it  
bears the name of Milford Haven, and Massa-  
chusetts Bay that of Stuard’s Bay. His High-  
ness Prince Charles changed the name of Cape  
Cod to Cape James; but even princes have not

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PROVINCETOWN: 218  
  
always power to change a name for the worse  
and, as Cotton Mather said, Cape Cod is  
name which I suppose it will never lose till  
shoals of oodfish be seen swimming on its high-  
est hills.”  
  
‘Many an early voyager was unexpectedly  
caught by this hook, and found himself em-  
bayed. On successive maps, Cape Cod appears  
sprinkled over with French, Dutch, and English  
names, as it made part of New France, New  
Holland, and New England. On one map  
Provincetown Harbor is called “Fuic (bownet?)  
Bay,” Barnstable Bay “Staten Bay,” and the  
sea north of it “Mare del Noort,” or the North  
Sea, On another, the extremity of the Cape is  
called “Staten Hoeck,” or the States Hook.  
On another, by Young, this has Noord Zee,  
Staten hoeck, or Hit hoeck, but the copy at .  
Cambridge has no date; the whole Cape is called  
“Niew Hollant” (after Hudson); and on an-  
other still, tho shore between Race Point and  
‘Wood End appears to be called “Bevechier.”  
In Champlain’s admirable Map of New France,  
including the oldest recognizable map of what is  
now the New England coast with which I am  
acquainted, Cape Cod is called C. Blan (i. e.,  
Cape White), from the color of its sands, and  
Massachusetts Bay is Baye Blanche. It was  
visited by De Monts and Champlain in 1605,

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a4 CAPE CoD  
  
and the next year was further explored by Poi-  
trincourt and Champlain. The latter has given  
particular account of these explorations in his  
“Voyages,” together with separate charts and  
soundings of two of its harbors, — Malle  
Barre, the Bad Bar (Nauset Harbor?), a name  
now applied to what the French called Cap  
Baturier, —and Port Fortune, apparently  
Chatham Harbor. Both these  
on the map of “Novi Belgii  
America, He also describes minutely the man-  
ners and customs of the savages, and represents  
by a plate the savages surprising the French  
and killing five or six of them. The French  
afterward killed some of the natives, and  
wished, by way of revenge, to carry off some  
and make them grind in their hand-mill at Port  
Royal.  
  
It is remarkable that there is not in English  
any adequate or correct account of the French  
exploration of what is now the coast of New  
England, between 1604 and 1608, though it is  
conceded that they then made the first perma-  
nent European settlement on the continent of  
North America north of St. Augustine. If the  
lions had been the painters it would have been  
otherwise. This omission is probably to be ac-  
counted for partly by the fact that the early  
edition of Champlain’s “Voyages” had not been

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PROVINCETOWN 275,  
  
consulted for this purpose. This contains by  
far the most particular, and, I think, the most  
interesting chapter of what we may call the  
Ante-Pilgrim history of New England, extend-  
ing to one hundred and sixty pages quarto; but  
appears to be unknown equally to the historian  
and the orator on Plymouth Rock. Bancroft  
does not mention Champlain at all among the  
authorities for De Monts’ expedition, nor does  
he say that he ever visited the coast of New  
England. Though he bore the title of pilot to  
De Monts, he was, in another sense, the lead-  
ing spirit, as well as the historian of the expe-  
dition. Holmes, Hildreth, and Barry, and  
apparently all our historians who mention Cham-  
plain, refer to the edition of 1682, in which all  
“ the separate charts of our harbors, ete., and  
about one half the narrative, are omitted; for  
the author explored so many lands afterward  
that he could afford to forget a part of what he  
had done. Hildreth, speaking of De Monts’  
expedition, says that ‘he looked into the Penob-  
seot [in 1605], which Pring had discovered two  
years before,” saying nothing about Cham-  
plain’s extensive exploration of it for De Monts  
in 1604 (Holmes says 1608, and refers to Pur-  
chas); also that he followed in the track of  
Pring along the coast “to Cape Cod, which he  
called Malabarre.” (Haliburton had made the

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216 CAPE CoD  
  
same statement before him in 1829. He called  
it Cap Blane, and Malle Barre— the Bad Bar —  
was the name given to a harbor on the east side  
of the Cape.) Pring says nothing about a river  
there. Belknap says that Weymouth discov-  
ered it in 1605, Sir F. Gorges says, in his  
narration,! 1658, that Pring in 1606 ‘made a  
perfect discovery of all the rivers and harbors.”  
‘This is the most I can find. Bancroft makes  
Champlain to have discovered more western riv-  
ers in Maine, not naming the Penobscot; he,  
however, must have been the discoverer of dis-  
tances on this river. Pring was absent from  
England only about six months, and sailed by  
this part of Cape Cod (Malebarre) because it  
yielded no sassafras, while the French, who  
probably had not heard of Pring, were patiently «  
for years exploring the coast in search of a place  
of settlement, sounding and surveying its har-  
bors.  
  
John Smith’s map, published in 1616, from  
observations in 1614-15, is by many regarded  
as the oldest map of New England. It is the  
first that was made after this country was called  
New England, for he so called it; but in Cham-  
plain’s “Voyages,” edition 1613 (and Lescarbot,  
in 1612, quotes a still earlier account of his  
  
   
  
2 Maine Hist. Coll, vol iL p. 19,  
Seo Belknap, p. 147.

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PROVINCETOWN 27  
  
voyage), there is a map of it made when it was  
mown to Christendom as New France, called  
Carte Géographique de la Nouvelle Franse  
faictte par le Sieur de Champlain Saint  
ongois Cappitaine ordinaire pour le Roy en  
Ja Marine,— faict len 1612, from his observa  
tions between 1604 and 1607; a map extending  
from Labrador to Cape Cod and westward to  
the Great Lakes, and crowded with informa-  
tion, geographical, ethnographical, zodlogical,  
and botanical. He even gives the variation of  
the compass as observed by himself at that date  
on many parts of the coast. This, taken to-  
gether with the many separate charts of harbors  
and their soundings on a large scale, which this  
volume contains, —among the rest, Qui ni be  
quy (Kennebec), Chouacoit R. (Saco R.), Le  
Beau port, Port St. Louis (near Cape Ann),  
and others on our coast, — but which are not in  
the edition of 1632, makes this a completer map  
of the New England and adjacent northern coast  
than was made for half a century afterward; al-  
most, we might be allowed to say, till another  
Frenchman, Des Barres, made another for us,  
which only our late Coast Survey has super-  
seded. Most of the maps of this coast made for  
a long time after betray their indebtedness to  
Champlain. He was a skillful navigator, a  
man of science, and geographer to the King of

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278 CAPE COD  
  
France, He crossed the Atlantic about twenty  
times, and made nothing of it; often in a small  
vessel in which few would dare to go to sea to-  
day; and on one occasion making the voyage  
from Tadoussac to St, Malo in eighteen days.  
He was in this neighborhood, that is, between  
Annapolis, Nova Scotia, and Cape Cod, observ-  
ing the land and its inhabitants, and making a  
map of the coast, from May, 1604, to Septem-  
ber, 1607, or about three and a half years, and  
he has described minutely his method of survey-  
ing harbors. By his own account, a part of his  
map was engraved in 1604(?). When Pont-  
Gravé and others returned to France in 1606,  
he remained at Port Royal with Poitrincourt,  
‘in order,” says he, ‘by the aid of God, to fin-  
ish the chart of the coasts which I had begun;””  
and again in his volume, printed before John  
Smith visited this part of America, he says: “It  
seems to me that I have done my duty as far as  
I could, if I have not forgotten to put in my  
said chart whatever I saw, and give a particular  
knowledge to the public of what had never been  
described nor discovered so particularly as I  
have done it, although some other may have  
heretofore written of it; but it was a very small  
affair in comparison with what we have discov-  
ered within the last ten years.”  
  
Is is not generally remembered, if known, by

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PROVINCETOWN: 279  
  
the descondants of the Pilgrims, that when their  
forefathers were spending their first memorable  
winter in the New World, they had for neigh-  
bors a colony of French no further off than Port  
Royal (Annapolis, Nova Scotia), three hundred  
miles distant (Prince seems to make it about  
five hundred miles); where,, in spite of many  
vicissitudes, they had been for fifteen years.  
‘They built a grist-mill there as early as 1606;  
also made bricks and turpentine on a stream,  
‘Williamson says, in 1606. De Monts, who was  
Protestant, brought his minister with him,  
who came to blows with the Catholic priest on  
the subject of religion. Though these founders  
of Acadie endured no less than the Pilgrims,  
and about the same proportion of them—  
thirty-five out of seventy-nine (Williamson’s  
Maine says thirty-six out of seventy)— died the  
first winter at St. Croix, 1604-5, sixteen years  
earlier, no orator, to my knowledge, has ever  
celebrated their enterpriso (Williamson's His-  
tory of Maine does considerably), while the  
trials which their successors and descendants  
endured at the hands of the English have fur-  
nished a theme for both the historian and poet.  
‘The remains of their fort at St. Croix were dis-  
covered at the end of the last century, and  
helped decide where the true St. Croix, our  
‘boundary, was.  
1 S00 Bancroft's Histry and Longfellow's Evangeline

Page-8738

280 CAPE COD  
  
The very gravestones of those Frenchmen are  
probably older than the oldest English monu-  
ment in New England north of the Elizabeth  
Islands, or perhaps anywhere in New England,  
for if there are any traces of Gosnold’s store-  
house left, his strong works are gone, Bancroft  
says, advisedly, in 1834, “‘It requires a believ-  
ing eye to discern the rains of the fort;” and  
that there were no ruins of a fort in 1837. Dr.  
Charles T. Jackson tells me that, in the course  
of a geological survey in 1827, he discovered a  
gravestone, a slab of trap rock, on Goat Island,  
opposite Annapolis (Port Royal), in Nova  
Scotia, bearing a Masonic coat-of-arms and the  
date 1606, which is fourteen years earlier than  
the Ianding of the Pilgrims. This was left in the  
possession of Judge Haliburton, of Nova Scotia.  
‘There were Jesuit priests in what has since  
een called New Engiand, converting the sav-  
ages at Mount Desert, then St. Savior, in 1613,  
—having come over to Port Royal in 1611,  
though they were almost immediately interrupted  
by the English, years before the Pilgrims came  
hither to enjoy their own religion, This ac-  
cording to Champlain. Charlevoix says the  
same; and after coming from France in 1611,  
went west from Port Royal along the coast as  
far as the Kennebeo in 1612, and was often  
carried from Port Royal to Mount Desert,

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PROVINCETOWN 281  
  
Indeed, the Englishman's history of New  
England commences only when it ceases to be  
New France. Though Cabot was the first to  
discover the continent of North America, Cham-  
plain, in the edition of his Voyages printed in  
1632, after the English had for a season got  
possession of Quebec and Port Royal, complains  
with no little justice: “The common consent of  
all Europe is to represent New France as ex-  
tending at least to the thirty-fifth and thirty-  
sixth degrees of latitude, as appears by the  
maps of the world printed in Spain, Italy, Hol-  
Jand, Flanders, Germany, and England, until  
they possessed themselves of the coasts of New  
France, where are Acadie, the Etechemains  
(Maine and New Brunswick), the Almouchic  
‘Massachusetts ?), and the Great River St. Law-  
rence, where they have imposed, according to  
their fancy, such names as New England, Seot-  
land, and others; but it is not easy to efface the  
‘memory of a thing which is known to all Chris  
tendom.”  
  
‘That Cabot merely landed on the uninhabita-  
ble shore of Labrador gave the English no just  
title to New England, or to the United States  
generally, any more than to Patagonia. His  
careful biographer (Biddle) is not certain in  
what voyage he ran down the coast of the United  
States, as is reported, and no one tells us what

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282 CAPE CoD  
  
he saw. Miller (in the New York Hist. Coll.,  
vol. i. p. 28), says he does not appear to have  
landed anywhere. Contrast with this Verraz-  
zani’s tarrying fifteen days at one place on the  
New England coast, and making frequent ex-  
cursions into the interior thence. It chances  
that the latter’s letter to Francis I., in 1524,  
contains “the earliest original account extant of  
the Atlantic coast of the United States;”” and  
even from that time the northern part of it be-  
gan to be called La” Terra Francese, or French  
Land. A part of it was called New Holland be-  
fore it was called New England. The English  
were very backward to explore and settle the  
continent which they had stumbled upon, The  
Freneh preceded them both in their attempts to  
colonize the continent of North America (Caro-  
Tina and Florida, 1562-64), and in their first  
permanent settlement (Port Royal, 1605); and  
the right of possession, naturally enough, was  
the one which England mainly respected and  
recognized in the case of Spain, of Portugal, and  
also of France, from the time of Henry VII.  
‘The explorations of the French gave to the  
world the first valuable maps of these coasts.  
Denys of Honfleur made a map of the Gulf of  
St. Lawrence in 1506. No sooner had Cartier  
explored the St. Lawrence in 1585, than there  
began to be published by his countrymen re-

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PROVINCETOWN 283  
  
markably accurate charts of that river as far up  
as Montreal. It is almost all of the continent  
north of Florida that you recognize on charts  
for more than a generation afterward, — though  
Verrazzani’s rude plot (made under French aus-  
pices) was regarded by Hackluyt, more than  
fifty years after his voyage (in 1524), as the  
‘most accurate representation of our coast. ‘The  
French trail is distinct. They went measuring  
and sounding, and when they got home had  
something to show for their voyages and explo-  
rations. ‘There was no danger of their charts  
being lost, as Cabot’s have been.  
  
‘The most distinguished navigators of that day  
were Italians, or of Italian descent, and Portu-  
guese. The French and Spaniards, though less  
advanced in the science of navigation than the  
former, possessed more imagination and spirit  
of adventure than the English, and were better  
fitted to be the explorers of a new continent  
even as late as 1751.  
  
This spirit it was which so early carried the  
French to the Great Lakes and the Mis sippi  
on the north, and the Spaniard to the same  
river on the south. It was long before our  
frontiers reached their settlements in the west,  
and a voyageur or coureur de bois is still our  
conductor there. Prairie is a French word, as  
Sierra is a Spanish one. Augustine in Florida

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284 CAPE CoD  
  
and Santa Fé in New Mexico (1582), both built,  
by the Spaniards, are considered the oldest  
towns in the United States. Within the mem-  
ory of the oldest man, the Anglo-Americans  
‘were confined between the Appalachian Moun-  
tains and the sea, “a space not two hundred  
miles broad,” while the Mississippi was by  
treaty the eastern boundary of New Franco.!  
So far as inland discovery was concerned, the +  
adventurous spirit of the English was that of  
sailors who land but for a day, and their enter-  
prise the enterprise of traders. Cabot spoke  
like an Englishman, as he was, if he said, as  
one reports, in reference to the discovery of the  
American continent, when he found it running  
toward the north, that it was a great disappoint.  
ment to him, being in his way to India; but we  
would rather add to than detract from the fame  
of so great a discoverer.  
  
Samuel Penhallow, in his History (Boston,  
1726), p. 51, speaking of “Port Royal and  
Nova Scotia,” says of the last, that its “first  
seizure was by Sir Sebastian Cobbet for the  
crown of Great Britain, in the reign of King  
Henry VII.; but lay dormant till the year  
1621,” when Sir William Alexander got a pat-  
ent of it, and possessed it some years; and  
  
1 Seo the pamphlet on settling the Ohio, London, 1708,  
‘bound up with the travels of Sir Joba Bartram,

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» PROVINCETOWN 285  
  
afterward Sir David Kirk was proprietor of it,  
but erelong, “to the surprise of all thinking  
men, it was given up unto the French.  
  
Even as late as 1633 we find Winthrop, the  
first Governor of the Massachusetts Colony,  
who was not the most likely to be misinformed,  
who, moreover, has the fame, at least, of hav-  
ing discovered Wachusett Mountain (discerned  
it forty miles inland), talking about the “Great  
Lake” and the “hideous swamps about it,”  
near which the Connecticut and the “Poto-  
mack” took their rise; and among the memora-  
ble events of the year 1642 he chronicles Darby  
Field, an Trishman's expedition to the “White  
Lill,” from whose top he saw eastward what he  
“judged to be the Gulf of Canada,” and wost-  
ward what he “judged to be the great lake  
which Canada River comes out of,” and where  
he found much “Muscovy glass,” and “could.  
rive out pieces of forty feet long and seven or  
eight broad.” While the very inhabitants of  
New England were thus fabling about the coun-  
try a hundred miles inland, which was a terra  
incognita to them, —or rather many years be-  
fore the earliest date referred to, — Champlain,  
the jirst Governor of Canada, not to mention  
the inland discoveries of Cartier! Roberval,  
  
1 Te is remarkable that the St, if not the only, part of  
  
‘Now England which Cartier saw was Vermont (be also saw  
‘the mountains of New York), from Montreal Mountain, in

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286 CAPE COD  
  
and others, of the preceding century, and his  
‘own earlier voyage, had already gone to war  
against the Iroquois in their forest forts, and  
penetrated to the Great Lakes and wintered  
there, before a Pilgrim had heard of New  
England. In Champlain's Voyages, printed in  
1613, there is a plate representing a fight in  
which he aided the Canada Indians against the  
Iroquois, near the south end of Lake Cham-  
plain, in July, 1609, eleven years before the  
settlement of Plymouth. Bancroft says he  
joined the Algonguins in an expeditioh against  
the Iroquois, or Five Nations, in the northwest  
of New York. This is that “Great Lake,”  
which the English, hearing some rumor of from  
the French, long after, locate in an “Imaginary  
Province called Laconia, and spent several years  
about 1630 in the vain attempt to discover.”  
‘Thomas Morton has a chapter on this “Great  
Lake.” In the edition of Champlain's map  
ated 1632, the Falls of Niagara appear; and  
in a great lake northwest of Mer Douce (Lake  
Huron) there is an island represented, over  
which is written, “Jsle ow il y d une mine de  
  
1585, sicty-soven ears before Gosnold saw Capo Cod. If see-  
ing is discovering, and that is all that it a proved that Cabot  
knew of the coast of the United States,—ehen Cartier (to  
omit Verramani and Gomez) was the discoverer of New Eng-  
land rather than Gosnuld, who is commonly so styled.  
  
1 Sir Ferdinand Gorges, in Maine Hist. Coll, vol itp. 68.

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PROVINCETOWN 287  
  
vivre,” —“Island where there is a mine of  
copper.”” This will do for an offset to our Gov~  
ernor's “Muscovy glass.” Of all these adven-  
tures and discoveries we have a minute and  
faithful account, giving facts and dates as well  
as charts and soundings, all scientific and  
Frenchman-like, with scarcely one fable or  
traveler's story.  
  
Probably Cape Cod was visited by Europeans  
long before the seventeenth century. It may  
be that Cabot himself beheld it. Verrazzani,  
in 1524, according to his own account, spent  
fifteen days on our coast, in latitude 41° 40’,  
(ome suppose in the harbor of Newport,) and  
often went five or six leagues into the interior  
there, and he says that he sailed thence at once  
‘one hundred and fifty leagues northeasterly,  
ahoays in sight of the coast. There is a chart  
in Hackluyt’s “Divers Voyages,” made accord-  
ing to Verrazzani’s plot, which last is praised  
for its accuracy by Hackluyt, but I cannot dis-  
tinguish Cape Cod on it, unless it is the “C.  
Arenas,” which is in the right latitude, though  
ten degrees west of “Claudia,” which is thought  
to be Block Island.  
  
‘The “Biographie Universelle” informs us  
that “an ancient manuscript chart drawn in  
1529 by Diego Ribeiro, a Spanish cosmogra-  
pher, has preserved the memory of the voyage

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288 CAPE CoD  
  
of Gomes [a Portuguese sent out by Charles the  
Fifth). One reads in it under (au dessous) the  
place occupied by the States of New York,  
Connecticut, and Rhode Island, Terre d’ Etienne  
Gomez, qu'il découvrit en 1525 (Land of Etienne  
Gomez, which he discovered in 1525).” ‘This  
chart, with a memoir, was published at Weimar  
in the last century.  
  
Jean Alphonse, Roberval’s pilot in Canada  
in 1542, one of the most skillful navigators of  
his time, and who has given remarkably minute  
‘and accurate direction for sailing up the St.  
Lawrence, showing that he knows what he is  
talking about, says in his “Routier” (it is in  
Hackluyt), “I have been at a bay as far as the  
forty-second degree, between Norimbegue [tho  
Penobscot] and Florida, but I have not ex-  
plored the bottom of it, and I do not know  
whether it passes from one land to the other,”  
i.e, to Asia. (“J'ai été & une Baye jusques  
par les 42° degrés entre la Norimbegue et la  
Floride; mais je n’en ai pas cherché le fond, et  
ne scais pas si elle passe d’une terre a l’autre,”)  
‘This may refer to Massachusetts Bay, if not  
possibly to the western inclination of the coast  
a little farther south. When he says, “I have  
no doubt that the Norimbegue enters into the  
river of Canada,” he is perhaps so interpreting  
some account which the Indians had given

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PROVINCETOWN 289  
  
respecting the route from the St. Lawrence to  
tho Atlantic, by the St. John, or Penobscot,  
or possibly even the Hudson River.  
  
We hear rumors of this country of “Norum-  
bega” and its great city from many quarters.  
In a discourse by a great’French sea-captain in  
Ramnsio’s third volume (1556-65), this is said  
to be th name given to the land by its inhabi-  
tants, and Verrazzani is called the discoverer of  
it; another in 1607 makes the natives call it, or  
the river, Aguncia. It is represented as an  
island on an accompanying chart. It is fre-  
quently spoken of by old writers as a country of  
indefinite extent, between Canada and Florida,  
and it appears as a large island with Cape Bre-  
ton at its eastern extremity, on the map mado  
according to Verrazzani's plot in Hackluyt’s  
“Divers Voyages.” These maps and rumors  
‘may have been the origin of the notion, common  
among the early settlers, that New England  
was an island. The country and city of Norum-  
bega appear about where Maine now is on a  
map in Ortelius (“Theatrum Orbis Terrarum,”  
Antwerp, 1570), and the “R. Grande” is drawn  
where the Penobscot or St. John might be.  
  
In 1604, Champlain being sent by the Sieur  
de Monta to explore the coast of Norembegue,  
sailed up the Penobscot twenty-two or twenty-  
three leagues from “Isle Haute,” or till he was

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290 CAPE CoD  
  
stopped by the falls. He says: ‘I think that  
this river is that which many pilots and histo-  
rians call Norembegue, and which the greater  
part have described as great and spacious, with  
numerous islands; and ite entrance in the forty-  
third or forty-third and one half, or, according  
to others, the forty-fourth degree of latitude,  
more or less.” He is convinced that “the  
greater part” of those who speak of a great city  
there have never seen it, but repeat a mere  
rumor, but he thinks that some have «cen the  
mouth of the river, since it answers to their de-  
scription.  
  
Under date of 1607 Champlain writes:  
“Three or four leagues north of the Cap de  
Poitrincourt [near the head of the Bay of Fundy  
in Nova Scotia] we found a cross, which was  
very old, covered with moss and almost all de-  
cayed, which was an evident sign that there had  
formerly been Christians there.”  
  
Also the following passage from Lescarbot  
will show how much the neighboring coasts were  
frequented by Europtans in the sixteenth cen-  
tury. Speaking of his return from Port Royal  
to France in 1607, he says: “At last, within  
four leagues of Campsoau [the Gut of Canso},  
vwe arrived at a harbor [in Nova Scotia}, where  
a worthy old gentleman from St. John de Lus,  
named Captain Savale, was fishing, who re-

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PROVINCETOWN 291  
  
ceived us with the utmost courtesy. And as  
this harbor, which is small, but very good, has  
no name, I have given it on my geographical  
chart the name of Savalet. [It is on Cham-  
plain’s map also.] This worthy man told us  
that this voyage was the forty-second which he  
‘had made to those parts, and yet the Newfound-  
landers [Terre neuviers] make only one a year.  
He was wonderfully content with his fishery,  
and informed us that he made daily fifty crowns’  
worth of cod, and that his voyage would be  
worth ten thousand francs. He had sixteen  
men in his employ; and his vessel was of eighty  
tons, which could carry a hundred thousand dry  
cod.”! They dried their fish on the rocks on  
shore. .  
  
‘The “Isola della Rena” (Sable Island?) ap-  
pears on the chart of “Nuova Francia” and  
Norumbega, accompanying the “Discourse”  
above referred to in Ramusio’s third volume,  
edition 1556-65. Champlain speaks of there  
being at the Isle of Sable, in 1604, “grass pas-  
tured by oxen (beu/s) and cows which the Por-  
tuguese carried there more than sixty years ago,”  
i. e., sixty years before 1613; in a later edition  
he says, which came out of a Spanish vessel  
which was lost in endeavoring to settle on the  
Isle of Sable; and he states that De la Roche's  
  
2 Histoire de a Nowwlle Franc, 1812.

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292, CAPE COD  
  
men, who were left on this island seven years  
from 1598, lived on the flesh of these cattle  
which they found “en quantie,” and built houses  
out of the wrecks of vessels which came to the  
island (“perhaps Gilbert's”), there being no  
‘wood or stone, Lescarbot says that they lived  
“on fish and the milk of cows left there about  
eighty years before by Baron de Leri and Saint  
Just.” Charlevoix says they ate up the cattle  
and then lived on fish. Haliburton speaks of  
cattle left there as'a rumor. De Leri and Saint  
Just had suggested plans of colonization on-the  
Tale of Sable as early as 1515 (15087) according  
to Baneroft, referring to Charlevoix. ‘These  
are but a few of the instances which I might  
uote,  
  
Cape Cod is commonly said to have been dis-  
covered in 1602. We will consider at length  
under what circumstances, and with what obser-  
vation and expectations, the first Englishmen  
whom history clearly discerns approached the  
coast of New England. According to the ac-  
counts of Archer and Brereton (both of whom  
accompanied Gosnold), on the 26th of March,  
1602, old style, Captain Bartholomew Gosnold  
set sail from Falmouth, England, for the North  
Part of Virginia, in a small bark called the  
Concord, they being in all, says one account,  
“thirty-two persons, whereof eight mariners

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PROVINCETOWN 298  
  
and sailors, twelve purposing upon the discovery  
to return with the ship for England, the rest  
remain there for population.” This is regarded  
as “the first attempt of the English to make a  
settlement within the limits of New England.”  
Pnrsuing a new and a shorter course than the  
usual one by the Canaries, “the 14th of April  
following” they had sight of Saint Mary’s, an  
island of the Azores.” As their sailors were  
few and “none of the best,” (I use their own  
phrases,) and they were “going upon an un-  
mown coast,” they were not “over-bold to stand  
in with the shore but in open weather;”” so they  
made their first discovery of land with the lead.  
‘The 28d of April the ocean appeared yellow,  
but on taking up some of the water in a bucket,  
“it altered not either in color or taste from the  
sea azure.” The 7th of May they saw divers  
birds whose names they knew, and many others  
in their “English tongue of no ngme.”” The  
8th of May “the water changed to'a yellowish  
green, where at seventy fathoms” they “had  
ground.” ‘The 9th, they had upon their lead  
“many glittering stones,”—“which might  
promise some mineral matter in the bottom.”  
The 10th, they were over bank which they  
thought to be near the western end of St. John’s  
Island, and saw schools of fish. ‘The 12th, they  
say, “continually passed fleeting by us sea-oare,

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294 CAPE COD  
  
which seemed to have their movable course  
towards the northeast.” On the 13th they ob-  
served “great beds of weeds, much wood, and  
divers things else floating by,” and “had smell-  
ing of the shore much as from the southern  
Cape and Andalusia in Spain.” On Friday,  
the 14th, early in the morning they descried  
land on the north, in the latitude of forty-three  
degrees, apparently somo part of the coast of  
‘Maine. Williamson says it certainly could not  
have been south of the central Isle of Shoals.  
Belknap inclines to think it the south side of  
Cape Ann. Standing fair along by the shore,  
about twelve o'clock the same day, they came to  
anchor and were visited by eight savages, who  
came off to them “in a Biscay shallop, with  
sail and oars,” —‘an iron grapple, and a ket-  
tle of copper.” ‘These they at first mistook for  
“Christians distressed.” One of them was  
“apparelled with a waisteoat and breeches of  
black serge, made after our sea-fashion, hoes  
and shoes on his feet; all the rest (saving one  
that had a pair of breeches of blue eloth) were  
naked.” They appeared to have had dealings  
with “some Basques of St. John de Luz, and  
to understand much more than we,” say the  
English, “for want of language, could compre-  
hend.” But they soon “set sail westward, leav-  
  
1 History of Maine.

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PROVINCETOWN 295  
  
ing them and their coast.” (This was a remark-  
able discovery for discoverers.)  
  
“The 15th day,” writes Gabriel Archer,  
“we had again sight of the land, which made  
abead, being as we thought an island, by reason  
of a large sound that appeared westward be-  
tween it and the main, for coming to the west  
end thereof, we did perceive a large opening,  
we called it Shoal Hope. Near this cape we  
came to anchor in fifteen” fathoms, where we  
took great store of cod-fish, for which we altered  
the name and called it Cape Cod. Here we saw  
skulls of herring, mackerel, and other small  
fish, in great abundance. This is a low, sandy  
shoal, but without danger; also we came to an-  
chor again in sixteen fathoms, fair by the land  
in the latitude of forty-two degrees. This Cape  
is well near a mile broad, and lieth northeast by  
east. The Captain went here ashore, and found  
the ground to be full of peas, strawberries,  
whortleberries, etc., as then unripe, the sand  
also by the shore somewhat deep; the firewood  
there by us taken in was of cypress, birch,  
witch-hazel, and beach. A young Indian came  
here to the captain, armed with his bow and ar-  
rows, and had certain plates of copper hanging  
at his ears; he showed a willingness to help'us  
in our occasions.”  
  
“The 16th we trended the coast southerly,

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298 CAPE CoD  
  
which was all champaign and full of grass, but  
the islands somewhat woody.”  
  
Or, according to the account of John Brere-  
ton, “riding here,” that is, where they first  
communicated with the natives, “in no very  
good harbor, and withal doubting the weather,  
about three of the clock the same day in the af-  
ternoon we weighed, and standing southerly off  
into sea the rest of that day and the night fol-  
lowing, with a fresh gale of wind, in the morn-  
ing we found ourselves embayed with a mighty  
headland; but coming to an anchor about nine  
of the clock the same day, within a league of the  
shore, we hoisted out the one half of our shallop,  
and Captain Bartholomew Gosnold, myself and  
three others, went ashore, being a white sandy  
and very bold shore; and marching all that af-  
ternoon with our muskets on our necks, on the  
highest hills which we saw (the weather very  
hot) at Jength we perceived this headland to be  
parcel of the main, and sundry islands lying  
almost round about it; so returning towards  
evening to our shallop (for by that time the other  
part was brought ashore and set together), we  
espied an Indian, a young man of proper stat-  
ure, and of a pleasing countenance, and after  
some familiarity with him, we left him at the  
sea side, and returned to our ship, where in five  
or six hours’ absence we had pestered our ship

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PROVINCETOWN 297  
  
80 with codfish, that we threw numbers of them  
overboard again; and surely I am persuaded  
that in the months of March, April, and May  
there is upon this coast better fishing, and in as  
‘great plenty, as in Newfoundland; for the skulls  
of mackerel, herrings, cod, and other fish, that  
we daily saw as wo went and came from the  
shore, were wonderful,” ete.  
  
“From this place we sailed round about this  
headland, almost all the points of the compass,  
the shore very bold; but as no coast is free from  
dangers, so I am persuaded this is as free as  
any. The land somewhat low, full of goodly  
woods, but in some places plain.”  
  
Tt is not quite clear on which side of the Cape  
they landed. If it was inside, as would appear  
from Brereton’s words, “From this place we  
sailed round about this headland almost all the  
points of the compass,” it must have been on  
the western shore either of Truro or Wellfleet.  
To one sailing south into Barnstable Bay along  
the Cape, the only “white, sandy, and very bold  
shore” that appears is in these towns, though  
the bank is not so high there as on the eastern  
side, At a distance of four or five miles the  
sandy cliffs there look like a long fort of yellow  
sandstone, they are s0 level and regular, espe-  
cially in Wellfleet, —the fort of the land de-  
fending itself against the encroachments of the

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298 CAPE COD  
  
Ocean. ‘They are streaked here and there with  
a reddish sand as if painted. Farther south the  
shore is more flat, and less obviously and ab-  
ruptly sandy, and a little tinge of green here  
and there in the marshes appears to the sailor  
Tike a rare and precious emerald. But in the  
Journal of Pring’s Voyage the next year (and  
Salterne, who was with Pring, had accompanied  
Gosnold) it is said, “Departing hence [i. e.,  
from Savage Rock] we bare into that great  
gulf which Captain Gosnold overshot the year  
efore.”?  
  
So they sailed round the Cape, calling the  
southeasterly extremity “Point Cave,” till they  
came to an island which they named Martha’s  
‘Vineyard (now called No Man’s Land), and an-  
other on which they dwelt awhile, which they  
named Elizabeth's Island, in honor of the  
queen, one of the group since 90 called, now  
known by its Indian name Cuttyhunk. ‘There  
they built a small storehouse, the first house  
‘built by the English in New England, whose  
cellar could recently still be seen, made partly  
  
1 « Savage Rock," which some have supposed to bo, from  
‘he name, the Saleages, a ledgo about two miles off Rockport,  
Cape Ann, was probably the Nuibie, a lange, high rock near  
‘he shore, on the eastside of York Harbor, Maine. ‘The first  
land mado by Gosnold is presumed by experienced navigators  
‘tw be Cape Elizabeth on the same coast. (See Babson's Hise  
tory of Gloucester, Massachusetts)

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PROVINCETOWN 299  
  
of stones talsen from the beach. Bancroft says  
(edition of 1837) the ruins of the fort can no  
Tonger ‘be discerned. ‘They who were to have  
remained becoming discontented, all together  
set sail for England, with a load of sassafras  
and other commodities, on the 18th of June fol-  
lowing.  
  
‘The next year came Martin Pring, looking  
for sassafras, and thereafter they began to come  
thick and fast, until long after sassafras had  
ost its reputation.  
  
‘These are the oldest accounts which we have  
of Cape Cod, unless, perchance, Cape Cod is,  
fas some suppose, the same with that “Kial-ar-  
nes” or Keel-Cape, on which, according to old  
Icelandic manuscripts, Thorwald, son of Eric  
the Red, after sailing many days southwest  
from Greenland, broke his keel in the year  
1004; and where, according to another, in some  
respects less trustworthy manuscript, Thor-finn  
Karlsefue (“that is, one who promises or is  
destined to be an able or great man;” he is said  
to have had a son born in New England, from  
whom Thorwaldsen the sculptor was descended),  
sailing past, in the year 1007, with his wife  
Gudrida, Snorre Thorbrandson, Biarne Grinolf-  
son, and Thorhall Garnlason, distinguished  
Norsemen, in three ships containing “one hun-  
dred and sixty men and all sorts of live stock

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800 CAPE CoD  
  
(probably the first Norway rats among the rest),  
having the land “on the right side” of them,  
“roved ashore,” and found “ Or-afi (trackless  
deserts),” and“ Strand-ir lang-ar ok sand-ar  
long, narrow beaches and sand-hills),” and  
“ealled the shores Furdu-strand-ir (Wonder  
Strands), because the sailing by them seemed  
Tong.”  
  
According to the Icelandic manuscripts,  
Thoreald was the first then, —unless. possibly  
one Biarne Heriulfson (i. e., son of Heriulf) who  
hhad been seized with a great desire to travel,  
sailing from Iceland to Greenland in the year  
986 to join his father who had migrated thither,  
for he had resolved, says the manuscript, “to  
spend the following winter, like all the preced-  
ing ones, with his father,” — being driven far  
to the southwest by a storm, when it cleared up  
saw the low land of Cape Cod looming faintly  
in the distance; but this not answering to the  
description of Greenland, he put his vessel  
about, and, sailing northward along the coast,  
at length reached Greenland and his father.  
‘At any rate, he may put forth a strong claim to  
be regarded as the discoverer of the American  
continent.  
  
‘These Northmen were a hardy race, whose  
younger sons inherited the ocean, and traversed  
it without chart or compass, and they are said

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PROVINCETOWN 301  
  
to have been “the first who learned the art of  
sailing on a wind.” Moreover, they had a  
habit of casting their dodr-posts overboard and  
settling wherever they went ashore. But as  
Biarne, and Thorwald, and Thorfinn have not  
  
   
  
enough, though we have great respect for them  
as skillful and adventurous navigators, we must  
for the present remain in doubt as to what capes  
they did see. We think that they were consid-  
erably further north.  
  
If time and space permitted, I could present  
the claims of several other worthy persons.  
Lescarbot, in 1609, asserts that the French sail-  
ors had been accustomed to frequent the New-  
foundland Banks from time immemorial, “for  
the codfish with which they feed almost all  
Enrope and supply all sea-going vessels,” and  
accordingly “the language of the nearest lands  
is half Basque; and he quotes Postel, a learned  
but extravagant French author, born in 1510,  
only six years after the Basques, Bretons, and  
Normans are said to have discovered the Grand  
Bank and adjacent islands, as saying, in his  
Charte Géographique, which we have not seen:  
“Terra haee ob lucrosissimam piscationis utili  
tatem summa litterarum memoria a Gallis adiri  
solita, et ante mille sexcentos annos frequentari  
solita est; sed eo quod sit urbibus inculta et

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802 CAPE COD  
  
vasta, spreta est.” “This land, on account of  
its very lucrative fishery, was accustomed to be  
visited by the Gauls from the very dawn of his-  
tory, and more than sixteen hundred years ago  
‘was accustomed to be frequented; but because  
it was unadorned with cities, and waste, it was  
despised.”  
  
It is the old story. Bob Smith discovered  
the mine, but I discovered it to the world. And  
now Bob Smith is putting in his clai  
  
But let us not laugh at Postel and his visions.  
He was perhaps better posted up than wes and  
if he does seem to draw the long bow, it may be  
because he had a long way to shoot, —quite  
across the Atlantic. If America was found and  
lost again once, as most of us believe, then why  
not twice? especially as there were likely to be  
80 fow records of an earlier discovery. Con-  
sider what stuff history is made of, — that for  
the most part it is merely « story agreed on by  
posterity. Who will tell us even how many  
Russians were engaged in the battle of the  
Chernaya, the other day? Yet, no doubt, Mr.  
Scriblerus, the historian, will fix on a definite  
number for the schoolboys to commit to their  
excellent memories. What, then, of the num-  
ber of Persians at Salamis? The historian  
whom I read knew as much about the position  
of the parties and their tactios in the last-men-

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PROVINCETOWN 808  
  
tioned affair, as they who describe a recent bat-  
tlo in an article for the press nowadays, before  
the particulars have arrived. I believe that, if  
I were to live the life of mankind over again  
myself, (which I would not be hired to do,) with  
the Universal History in my hands, I should  
not be able to tell what was what.  
  
Earlier than the date Postel refers to, at any  
rate, Cape Cod lay in utter darkness to the civ-  
ilized world, though even then the sun rose from  
eastward out of the sea every day, and, rolling  
over the Cape, went down westward into the  
Bay. It was even then Cape and Bay, —ay,  
the Cape of Codjish, and the Bay of the Massa-  
ehusetts, perchance,  
  
Quite recently, on the 11th of November,  
1620, old style, as is well known, the Pilgrims  
in the Mayflower came to anchor in Cape Cod  
Harbor. ‘They had loosed from Plymouth,  
England, the 6th of September, and, in the  
words of “Mourt’s Relation,” “after many  
difficulties in boisterous storms, at length, by  
God’s providence, upon the 9th of November,  
we espied land, which we deemed to be Cape  
Cod, and so afterward it proved. Upon the  
Lith of November we came to anchor in the  
bay, which is a good harbor and pleasant bay,  
circled round except in the entrance, which is  
about four miles over from land to land, com-

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804 ‘CAPE CoD  
  
passed about to the very sea with oaks, pines,  
juniper, sassafras, and other sweet wood. It is  
a harbor wherein a thousand sail of ships may  
safely ride. There we relieved ourselves with  
wood and water, and refreshed our people,  
while our shallop was fitted to coast the bay, to  
search for an habitation.” ‘There we put up at  
Fuller's Hotel, passing by the Pilgrim House as  
too high for us (we learned afterward that we  
need not have been so particular), and we re-  
freshed ourselves with hashed fish and beans,  
beside taking in a supply of liquids (which were  
not intoxicating), while our legs were refitted to  
coast the back-side. Further say the Pilgrims:  
“We could not come near the shore by three  
quarters of an English mile, because of shallow  
water; which was a great prejudice to us; for  
cour people going on shore were forced to wade  
a bow-shot or two in going aland, which caused  
many to get colds and coughs; for it was many  
times freezing cold weather.” They afterwards  
say: “It brought much weakness amongst us;””  
and no doubt it led to the death of some at Ply-  
mouth.  
  
‘The harbor of Provincetown is very shallow  
near the shore, especially about the head, where  
the Pilgrims landed. When I left this place  
the next summer, the steamer could not get up  
to the wharf, but we were carried out to a large

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PROVINCETOWN 805  
  
boat in a cart as much as thirty rods in shallow  
water, while a troop of little boys kept us com-  
pany, wading around, and thence we pulled to  
the steamer by a rope. ‘The harbor being thus  
shallow and sandy about the shore, coaster’ are  
acoustomed to run in here to paint their vessels,  
which are left high and dry when the tide goes  
down.  
  
Tt chanced that the Sunday morning that we  
were there, I had joined a party of men who  
wore smoking and lolling over a pile of boards  
‘on one of the wharves, (nihil humanum a me,  
ete.,) when our landlord, who was a sort of  
tithing-man, went off to stop some sailors who  
were engaged in painting their vessel. Our  
party was recruited from time to time by other  
citizens, who came rubbing their eyes as if they  
had just got out of bed; and one old man re-  
marked to me that it was the custom there to lie  
abed very late on Sunday, it being a day of  
rest. I remarked that, as I thought, they might  
as well let the man paint, for all us. It was  
not noisy work, and would not disturb our devo-  
But a young man in the company, tak-  
ing his pipe out of his mouth, said that it was  
a plain contradiction of the law of God, which  
he quoted, and if they did not have some such  
regulation, vessels would run in there to tar,  
and rig, and paint, and they would have no Sab-

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306 CAPE coD  
  
bath at all. This was a good argument enough,  
if ho had not put it in the name of religion.  
‘The next summer, as I sat on a hill there one  
sultry Sunday afternoon, the meeting-house  
windows being open, my meditations were inter-  
rupted by the noise of a preacher who shouted  
ike boatewain, profaning the quiet atmo-  
sphere, and who, I fancied, must have taken  
off his coat. Few things could have been more  
disgusting or disheartening. 1 wished the tith-  
ing-man would stop him.  
  
‘The Pilgrims say, “There was the greatest  
store of fowl that ever we saw.”  
  
We saw no fowl there, except gulls of various  
kinds; but the greatest store of them that ever  
we saw was on a flat but slightly covered with  
water on the east side of the harbor, and we ob-  
served a man who had landed there from a boat  
creeping along the shore in order to get a shot  
at them, but they all rose and flew away in a  
great scattering flock, too soon for him, having  
apparently got their dinners, though he did not  
get his.  
  
It is remarkable that the Pilgrims (or their  
reporter) describe this part of the Cape, not  
only as well wooded, but as having a deep and  
excellent soil, and hardly mention the word  
sand. Now what strikes the voyager is the bar-  
‘renness and desolation of the land. They found

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PROVINCETOWN 307  
  
“the ground or earth sand-hills, much like the  
downs in Holland, but much better; the crust of  
the earth, a spit’s depth, excellent black earth.”  
‘We found that the earth had lost its crust, —  
if, indeed, it ever had any,—and that there  
‘was no soil to speak of. We did not see enough  
black earth in Provincetown to fill a flower-pot,  
unless in the swamps. They found it “all  
wooded with oaks, pines, sassafras, juniper,  
birch, holly, vines, some ash, walnut; the wood  
for the most part open and without underwood,  
fit either to go or ride in.” We saw scarcely  
anything high enough to be called a tree, except  
a little low wood at the east end of the town,  
and the few ornamental trees in its yards, —  
only a few small specimens of some of the above  
kinds on the sand-hills in the rears but it was  
all thick shrubbery, without any large wood  
above it, very unfit either to go or ride in.  
‘The greater part of the land was a perfect des-  
ert of yellow sand, rippled like waves by the  
wind, in which only a little beach-grass grew  
here and there. They say that, just after pass-  
ing the head of East Harbor Creek, the boughs  
and bushes “tore” their “very armor in pieces”  
(the same thing happened to such armor as we  
wore, when out of curiosity we took to the  
bushes); or they came to deep valleys, “full of  
brush, wood-gaile, and long grass,” and ‘found  
springs of fresh water.” \*

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808 CAPE CoD  
  
For the most part we saw neither bough nor  
bush, not so much as a shrub to tear our clothes  
against if we would, and a sheep would lose  
none of its fleece, even if it found herbage  
enough to make fleece grow there. We saw  
rather beach and poverty-grass, and merely sor-  
rel enough to color the surface. I suppose,  
then, by wood-gaile they mean the bayberry.  
All accounts agree in affirming that this part  
of the Cape was comparatively well wooded a  
century ago. But notwithstanding the great  
changes which have taken place in these re-  
spects, I cannot but think that we must make  
‘some allowance for the greenness of the Pilgrims  
in these matters, which caused them to see  
green. We do not believe that the trees were  
Tange or the soil was deep here. ‘Their account  
may be true particularly, but it is generally  
false. They saw literally, as well as figura-  
tively, but one side of the Cape. They natu-  
rally exaggerated the fairness and attractiveness  
of the land, for they were glad to get to any  
land at all after that anxious voyage. Every-  
thing appeared to them of the color of the rose,  
and had the scent of juniper and sassafras.  
Very different is the general and off-hand ac-  
count given by Captain John Smith, who was  
on this coast six years earlier, and speaks like  
an old traveler, voyager, and soldier, who had

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PROVINCETOWN 309  
  
seen too much of the world to exaggerate, or  
even to dwell long on a part of it. In his  
“Description of New England,” printed in  
1616, after speaking of Accomack, since called  
Plymouth, he says: “Cape Cod is the next pre-  
sents itself, which is only a headland of high  
hills of sand, overgrown with shrubby pines,  
hurts [i. e. whorts, or whortleberries], and such  
trash, but an excellent harbor for all weathers.  
‘This Cape is made by the main sea on the one  
side, and a great bay on the other, in form of  
a sickle.” Champlain had already written,  
“Which we named Cap Blanc (Cape White),  
because they were sands and downs (sables et  
dunes) which appeared thus.”  
  
‘When the Pilgrims get to Plymouth their  
reporter says again, “The land for the crust of  
the earth is a spit’s depth,” — that would seem  
to be their recipe for an earth’s crust, — “ex-  
cellent black mould and fat in some places.”  
However, according to Bradford himself, whom  
some consider the author of part of “Mourt’s  
Relation,” they who came over in the Fortune  
the next year were somewhat daunted when  
“they came into the harbor of Cape Cod, and  
there saw nothing but a naked and barren  
place.” ‘They soon found out their mistake  
with respect to the goodness of Plymouth soil.  
Yet when at length, some years later, when they

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310 CAPE CoD  
  
were fully satisfied of the poorness of the place  
which they had chosen, ‘the greater part,” says  
Bradford, “consented to a removal to a place  
called Nausett,” they agreed to remove all to-  
gether to Nauset, now Eastham, which was  
jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire; and  
some of the most respectable of the inhabitants  
of Plymouth did actually remove thither accord-  
ingly.  
  
Tt must be confessed that the Pilgrims pos-  
sessed but few of the qualities of the modern  
pioneer. They were not the ancestors of the  
American backwoodsmen. ‘They did not go at  
‘once into the woods with their axes. They were  
a family and church, and were more anxious to  
keep together, though it were on the sand, than  
to explore and colonize a New World. When  
the above-mentioned company removed to East-  
ham, the church at Plymouth was left, to use  
Bradford’s expression, “like an ancient mother  
grown old, and forsaken of her children.”  
‘Though they landed on Clark’s Island in Ply-  
mouth harbor, the 9th of December (O. 8.),  
and the 16th all hands came to Plymouth, and  
the 18th they rambled about the mainland, and  
the 19th decided to settle there, it was the 8th  
of January before Francis Billington went with  
one of the master’s mates to look at the magnifi-  
cent pond or lake now called “Billington Sea,”

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PROVINCETOWN 81  
  
about two miles distant, which he had discov-  
ered from the top of a tree, and mistook for a  
great sea. And the 7th of March “Master \_  
Carver with five others went to the great ponds  
which seem to be excellent fishing,” both which  
points are within the compass of an ordinary  
afternoon’s ramble, —however wild the coun-  
try. It is true they were busy at first about  
their building, and were hindered in that by  
much foul weather; but a party of emigrants to  
California or Oregon, with no less work on their  
hands, —and more hostile Indians, — would do  
as much exploring the first afternoon, and the  
Sieur de Champlain would have sought an in-  
terview with the savages, and examined the  
country as far as the Connecticut, and made a  
map of it, before Billington had climbed his  
tree, Or contrast them only with the French  
searching for copper about the Bay of Fundy  
in 1603, tracing up small streams with Indian  
guides. Novertheless, the Pilgrims were pio-  
neers, and the ancestors of pioneers, in a far  
grander enterprise.  
  
By this time we saw the little steamer Nau-  
shon entering the harbor, and heard the sound  
of her whistle, and came down from the hills to  
meet her at the wharf. So we took leave of  
Cape Cod and its inhabitants. We liked the  
manners of the last, what little we saw of them,

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812 CAPE COD  
  
very much, ‘They were particularly downright  
and good-bumored. The old people appeared  
remarkably well preserved, as if by the saltmess  
of the atmosphere, and after having once mis-  
taken, we could never be certain whether we  
wore talking to a coeval of our grandparents, or  
to one of our own age. They are said to be  
more purely the descendants of the Pilgrims  
than the inhabitants of any other part of the  
State. We were told that “sometimes, when  
the court comes together at Barnstable, they  
have not a single criminal to try, and the jail is  
shut up.” It was “to let” when we were there,  
Until quite recently there was no regular lawyer  
below Orleans. Who then will complain of a  
few regular man-eating sharks along the back-  
side?  
  
One of the ministers of Truro, when I asked  
what the fishermen did in the winter, answered  
that they did nothing but go a-visiting, sit  
about and tell stories, — though they worked  
hard in summer. Yet it is not a long vacation  
they get. I am sorry that I have not been there  
in the winter to hear their yarns. Almost  
every Cape man is Captain of some craft or  
other,—every man at least who is at the head  
of his own affairs, though it is not every one  
that is, for some heads have the force of Alpha  
privative, negativing all the efforts which Nature

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PROVINCETOWN 818  
  
would fain make through them. The greater  
number of men are merely corporals. It  
worth the while to talk with one whom  
neighbors address as Captain, though his craft  
may have long been sunk, and he may be hold-  
ing by his teeth to the shattered mast of a pipe  
alone, and only gets half-seas-over in a figura-  
tive sense, now. He is pretty sure to vindicate  
his right to the title at last, —can tell one or  
two good stories at least.  
  
For the most part we saw only the back-side  
of the towns, but our story is true as far as it  
goes. We might have made more of the Bay  
side, but we were inclined to open our eyes  
‘widest at the Allantic. We did not care to see  
those features of the Cape in which it is inferior  
or merely equal to the mainland, but only those  
in which it is peculiar or superior. We cannot  
say how its towns look in front to one who goes  
to meet them; we went to see the ocean behind  
them. They were merely the raft on which we  
stood, and we took notice of the barnacles which  
adhered to it, and some carvings upon it.  
  
Before we left the wharf we made the acquain-  
tance of a passenger whom we had seen at the  
hotel. When we asked him which way he came  
to Provincetown, he answered that he was cast  
ashore at Wood End, Saturday night, in the  
same storm in which the St. John was wrecked.

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314 CAPE CoD  
  
He had been at work as a carpenter in Maine,  
and took passage for Boston in a schooner laden  
with lumber. When the storm came on, they  
endeavored to get into Provincetown harbor.  
“Tt was dark and misty,” said he, “and as we  
were steering for Long Point Light we suddenly  
saw the land near us,—for our compass was  
out of order, —varied several degrees [a mar-  
iner always casts the blame on his compass], —  
but there being a mist on shore, we thought it  
was farther off than it was, and ¢o held on, and  
we immediately struck on the bar. Says tho  
Captain, ‘We are all lost.’ Says I to the Cap-  
tain, ‘Now don’t let her strike again this way;  
head her right on.’ The Captain thought a  
moment, and then headed her on. ‘The sea  
washed completely over us, and well-nigh took:  
the breath out of my body. I held on to the  
running rigging, but I have learned to hold on  
to the standing rigging the next time.” “Well,  
wore there any drowned?” I asked. “No; we  
all got safe to a house at Wood End, at mid-  
night, wet to our skins, and half frozen to  
death.” He had apparently spent the time  
since playing checkers at the hotel, and was  
congratulating himself on having beaten a tall  
fellow-boarder at that game. “The vessel is to  
be sola at auction to-day,” he added. (Wo had  
‘heard the sound of the crier’s bell which adver-

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PROVINCETOWN 3815  
  
tised it.) “The Captain is rather down about  
it, but I tell him to cheer up and he will soon  
get another vessel.””\*  
  
‘At that moment the Captain called to him  
from the wharf. He looked like a man just  
from the country, with a cap made of a wood-  
chuck’s skin, and now that I had heard a part  
of his history, he appeared singularly destitute,  
Captain without any vessel, only a great-  
coat! and that perhaps a borrowed one! Not  
even a dog followed him; only his title stuck to  
him, I also saw one of the crew. ‘They all had  
‘caps of the same pattern, and wore a subdued  
look, in addition to their naturally aquiline  
features, as if a breaker—a “comber”—had  
washed over them. As we passed Wood End,  
wwe noticed the pile of lumber on the shore which  
had made the cargo of their vessel.  
  
About Long Point in the summer you com-  
monly see them catching lobsters for the New  
York market, from small boats just off the  
shore, or rather, the lobsters catch themselves,  
for they cling to the netting on which the bait  
is placed, of their own accord, and thus are  
drawn up. They sell them fresh for two cents  
apiece. Man needs to know but little more  
than a lobster in order to catch him in his traps.  
‘The mackerel flect had been getting to sea, one  
after ‘another, ever since midnight, and as wo

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316 CAPE COD  
  
were leaving the Cape we passed near to many  
of them under sail, and got a nearer view than  
‘we had had;— half a dozert red-shirted men and  
boys, leaning over the rail to look at us, the  
skipper shouting back the number of barrels he  
hhad caught, in answer to our inquiry. All sail-  
‘ors pause to watch a steamer, and shout in wel  
come or derision. In one a large Newfoundland  
dog put his paws on the rail and stood up as  
high as any of them, and looked as wise. But  
the skipper, who did not wish to be seen no  
better employed than a dog, rapped him on the  
nose and sent him below. Such is human jus-  
tice! I thought I could hear him making an  
effective appeal down there from human to di-  
vine justice. He must have had much the clean-  
‘est breast of the two.  
  
Still, many a mile behind us across the Bay,  
we saw the white sails of the mackerel fishers  
hovering round Cape Cod, and when they were  
all hull down, and the low extremity of the  
Cape was also down, their white sails still ap-  
peared on both sides of it, around where it had  
sunk, like a city on the ocean, proclaiming the  
rare qualities of Cape Cod Harbor. But before  
the extremity of the Cape had completely sunk,  
it appeared like a filmy sliver of land lying flat  
on the ocean, and later still a mere reflection of  
a sand-bar on the haze above. Its name sug-

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PROVINCETOWN ait  
  
gests a homely truth, but it would be more  
poetic if it described the impression which it  
makes on the beholder. Some capes have pe-  
culiarly suggestive names. There is Cape  
‘Wrath, the northwest point of Scotland, for in-  
stances what a good name for a cape lying far  
away, dark over the water, under a lowering sky!  
  
‘Mild as it was on shore this morning, the  
wind was cold and piercing on the water.  
Though it be the hottest day in July on land,  
and the voyage is to last but four hours, take  
your thickest clothes with you, for you are  
about to float over melted icebergs. When I  
left Boston in the steamboat on the 25th of  
Tune the next year, it was a quite warm day on  
shore. The passengers were dressed in their  
thinnest clothes, and at first sat under their um-  
brellas, but when we were fairly out on the Bay,  
such as had only thin coats were suffering with  
the cold, and sought the shelter of the pilot’s  
house and the warmth of the chimney. But  
when we approached the harbor of Province-  
town, I was surprised to perceive what an influ-  
ence that low and narrow strip of sand, only a  
mile or two in width, had over the temperature  
of the air for many miles around. We pene-  
trated into a sultry atmosphere where our thin  
coats were once more in fashion, and found the  
inhabitants sweltering.

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818 ” CAPE cop  
  
‘Leaving far on one side Manomet Point in  
Plymouth and the Scituate shore, after being  
out of sight of land for an hour or two, for it  
‘was rather hazy, we neared the Cohasset Rocks  
again at Minot's Ledge, and saw the great  
tupelo-tree on the edge of Seituate, which lifts  
its dome, like an umbelliferous plant, high over  
the surrounding forest, and is conspicuous for  
many miles over land and water. Here was the  
new iron light-house, then unfinished, in the  
shape of an ogg-shell painted red, and placed  
high on iron pillars, like the ovum of a sea-  
monster floating on the waves, — destined to be  
phosphorescent. As we passed it at half-tide  
we saw the spray tossed up nearly to the shell.  
A man was to live in that egg-shell day and  
night, a mile from the shore. When I passed  
it the next summer it was finished and two men  
lived in it, and a light-house keeper said that  
they told him that in a recent gale it had rocked  
0 8 to shake the plates off the table. ‘Think  
‘of making your bed thus in the crest of a  
breaker! To have the waves, like a pack of  
hungry wolves, eying you always, night and  
day, and from time to time making a spring at  
‘you, almost sure to have you at last. And not  
‘one of all those voyagers can come to your re~  
lief, —but when yon light goes out, it will be a  
sign that the light of your life has gone out

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PROVINCETOWN 319  
  
also. What a place to compose a work on  
breakers! This light-house was the cynosure of  
all eyes. Every passenger watched it for half  
an hour at least; yet a colored cook belonging  
to the boat, whom I had seen come out of his  
quarters several times to empty his dishes over  
the side with a flourish, chancing to come out  
just as we were abreast of this light, and not  
more than forty rods from it, and were all gaz  
ing at it, as he drew back his arm, caught sight  
of it, and with surprise exclaimed, “What ’s  
that?” He had been employed on this boat for  
@ year, and passed this light every week-day,  
but as he had never chanced to empty his dishes,  
jst at that point, had never seen it before. To  
look at lights was the pilot's business; he  
minded the kitchen fire. Tt suggested how little  
some who voyaged round the world could man-  
age to see. You would almost as easily believe  
that there are men who never yet chanced to  
come out at the right time to seo the sun,  
‘What avails it though a light be placed on the  
top of a hill, if you spend all your life directly  
under the hill? It might as well be under a  
bushel. ‘This light-house, as is well known,  
was swept away ina storm in April, 1851, and  
the two men in it, and the next morning not a  
vestige of it was to be seen from the shore.  
  
A Hull man told mo that he helped set up a

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820 CAPE COD  
  
white-oak pole on Minot's Ledge some years  
before. It was fifteen inches in diameter, forty-  
one fect high, sunk four fect in the rock, and  
‘was secured by four guys, —but it stood only  
one year, Stone piled up cob-fashion near the  
same place stood eight years.  
  
When I crossed the Bay in the Melrose in  
July, wo hugged the Scituate shore as long as  
possible, in order to take advantage of the  
wind. Far out on the Bay (off this shore) we  
scared up a brood of young ducks, probably  
black ones, bred hereabouts, which the packet  
had frequently disturbed in her trips. A  
townsman, who was making the voyage for the  
first timo, walked slowly round into the rear of  
the helmsman, when we were in the middle of  
the Bay, and looking out over the sea, before he  
eat down there, remarked with as much original-  
ity as was possible for one who used a borrowed  
expression, “This is a great country.” He had  
‘been a timber merchant, and I afterward saw  
him taking the diameter of the main mast with  
his stick, and estimating its height. I returned  
from the same excursion in the Olata, a very  
handsome and swift-sailing yacht, which left  
Provincetown at the same time with two other  
packets, the Melrose and Frolic. At first there  
was scarcely breath of air stirring, and we  
loitered about Long Point for an hour in com-

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PROVINCETOWN: 821  
  
pany, —with our heads over the rail watching  
the great sand-circles and the fishes at the bot-  
tom in calm water fifteen feet deep. But after  
clearing the Cape we rigged a fying-jib, and,  
as the Captain had prophesied, soon showed our  
consorts our heels. ‘There was a steamer six or  
eight miles northward, near the Cape, towing a  
large ship toward Boston. Its smoke stretched  
perfectly horizontal several miles over the sea,  
and by a sudden change in its direction, warned  
us of a change in the wind before we felt it.  
‘The steamer appeared very far from the ship,  
and some young men who had frequently used  
the Captain’s glass, but did not suspect that the  
vessels were connected, expressed surprise that  
they kept about the same distance apart for so  
many hours. At which the Captain dryly re-  
marked, that probably they would never get  
any nearer together. As long as the wind held  
we kept pace with the steamer, but at length it  
died away almost entirely, and the flying-jib did  
all the work. When we passed the light-boat  
at Minot’s Ledge, the Melrose and Frolic were  
just visible ten miles astern,  
  
Consider the islands bearing the names of all  
the saints, bristling with forts like chestnut-  
burs, or echinide, yet the police will not let a  
couple of Irishmen have a private sparring-  
match on one of them, as it is a government

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322 CAPE COD  
  
‘monopoly; all the great seaports are in a boxing  
attitude, and you must sail prudently between  
‘two tiers of stony knuckles before you come to  
feel the warmth of their breasts.  
  
‘The Bermudas are said to have been discov-  
ered by a Spanish ship of that name which was  
wrecked on them, “ which till then,” says Capt.  
John Smith, ‘for six thousand years had been  
nameless.” The English did not stumble upon  
‘them in their firet voyages to Vinginia; and  
the first Englishman who was ever there was  
wrecked on them in 1593. Smith says, “No  
place Known hath better walls nor a broader  
ditch.” Yet at the very first planting of them  
with some sixty persons, in 1612, the first Gov-  
ernor, the same year, “built and laid the foun-  
dation of eight or nine forts.” To be ready,  
‘one would say, to entertain the first ship's com-  
pany that should be next shipwrecked on to  
them. It would have been more sensible to  
have built as many “Charity-houses.” Those  
are the vexed Bermoothes.  
  
Onur great sails caught all the air there was,  
and our low and narrow hull caused the least  
possible friction. Coming up the harbor against  
the stream we swept by everything. Some  
young men returning from a fishing excursion  
‘camo to the sido of their smack, while we were  
‘thus steadily drawing by them, and, bowing,

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PROVINCETOWN 828  
  
observed, with the best possible grace, “We  
give it up.” Yet sometimes wo were nearly at  
a.stand-still. ‘The sailors watched (two) objects  
on the shore to ascertain whether we advanced  
or receded. In the harbor it was like the even-  
ing of aholiday. ‘The Eastern steamboat passed  
us with music and a cheer, as if they were going  
toa ball, when they might be going to— Davy’s  
locker.  
  
Theard a boy telling the story of Nix’s mate  
to some girls as we passed that spot. ‘That waa  
the name of sailor hung there, he said. — “If  
I am guilty, this island will remain; but if I  
‘am innocent, it will be washed away,” and now  
it is all washed away!  
  
Next (?) came the fort on George’s Island.  
‘These are bungling contrivances: not our fortes,  
but our foibles. Wolfe sailed by the strongest,  
fort in North America in the dark, and took it,  
  
Tadmired the skill with which the vessel was  
at last brought to her place in the dock, near  
the end of Long Wharf. It was candle-light,  
and my eyes could not distinguish the wharves  
jutting out toward us, put it appeared like an  
feven line of shore densely crowded with ship-  
ping. You could not have guessed within a  
quarter of a mile of Long Wharf. Neverthe-  
less, we were to be blown to a crevice amid  
them, —steering right into the maze. Down

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824 CAPE CoD  
  
goes the mainsail, and only the jib draws us  
along. Now we are within four rods of the  
shipping, having already dodged several outsid-  
ers; but it is still only maze of spars, and  
rigging, and hulls, —not a crack ean be seen.  
Down goes the jib, but still we advance. The  
Captain stands aft with one hand on the tiller,  
and the other holding his night-glass, — his son  
stands on the bowsprit straining his eyes, — the  
passengers feel their hearts half-way to their  
mouths, expecting a crash. “Do you see any  
room there?” asks the Captain quietly. He  
must make up his mind in five seconds, else he  
will carry away that vessel’s bowsprit, or lose  
his own. “Yes, sir, here is a place for us;””  
and in three minutes more we are fast to the  
wharf in alittle gap between two bigger vessels.  
  
And now we were in Boston. Whoever has  
been down to the end of Long Wharf, and  
walked through Quincy Market, has seen Bos-  
ton.  
  
Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston,  
New Orleans, and the rest, are the names of  
wharves projecting into the sea (surrounded by  
the shops and dwellings of the merchants), good  
places to take in and to discharge a cargo (to  
Jand the products of other climes and load the  
exports of our own). I see a great many bar-  
rels and fig-drums,—piles of wood for um-

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PROVINCETOWN 825  
  
brella-sticks,—blocks of granite and ice, —  
great heaps of goods, and the means of packing  
and conveying them,—much wrapping-paper  
and twine, —many erates and hogsheads and  
trucks, —and that is Boston. ‘The more bar-  
els, the more Boston. The museums and  
scientific societies and libraries are accidental.  
‘They gather around the sands to save carting.  
‘The wharf-rate and cystom-house officers, and  
broken-down poets, seeking a fortune amid the  
barrels. Their better or worse lyceums, and  
preachings, and doctorings, these, too, are acci-  
dental, and the malls of commons are always  
small potatoes. When I go to Boston, I natu-  
rally go straight through the city (taking the  
Market in my way), down to the end of Long  
Wharf, and look off, for I have no cousins in  
the back alleys, — and there I see a great many  
countrymen in their shirt-sleeves from Maine,  
and Pennsylvania, and all along shore and in  
shore, and some foreigners beside, loading and  
unloading and steering their teams about, as at  
‘a country fair.  
  
‘When we reached Boston that October, I had  
a gill of Provincetown sand in my shoes, and at  
Concord there was still enough left to sand my  
pages for many a day; and I seemed to hear the  
sea roar, as if I lived in a shell, for a week  
afterward.

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826 CAPE CoD  
  
‘Tho places which I have described may seem  
strange and remote to my townsmen, — indeed,  
from Boston to Provincetown is twice as far as  
from England to France; yet step into the cars,  
and in six hours you may stand on those four  
planks, and see the Cape which Gosnold is said  
to have discovered, and which I have so poorly  
deseribed. If you had started when I first ad-  
vised you, you might have seen our tracks in  
the sand, still fresh, and reaching all the way  
from the Nauset lights to Race Point, some  
thirty miles, —for at every step we made an  
impression on the Cape, though we were not  
aware of it, and though our account may have  
made no impression on your minds. But what  
is our account? In it there is no roar, no  
beach-birds, no tow-cloth.  
  
‘We often love to think now of the lifo of men  
on beaches, —at least in midsummer, when the  
weather is sereno; their sunny lives on the  
sand, amid the beach-grass and the bayberries,  
their companion a cow, their wealth a jag of  
drift-wood or a few beach-plums, and their  
music the surf and the peep of the beach-bird.  
  
‘We went to see the Ocean, and that is prob-  
ably the best place of all our coast to go to. If  
you go by water, you may experience what it is  
  
"to leave and to approach these shores; you may  
s00 the Stormy Petrel by the way, @adarootpiua,

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PROVINCETOWN 827  
  
running over the sea, and if the weather is but a  
little thick, may lose sight of the land in mid-  
passage. I do not know where there is another  
beach in the Atlantic States, attached to the  
mainland, so Jong, and at the same time so  
straight, and completely uninterrupted by creeks  
or coves or fresh-water rivers or marshes; for  
though there may be clear places on the map,  
they would probably be found by the foot trav-  
ler to be intersected by creeks and marshes;  
certainly there is none where there is a double  
way, such as I have described, a beach and a  
bank, which at the same time shows you the  
and and the sea, and part of the time two seas.  
‘The Great South Beach of Long Island, which  
I have since visited, is longer still without an  
inlet, but it is literally a mere sand-bar, ex-  
posed, several miles from the island, and not  
the edge of a continent wasting before the as-  
saults of the ocean. ‘Though wild and desolate,  
as it wants the bold bank, it possesses but half  
the grandeur of Cape Cod in my eyes, nor is  
the imagination contented with its southern  
aspect. The only other beaches of great length  
‘on our Atlantic coast, which I have heard sail-  
ors speak of, are those of Barnogat on the Jer-  
sey shore, and Currituck between Virginia and  
North Carolina; but these, like the last, are low  
and narrow sand-bars, lying off the coast, and

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828 CAPE COD  
  
separated from the mainland by lagoons. Be-  
sides, as you go farther south the tides are fee-  
ler, and cease to add variety and grandeur to  
the shore. On the Pacific side of our country  
also no doubt there is good walking to be found;  
a recent writer and dweller there tells us that  
“the coast from Cape Disappointment (or the  
Columbia River) to Cape Flattery (at the Strait  
of Juan de Fuca) is nearly north and south, and  
can be traveled almost its entire length on a  
beautiful sand-beach,” with the exception of  
‘two bays, four or five rivers, and a few points  
jutting into the sea. Tho common shell-fsh  
found there seem to be often of corresponding  
types, if not identical species, with those of  
Cape Cod. The beach which I have described,  
however, is not hard enough for carriages, but  
must be explored on foot. When one carriage  
has passed along, a following one sinks deeper  
still in its rut. It has at present no name any  
more than fame. ‘That portion south of Nauset  
Harbor is commonly called Chatham Beach.  
‘Tho part in Eastham is called Nauset Beach,  
and off Wellfleet and Truro the Backside, or  
sometimes, perhaps, Cape Cod Beach. I think  
that part which extends without interruption  
from Nauset Harbor to Race Point should be  
called Cape Cod Beach, and do so speak of it.  
One of the most attractive points for visitors

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PROVINCETOWN 829  
  
is in the northeast part of Wellfleet, where ac-  
commodations (I mean for men and women of  
tolerable health and habits) could probably be  
had within half a mile of the seashore. It best  
‘combines the country and the seaside. ‘Though  
the Ocean is out of sight, its faintest murmur  
is audible, and you have only to climb a hill to  
find yourself on its brink. It is but a step  
from the glassy surface of the Herring Ponds to  
the big Atlantic Pond where the waves never  
ccoase to break. Or perhaps the Highland Light  
in Truro may compete with this locality, for  
there there is a more uninterrupted view of the  
‘Ocean and the Bay, and in the summer there is  
always some air stirring on the edge of the bank  
there, so that the inhabitants know not what  
hot weather is. As for the view, the keeper of  
the light, with one or more of his family, walks  
out to the edge of the bank after every meal to  
look off, just as if they had not lived there all  
their days. In short, it will wear well. And  
what picture will you substitute for that, upon  
your walls? But ladies cannot get down the  
‘bank there at present without the aid of a block  
and tackle,  
  
‘Most persons visit the seaside in warm  
weather, when fogs are frequent, and the atmo-  
sphere is wont to be thick, and the charm of the  
sea is to some extent lost. But I suspect that

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380 CAPE COD  
  
the fall is the best season, for then the atmo-  
sphere is more transparent, and it is a greater  
pleasure to look out over the sea. The clear  
and bracing air, and the storms of autumn and  
winter even, are necessary in order that we  
may get the impression which the sea is caleu-  
lated to make. In October, when the weather  
is not intolerably cold, and the landscape wears  
its autumnal tints, such as, methinks, only a  
Cape Cod landscape ever wears, especially if  
you have a storm during your stay, — that I am  
‘convinced is the best time to visit this shore.  
In autumn, even in August, the thoughtful days  
begin, and we can walk anywhere with profit.  
Beside, an outward cold and dreariness, which  
make it necessary to seek shelter at night, lend  
a spirit of adventure to a walk.  
  
The time must come when this coast will be a  
place of resort for those New-Englanders who  
really wish to visit the seaside. At present it  
is wholly unknown to the fashionable world, and  
probably it will never be agreeable to them. If  
it is merely a ten-pin alley, or a circular rail-  
way, or an ocean of mint-julep, that the visitor  
is in search of, — if he thinks more of the wine  
than the brine, as I suspect some do at New-  
port, —T trust that for a long time he will be  
disappointed here. But this shore will never  
be more attractive than it is now. Such beaches

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PROVINCETOWN 881  
  
as are fashionable are here made and unmade in  
a day, I may almost say, by the sea shifting its  
sands, Lynn and Nantasket! this bare and  
bended arm it is that makes the bay in which  
they lie so snugly. ‘What are springs and wa-  
terfalls? Here is the spring of springs, the  
waterfall of waterfalls. A storm in the fall or  
winter is the time to visit it; a light-house or a  
fisherman’s hut the true hotel. A man may  
stand there and put all America behind him.  
  
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THE  
  
MAINE WOODS.  
  
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Sakon “consume  
  
   
  
BOSTON:  
  
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY,  
  
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‘Tam first of the papers following was pub-  
lished in ‘The Union Magazine,” (New York,)  
in 1848; the second, “Chesuncook,” came out  
in the “Adantic Monthly,” in 1858; and the  
last is now for the first time printed.

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THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
KTAADN.  
  
On the Bist of August, 1846, T left Concord in Mase  
ssachusetts for Bangor and the backwoods of Bfaine, by  
‘way of the railroad and steamboat, intending to accom-  
pany a relative of mine engaged in the lumbertrade  
in Bangor, as far asa dam on the west branch of the  
Penobscot, in which property he was interested. From  
this place, which is about one’ hundred miles by the  
river above Bangor, thirty miles from the Houlton mili-  
tary road, and five miles beyond the last log-hut, I pro-  
posed to make excursions to Mount Ktaadn, the second  
highest mountain in New England, about thirty miles  
distant, and to some of the lakes of the Penobscot, either  
alone or with such company as I might pick up there.  
Tt is unusual to find @ camp so far in the woods at that  
season, when lumbering operations have ceased, and I  
was glad to avail myself of the circumstance of a gang  
fof men being employed there at that time in repairing  
the injuries caused by the great freshet in the spring.  
‘The mountain may be approached more easily and di-  
rectly on horseback and on foot from the northeast side,  
by the Aroostook road, and the Wassataquoik River but  
in that ease you see much less of the wilderness, none of  
1 \*

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2 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
the glorious river and lake scenery, and have no experi-  
ence of the batteau and the boatman’s life. I was fortue  
nate also in the season of the year, for in the summer  
myriads of black ‘lies, mosquitoes, and midges, or, as  
the Indians call them, “no-see-ems,” make travel  
the woods almost impossible; but now their reign was  
realy over.  
  
Kiaadn, whose name i an Indian word sigoi  
highest land, was first ascended by white met  
It was visited by Professor J. W. Bailey of West Point  
in 1886; by Dr. Charles 'T. Jacksov, the State Geolo-  
gist, in 1837; and by two young men from Boston in  
1845, All these have given accounts of their expedi-  
tions. Since I was there, two or three other parties  
hhave made the excursion, and told their stories. Besides  
these, very few, even among backwoodsmen and hunters,  
have ever climbed it, and it will be a long time before  
the tide of fashionable travel sets that way. ‘The moun-  
‘ainous region of the State of Bfaine stretches from near  
‘the White Mountains, northeasterly one hundred and  
sixty miles, to the head of the Aroostook River, and is  
about sixty miles wide. ‘The wild or unsettled portion  
is far more extensive. So that some hours only of travel  
in this direction will earry the curious to the verge of  
fa primitive forest, more interesting, perhaps, on all ac-  
counts, than they would reach by going a thousand miles  
westward.  
  
‘The next forenoon, Tuesday, September 1st, I started  
‘with my companion in a buggy from Bangor for “up  
river,” expecting to be overtaken the next day night at  
Mattawamkeag Point, some sixty miles of, by two more  
Bangoreans, who had decided to join us in a trip to the  
mountain. We had each a knapsack or Lng filled with

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ETAADY. 8  
  
such clothing and articles as were indispensable, and my  
companion carried his gun.  
  
‘Within a dozen miles of Bangor we passed through  
the villages of Stillwater and Oldtown, built at the falls  
of the Penobscot, which furnish the principal power by  
which the Blaine woods are converted into lumber. ‘The  
tare built directly over and across the river. Here  
is a close jam, 9 hard rub, at all seasons; and then the  
once green tree, long since white, I need not say as  
the driven snow, but as a driven log, becomes lumber  
  
‘Here your inch, your two and your three inch  
stuff begin to be, and Mr. Sawyer marks off those spaces  
which decide the destiny of so many prostrate forests  
steel riddle, more or less coarse, is the  
forest, from Ktaadn and Chesuncook, and  
the head-waters of the St. John, relentlessly sifted, til it  
‘comes out boards, clapboards, lnths, and shingles such  
‘as the wind can take, still perchance to be slit and slit  
again, till men get a size that will suit. ‘Think how stood  
‘the white-pine tree on the shore of Chesuncook,  
branches soughing with the four winds, and every indi-  
vidual needle trembling in the sunlight, — think how it  
stands with it now,—-sold, perchanee, to the New Eng-  
land Friction-Match Company! ‘There were in 1837,  
‘as I read, two hundred and fifty saw-mills on the Penob-  
scot and its tributaries above Bangor, the greater part of  
them in this immediate neighborhood, and they sawed  
‘two hundred millions of feet of boards annually. ‘To  
thio is to be added the lumber of the Kennetee, Andros:  
coggin, Saco, Passamaquoddy, and other streams. No  
wonder that we hear so often of vessels whieh are be-  
calmed off our coast, being surrounded a week at a timo  
by floating lumber from the Maine woods. ‘The miseion

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4 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
| of mon there seems to be, like so many busy demons, to  
  
| drive the forest all out of the country, from every solie  
  
| tary beaver-swamp and mountain-side, as s00n a3 pos  
sible.  
  
At Oldtown we walked into a battecu-manufactory.  
‘The making of batteaux is quite a business here for the  
supply of the Penobscot River. We examined some on  
the stocks, ‘They are light and shapely vessels, calcu-  
lated for rapid and rocky streams, and to be carried over  
Jong portages on men’s shoulders, from twenty to thirty  
feet long, and only four or four and a half wide, sharp  
fat both ends like a canoe, though broadest forward  
‘on the bottom, and reaching seven or eight feet over the  
‘water, in order that they may slip over rocks as gently  
as possible. ‘They are made very slight, only two boards  
to a side, commonly secured to a few light maple or  
other hard-wood knees, but inward are of the clearest  
and widest white-pine staff, of which there is a great  
‘waste 6m account of their form, forthe bottom is left per-  
fectly flat, not only from side to side, but from end to  
end. Sometimes they become “hogging” even, after  
Tong use, and the boatmen then turn them over and  
straighten them by a weight at each end. ‘They told us  
that one wore out in two years, oF often in a single trip,  
fon the rocks, and sold for from fourteen to sixteen dol-  
Jars ‘There was something refreshing and wildly musi-  
eal to my ears in the very name of the white man’s  
canoe, reminding me of Charlevoix and Canadian Voyn-  
geurs. The batteau is sort of mongrel between the  
canoe and the boat, a fiar-trader's boat,  
  
‘The ferry here took us past the Indian island, As  
we left the shore, I observed a short, shabby, washer-  
woman-looking Indian —they commonly have the woes

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KTAADN, 8  
  
begone look of the girl that cried for spilt milk —just !  
from “up river” —land on the Oldtown side near a gro-  
cery, and, drawing up his canoe, take out a bundle of!  
skins in one band, and an empty keg or halt-barrel  
  
the other, and scramble up the bank with them. ‘This  
picture will do to put before the Indian’s history, that is,  
the history of his extinction, In 1887 there were three  
Ihundred ‘and sixty-two souls left of this tribe. ‘The  
{sland seemed deserted to-day, yet I observed some new  
hhouses among the weather-stained ones, as if the tribe  
‘had still a design upon life; but generally they have a  
‘very shabby, forlorn, and cheerless look, being all back  
side and woodshed, not homesteads, even Indian home-  
steads, but instead of home or abroad-steads, for their life  
is domi aut militia, at home or at war, ot now rather  
venatus, that is, a hunting, and most of the latter. ‘Tho  
church is the only trim-looking building, but that is not  
Abenaki, that was Rome's doings. Good Canadian it  
may be, but it is poor Indian. ‘These were once a pow  
erful tribe. Polities are all the rage with them now. I  
even thought that a row of wigwams, with a dance of  
powwows, and a prisoner tortured at the stake, would  
be more respectable than this.  
  
‘We landed in Milford, and rode along on the east side  
of the Penobscot, having @ more or less constant view  
of the river, and the Indian islands in it, for they retain  
all the islands as far up as Nickatow, at the mouth of the  
East Branch. They are generally wel-timbered, and  
fare said to be better soil than the neighboring shores,  
‘The river seemed shallow and rocky, and interrupted by  
rapids, rippling and gleaming in the sun, We paused a  
‘moment to see a fish-hawk dive for a fish down straight  
‘as an arrow, from a great height, but he missed his prey

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6 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
this time, It was the Houlton road on which we were  
znow travelling, over which some troops were marched  
‘once towards Mars’ Hil, though not to Mars’ eld, as it  
proved. It is the main, almost the only, road in these  
parts, a9 straight and well made, and kept in as good re-  
pair, aa almost any you will find anywhere. Everywhere  
‘we saw signs of the great freshet, — this house standing  
‘awry, and that where it was not founded, but where it  
‘was found, at any rate, the next day; and that other with  
a water-logged look, as if it were still airing and drying  
its basement, and logs with everybody's marks upon  
them, and sometimes the marks of their having served  
1s bridges strewn along the road. We crossed the Sunk-  
‘haze, a summery Indian name, the Olemmon, Passadum-  
keag, and other streams, which make a greater show on  
the map than they now did on the road. At Pessadum-  
eag we found anything but what the name implies, —  
‘earnest politicians, to wit, —white ones, I mean,—on the  
alert, to know how the election was likely to go; men  
who talked rapidly, with subdued voice, and a sort of  
{factitious earnestness, you could not help believing, hard»  
ly waiting for an introduction, one on each side of your  
Duggy, endeavoring to say much in little for they see  
‘you hold the whip impatiently, but always saying little  
in much. Caucuses they have had, it seems, and cau-  
ceuses they are to have again,—victory and defeat,  
Somebody may be elected, somebody may not. One  
‘man, a total stranger, who stood by our carriage in the  
dusk, actually frightened the horse with his asseverations,  
‘growing more solemnly positive as there was tess in him  
to be positive about. So Passadamkeag did not look on  
the map. At sundown, leaving the river-road awhile  
for shortness, we went by way of Enfield, where we

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TAADY. 7  
  
stopped for the night. This, like most of the localities  
bearing names on this road, was a place to name, which,  
in the midst of the unnamed and unincorporated wilder-  
ness, was to make a distinction without a difference, it  
seemed to me. Here, however, I noticed quite an om  
chard of healthy and well-grown apple-trees, in w bear-  
ing state, it being the oldest settler’s house in this region,  
Dut all natural fruit, and comparatively worthless for  
‘want of a grafter. And so it is generally, lower down  
the river. It would be a good speculation, as well as,  
‘a favor conferred on the settlers, for a Massachusetts  
bboy to go down there with a trunk full of choice scions,  
‘and his grafting apparatus, in the spring.  
  
‘The next morning we drove along through a high and  
hilly country, in view of Cold-Stream Pond, a beautiful  
lake four or five miles long, and came into the Houlton  
ond again, here called the military road, st Lincoln,  
forty-five miles from Bangor, where there is quite a vile  
Inge for this country,—the principal one above Olde  
town. Learning that there were several wigwams here,  
‘on one of the Indian islands, we left our horse and wagon,  
and walked through the forest half a mile to the river,  
to procure a guide to the mountain, It was not till  
after considerable search that we discovered their habi-  
tations, — small buts, in a retired place, where the  
scenery was unusually soft and beautiful, and the shore  
skirted with pleasant meadows and graceful elms. We  
addled ourselves across to the island-side in a eanoe,  
which we found on the shore. Near where we landed  
sat an Indian girl ten or twelve years old, on a rock in  
the water, in the sun, washing, and humming or moan-  
ing a song meanwhile. Tt was an aboriginal strain. A  
salion-spear, made wholly of wood, lay on the shore,

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8 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
such as they might have used before white men eames  
It had an elastic piece of wood fastened to one side of  
its point, which slipped over and closed upon the fishy  
somewhat like the contrivance for holding a bucket at  
the end of a welkpole. As we walked up to the near  
fest house, we were met by a sally of a dozen wolfish-  
looking dogs, which may have been lineal descendants  
from the ancient Indian dogs, which the first voyageurs  
describe as “their wolves.” I suppose they were. ‘The  
‘occupant soon appeared, with a long pole in his handy  
‘with which he beat off the dogs, while he parleyed with  
us, A stalwart, but dull and greasy-looking fellow, who  
told us, in his sloggish way, in answer to our questions,  
as if it were the first serious business he had to do that  
day, that there were Indians going “up river”—he and  
fone other— to-day, before noon. And who was the  
other? Louis Neptune, who lives in the next house.  
‘Well, let us go over and see Louis together. ‘The same  
Aoggish reception, and Louis Neptune makes his appear  
ance,—a small, wiry man, with puckered and wrinkled  
face, yet he seemed the chief man of the two; the same,  
as I remembered, who had accompanied Jackson to the  
‘mountain in 87. ‘The same questions were put to Louis,  
and the same information obtained, while the other Ine  
dian stood by. It appeared that they were going to  
start by noon, with two canoes, to go up to Chesuncook  
to hunt moose,—to be gone a month. Well, Louis,  
suppose you get to the Point [to the Five Islands, just  
below Mattawamkeag], to camp, we walk on up the  
‘West Branch to-morrow, — four of us,—and wait for  
you at the dam, or this side, You overtake us to-mor-  
Tow or next day, and take us into your canoes. We  
stop for you, you stop for us. We pay you for your

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TAADY. 9  
  
trouble” “Yel” replied Louis, “may be you carry  
some provision for all,—some pork,— some bread, —  
and s0 pay.” He said, “Me sure get some moose  
and when I asked if he thought Pomola would let us  
{g0 up, he answered that we must plant one bottle of  
um on the top; he had planted good many ; and when  
he looked again, the rum was all gone. He had been  
up two or three times: he had planted letter, —\_Eng-  
lish, German, French, é&c. ‘These men were slightly  
lad in shirt and pantaloons, like laborers with us ia  
warm weather. ‘They did not invite us into their house  
Dut met us outside, So we left the Indians, thinking  
‘ourselves lucky to have secured such guides and com-  
Pre ee yey lw las any hu oc yeti  
id not altogether fail, as if the law by which men are  
dispersed over the globe were a very stringent one, and  
not to be resisted with impunity or for slight reasons,  
‘There were even the germs of one or two villages just  
beginning to expand. ‘The beauty of the road itself was  
remarkable. ‘The various evergreens, many of which  
are rare with us,—delicate and beautiful specimens of  
the larch, arbor-vite, ball-sprace, and fir-balsam, from a  
few inches to many feet in height, — lined its sides, in  
some places like & long, front yard, springing up from the  
smooth grase-plots which uninterruptedly border it, and  
aro made fertile by its wash; while it was but a step  
fon eitler hand to the grim, untrodden wilderness, whose  
tangled labyrinth of living, fallen, and decaying trees  
only the deer and moose, the bear and wolf, can easily  
penetrate. More perfect specimens than any front-yard  
plot can show, grew there to grace the passage of the  
‘Houlton tear.

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0 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘About noon we reached the Mattawamkeag, fity-be  
riles from Bangor by the way we had come, and put up  
ft a frequented house still on the Houlton road, where  
the Houlton stage stops. Here was substantial cov-  
ered bridge over the Mattawamkeag, built, I think they  
said, some seventeen years before. We had dinner, —  
where, by the way, and even at breakfast, as well as  
supper, at the public-houses on this road, the front  
rank is composed of various kinds of “sweet cakes,” in  
1 continuous line from one end of the table to the other.  
I think I may safely say that there was a row of ten  
or a dozen plates of this kind set before us two here.  
‘To account for which, They say that, when the lumberers  
come out of the woods, they have a eraving for cakes  
and pies, and such smect things, which there are almost  
unknown, and this is the supply to satisfy that demand.  
The supply is always equal to the demand, and these  
hungry men think a good deal of getting their money's  
‘worth. No doubt the balance of victuals is restored  
by the time they reach Bangor, — Mattawamkeng takes  
off the raw edge, Well, over this front rank, T say,  
‘you, coming from the “sweet cake” side, with a cheap  
Philosophie indifference though it may be, have to as-  
sault what there is behind, which I do not by any means  
mean to insinuate is insufleent in quantity oF quality to  
supply that other demand, of men, not from the woods,  
but from the towns, for venison and strong country fare.  
After dinner we strolled down to the “Point,” formed  
by the junction of the two rivers, which is aaid to be  
the scene of an ancient battle between the Exttern Ine  
ians and the Mohawks, and searched there carefully:  
for relics, though the men at the bar-room had never  
hheard of such things; but we found only some flaket

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KTAADN. nL  
  
of arrow-head stone, some points of arrow-heads, one  
small leaden bullet, and some colored beads, the last to  
be referred, perhaps, to early far-trader days. ‘The Mat-  
tawamkeag, though wide, was a mere river's bed, fall  
of rocks and shallows at this time, ¢0 that you could  
cross it almost dry-shod in boots; and I could hardly  
believe my companion, when he told me that he had  
been fifty or sixty miles up it in a batteau, through  
distant and still uncut forests. A battean could hardly  
find a harbor now at its mouth. Deer and carribou, or  
reindeer, are taken here in the winter, in sight of the  
house.  
  
Before our companions arrived, we rode on up the  
Houlton road seven miles, to Molunkus, where the  
Aroostook road comes into it, and where there is a spa-  
cious public house in the woods, called the \* Mfolunkus  
House,” kept by one Libbey, which looked as if it had  
its hall for dancing and for military drills. ‘There was  
no other evidence of man but this huge shingle palace  
in this part of the world; but sometimes even this is  
filled with travellers. I looked off the piazza round the  
comer of the house up the Aroostook road, on which  
there was no clearing in sight. ‘There was a man just  
adventuring upon it this evening in a rude, original,  
‘what you may call Aroostook wagon,—a mere seat,  
with a wagon swang under it,a few bags on it, and a  
dog asleep to watch them. He offered to carry a mes-  
sage for us to anybody in that country, cheerfully. I}  
suspect that, if you should go to the end of the world,  
‘you would find somebody there going farther, as if just}  
starting for home at sundown, and having a last word  
before he drove off. Here, too, was n small trader,  
whom I did not see at first, who kept a store—but no

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2 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
‘great store, certainly —in a small box over the way,  
‘behind the Molunkus sign-post. It looked like the  
Dalance-box of patent hiay-scales. As for his houze,  
‘we could only conjecture where that was; he may have  
been @ boarder in the Molunkus House. T saw hna  
standing in his shop-door,— his shop was so small, that  
if a traveller should make demonstrations of entermg,  
in, he would have to go out by the back way, and conter  
with his customer through a window, about his goods  
in the cellar, or, more probably, bespoken, and yet on  
the way. I should have gone in, for Ifelt a real im-  
pulse to trade, if I had not stopped to consider what  
would become of him. ‘The day before, we had walked  
{nto a shop, over against an inn where we stopped, the  
puny beginning of trade, which would grow at last into  
‘firm copartnership in the future town or city, — indeed,  
it was already “Somebody & Co,” I forget who. ‘The  
‘woman came forward from the penetralia of the at-  
tached house, for “ Somebody & Co.” was in the burning,  
‘and she sold us percussion-caps, canals and smoothy  
and knew their prices and qualities, and which the hunt-  
fers preferred. Here was a litle of everything in a  
‘small compass to satisfy the wants and the ambition of  
the woods,—a stock selected with what pains and eare,  
‘and brought home in the wagon-box, or a corner of the  
Houlton team; but there seemed to me, as usual, a pre-  
ponderance of children’s toys,—dogs to hark, and cats to  
mew, and trumpets to blow, where natives there hardly.  
are yet. Asif.a child, born into the Bfaine woods, among,  
the pine-cones and cedar-berries, could not do without  
such a sugar-man, or skipping-jack, as the young Roths=  
child has.  
  
T think that there was not more than one house on

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KTAADY. i  
  
the road to Molunkus, or for seven miles. At that place  
wwe got over the fence into a new field, planted with  
potatoes, where the logs were still burning between the  
hills and, palling up the vines, found good-sized pota-  
toes, nearly ripe, growing like weeds, and turnips mixed  
with them. ‘The mode of clearing and planting is, 10  
fell the trees, and burn once what will burn, then cut  
‘them up into suitable lengths, roll into heaps, and bura  
‘again; then, with a hoe, plant potatoes where you can  
come at the ground between the stumps and charred  
logs ; for a first crop the ashes suificing for manure, and  
‘no hoving being necessary the first year. In the fall,  
cut, roll, and burn again, and s0 on, tll the land is  
cleared ; and soon it is ready for grain, and to be laid  
down, Let those talk of poverty and hard times who  
‘will in the towns and cities ; cannot the emigrant who  
ean pay his fare to New York or Boston pay five dol-  
lace more to get here, —I paid three, all told, for my  
passage from Boston to Bangor, two hundred and fifty  
miles, —and be as rich as he pleases, where land vire  
tually costs nothing, and houses only the labor of buil  
ing, and he may begin life as Adam did? If he will  
still remember the distinction of poor and rich, let him  
Despeak him a narrower house forthwith.  
  
‘When we returned to the Mattawamkeag, the Houlton  
stage had already put up there; and a Province man  
‘was betraying his greenness to the Yankees by his ques  
tion, Why Province money won't pass here at par,  
when States? money is good at Frederickion,— though  
this, perhaps, was sensible enough. From what I saw  
then, it appears that the Province man was now the  
only real Jonathan, or raw country bumpkin, left so far  
behind by his enterprising neighbors that he didn't know

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av THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘enough fo put a question to them. No people can long  
continue provincial in character who have the propensity  
for politics and whiting, and rapid travelling, whieh the  
Yankees have, and who are leaving the mother country  
ehind in the variety of their notions and inventions.  
‘The possession and exercise of practical talent merely  
fare a sure and rapid means of intellectual culture and  
independence.  
  
The last edition of Greenleat’s Map of Maine hung  
fon the wall here, and, as we had no pocket-fhap, we re-  
solved to trace a map of the lake country. So, dipping  
a wad of tow into the lamp, we oiled a sheet of paper  
on the oiled table-cloth, and, in good faith, traced what  
wwe afterwards ascertained to be a labyrinth of errors,  
carefully following the outlines of the imaginary lakes  
which the map contains. The Map of the Publie Lands  
‘of Maine and Massachusetts is the only one I have seen  
that at all deserves the name, Tt was while we were  
‘engaged in this operation that our companions arrived.  
‘They had seen the Indians’ fire on the Five Islands, and  
0 we concluded that all was right.  
  
Early the next morning we had mounted our packs,  
and prepared for a tramp up the West Branch, my com-  
panion having turned his horse out to pasture for a week.  
or ten days, thinking that a bite of fresh grass, and a  
taste of running water, would do him as much good as  
Dackwoods fare and new country influences his master.  
Leaping over a fence, we began to follow an obscure  
trail up the northern bank of the Penobscot. ‘There  
‘was now no road further, the river being the only high-  
way, and but half a dozen log-huts confined to its banks,  
to be met with for thirty On either hand, and  
beyond, was a wholly uninhabited wilderness, stretching

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ETAADY. ww  
  
to Canada, Neither horse nor cow, nor vehicle of any  
kkind, bad ever passed over this ground ; the cattle, and  
the few bulky articles which the loggers use, being got  
up in the winter on the ice, and down again before it  
breaks up. ‘The evergreen woods had a decidedly sweet  
and bracing fragrance; the air was a sort of diet-drink,  
and we walked on buoyantly in Indian file stretching  
our legs. Occasionally there was a small opening on  
the bank, made for the purpose of log-rolling, where we  
got a sight of the river, —always a rocky and rippling  
stream. The roar of the rapids, the note of a whistler-  
duck on the river, of the jay and chickadee around us,  
and of the pigeon-woodpecker in the openings, were the  
sounds that we heard. ‘This was what you might call  
a bran-new country ; the only roads were of Nature's  
‘making, and the few houses were camps. Here, then,  
‘one could no longer accuse institutions and society, but  
‘mast front the true source of ev  
  
There aro three classes of inhabitants who either fre-  
‘quent or inhabit the country which we had now entered;—  
first, the loggers, who, for a part of the year, the winter  
‘and spring, are far the most numerous, but in the sum-  
mer, except a few explorers for timber, completely desert  
second, the few settlers I have named, the only per-  
manent inhabitants, who live on the verge of it, and help  
supplies for the former; third, the hunters, mostly  
Indians, who range over it in their season.  
  
‘At the end of three miles, we came to the Bfattaceunk  
stream and mill, where there was even a rude wooden  
railroad running down to the Penobscot, the last railroad  
‘wé were to see. We crossed one tract, on the bank of  
the river, of more than a hundred acres of heavy timber,  
{which had just been felled and burnt over, and was stil

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16 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
‘smoking. Our trail lay through the midst of it, and was  
wellnigh blotted out. ‘The trees lay at full length, four  
or five feet deep, and crossing each other in all directions,  
all black as charcoal, but perfectly sound within, still  
{good for fuel or for timber; soon they would be eut into  
lengths and burnt again. Here were thousands of cords,  
‘enough to keep the poor of Boston and New York amply  
‘warm for a winter, which only cumbered the ground and  
‘were in the settler’s way. And the whole of that solid  
‘and interminable forest is doomed to be gradually de-  
Youred thus by fire like shavings, and no man be warmed  
by it At Crocker’s log-hut, at the mouth of Salmon  
River, seven miles from the Point, one of the party com-  
menced distributing a store of small cent picture-books  
among the children, to teach them to read, and also  
newspapers, more or Teas recent, among the parents, than  
which nothing can be more acceptable to a backwoods  
people. Tt was really an important item in our outfit,  
‘and, at times, the only eurrency that would circulate. I  
walked through Salmon River with my shoes on, it bei  
low water, but not without wetting my feet. A few miles  
farther we came to“ Marm Howard's,” at the end of an  
extensive clearing, where there were two or three log-  
Inuts in sight at once, one on the opposite side of the  
river, and a few graves, even surrounded by a wooden  
paling, where already the rude forefathers of @ hamlet  
  
je, and a thousand years hence, perchance, some poet  
will write his “Elegy in a Country Churchyard.” The  
“Village Hampdens,” the “mute, inglorious Miltons,”  
and Cromwells, «guilless of” their “country’s blood."  
‘were yet unborn.  
  
“\* Perebance inthis wild spot thre wl Be aid  
Some heart once pregaaat with celestial Ares

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KTAADN. W  
  
   
  
“ands that the rod of empire might  
(Or waked to ecstasy the living Iyro”  
  
‘The next house was Fisk's, ten miles from the Point  
‘tthe mouth of the East Branch, opposite to the island  
atom, or the Forks, the last of the Indian islands.  
‘Lam particular to give the names of the settlers and the  
distances, since every log-hut in these woods is a public  
house, and such information is of no little consequence  
to those who may have occasion to travel this way. Our  
course here crossed the Penobscot, and followed the  
outhern bank. One of the party, who entered the  
house in search of some one to set us over, roported a  
very neat dwelling, with plenty of books, and a new  
‘wife, just, imported from Boston, wholly new to the  
‘woods. We found the East Branch a lange and rapi  
stream at its mouth, and much deeper than it appeared.  
‘Having with some difficulty discovered the trail again,  
‘we kept up the south eide of the West Branch, or main  
river, passing by some rapids called Rock-Ebeeme, the  
roar of which we heard through the woods, and, shortly  
after, in the thickest of the wood, some empty loggers’  
camps, still new, which were occupied the previous wine  
ter. ‘Though we saw a few more afterwards, I will make  
‘one account serve for all. ‘These were such houses as  
the lumberers of Maine spend the winter ia, in the wile  
deress. ‘There were the camps and the hovels for the  
cattle, hanily distinguishable, except that the latter had  
no chimney. ‘These camps were about twenty feet long  
by fifteen wide, built of logs,— hemlock, cedar, spruce,  
or yellow birch, —one kind alone, or all together, with  
the bark on; two or three large ones first, one directly  
‘above another, and notched together at the ends, to ther  
  
height of three or four feet, then of smaller logs resting  
  
razed,

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18 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
‘upon transverse ones at the ends, each of the last suc-  
cessively shorter than the other, to form the roof. ‘The  
chimney was an oblong square hole in the middle, three  
or four feet in diameter, with a fence of logs as high as  
the ridge. ‘The interstices were filled with moss, and  
‘the roof was shingled with long and handsome splints of  
‘cedar, or spruce, or pine, ited with a sledge and cleaver.  
‘The fire-place, the most important place of all, was in  
shape and size like the chimney, and directly under i  
defined by a log fence or fender on the ground, and a  
hheap of ashes, a foot or two deep, within, with solid  
benches of split logs running round it, Here the firo  
usually melts the snow, and dries the rain before it can  
descend to quench it. ‘The faded beds of arbor-vitw  
leaves extended under the eaves on either hand. ‘There  
was the place for the water-pail, pork-barrel, and wash-  
basin, and generally a dingy pack of cards left on a log.  
Usually a good deal of w was expended on the \*  
lateh, which was made of wood, in the form of an iron  
fone. ‘These houses are made comfortable by the huge  
fires, which can be afforded night and day. Usually the  
scenery about them ia drear and savage enough ; and the  
loggers’ camp is as completely in the woods as a fongus  
‘at the foot of a pine in a swamp; no outlook but to the  
sky overhead; no more clearing than is made by cutting  
down the trees of which it is built, and those which are  
necessary for fuel. If only it be well sheltered and con-  
venient to his work, and near a spring, he wastes no  
thought on the prospect. They are very proper forest  
houses, the stems of the trees collected together and  
led up around a man to keep out wind and rain,—  
ade of living green logs, hanging with moss and lichen,  
ard with the curls and fringes of the yellow-birch bark,

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TAADY. 19  
  
‘and dripping with resin fresh and moist and redolent of  
‘swampy odors, with that sort of vigor and perennialness  
‘even about them that toadstools suggest® ‘The logger’s  
fare consists of tea, molasses flour, pork (sometimes beef),  
‘and beans. A. great proportion of the beans raised in  
‘Massachusetts find their market here. On expeditions  
it is only hard bread and pork, often raw, slice upon  
slice, with tea or water, as the ease may be.  
  
‘The primitive wood is always and everywhere damp  
and mossy, so that I travelled constantly with the im-  
pression that I was in a swamp ; and only when it was  
remarked that this or that tract, judging fom the qual-  
ity of the timber on it, would make a profitable clearing,  
was I reminded, that if the sun were let in it would,  
make a dry feld, ike the few I had seen, at once. ‘The  
best shod for the most part trave) with wet feet. If the  
‘ground was co wet and spongy at this, the dryest part  
‘of a dry season, what must it be in the spring? The  
‘woods hereabouts abounded in beech and yellow birch,  
of which last there were some very lange specimens 5  
‘also spruce, cedar, fir, and hemlock ; but we saw only  
‘the stumps of the white pine here, some of them of  
‘great size, these having been already culled out, being  
the only tree much sought after, even as low down ax  
this, Only a litde spruce and hemlock beside had been  
  
1 Springer, io his “Forest Life™ (185), sys that they fit r=  
rove the leaves and tur fom the spot where thy ftend fo bald  
‘amp, for fea of fro; alo, thatthe spruce-ro is generally weect=  
1 for camp-balling it being light straight, and quite free from  
  
"5 that the root is fosily covered with the boughs of the Gr,  
spruce, and hemlock o that wien the sow fills upon the whole,  
‘wamth of the camp is prserved in th coldest weather”; and that  
they make the log sett before the fe, celled the " Deacon's Seat?  
of apruce or fr api in balves, with three or fur stout Labs lt  
‘0 on sido for log, which aro not likely to gt ose.

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20 THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
logged here. ‘The Eastern wood which is sold for fuel  
in Massachusetts all comes from below Bangor. It was  
the pine alone, chiefly the white pine, that had tempted  
‘any but the hunter to precede us on this route.  
  
J Waite's farm, thirteen miles from the Point, is an ex-  
tensive and elevated clearing, from which we got a fino  
view of the river, rippling and gleaming far beneath us.  
‘My companions had formerly had a good view of Ktaadn  
‘and the other mountains here, but to-day it was so smoky  
‘that we could see nothing of them. We could overlook:  
‘an immense country of uninterrupted forest, stretching  
away up the East Branch toward Canada, on the north  
and northwest, and toward the Aroostook valley on the  
northeast; and imagine what wild life was stirring in its  
midst. Here was quite a fleld of com for this region,  
whose peculiar dry scent we perceived a third of  
mile off, before we saw it,  
  
Eighteen miles from the Point brought us in sight of  
‘McCauslin’s, or “Uncle George’s;” as he was familiarly  
called by my companions, to whom he was well known,  
where we intendfa to break our long fast. His house  
‘was in the midst of an extensive clearing of intervale,  
at the mouth of the Little Schoodie River, on the op-  
posite or north bank of the Penobscot. So we collected  
‘on 8 point of the shore, that we might be seen, and fired  
our gon as a signal, which brought out his dogs forth-  
with, and thereafter their master, who in due time took  
us across in his batteau. This clearing was bounded  
abruptly, on all sides but the river, by the naked stems  
of the forest, as if you were to cut only a few fect,  
‘square in the midst of a thousand acres of mowing, and  
set down a thimble therein. He had a whole heaven  
‘and horizon to hintself, and the sun veemed to be jour-

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KTAADN. 2  
  
neying over his clearing only the livelong day. Here  
‘we concluded to spend the night, and wait for the Ine  
dians, as there was no stopping-place 60 convenient  
above. He had seen no Indians pass, and this di not  
often happen without his knowledge. He thought that  
hhis dogs sometimes gave notice of the approach of In-  
ians half an hour before they arrived.  
  
‘McCauslin was a Kennebec man, of Scotch descent;  
who had been a waterman twenty-two years, and bad  
driven on the lakes and head-waters of the Penobscot  
five or six springs in succession, but was now settled  
here to raise supplies for the lumberers and for himself,  
‘He entertained us a day or two with true Scotch hospi  
tality, and would accept no recompense for it. A man  
of a dry wit and shrewdness, and a general intelligence  
which I had not looked for in the backwoods. In fact,  
‘the deeper you penetrate into the woods, the more in-  
telligent, and, in one sense, less countrified do you find  
‘the inhabitants ; for always the pioneer has been a trav-  
eller, and, to some extent, a man of the world; and, as  
‘the distances with which he is familiar are greater, so  
is his information more general and far reaching than  
the villagers. If I were to look for a narrow, ani  
formed, and countrified mind, as opposed to the intel  
gence and refinement which are thought to emanate from  
cities, it would be among the rusty inhabitants of an old-  
settled country, on farms all run out and gone to seed  
with life-everlas the towns about Boston, even  
fon the high-road in Concord, and not in the backwoods  
of Maine.  
  
Supper was got before our eyes in the ample kitchen,  
by a fire which would have roasted an ox many whole  
logs, four feet long, were consumed to boil our tea-kettle,

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22 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
—Dirch, oF beech, or maple, the same summer and wins  
ter; and the dishes were soon smoking on the table,  
late the arm-chair, against the wall, from which one of  
the party was expelled. ‘The arms of the chair formed  
‘the frame on which the table rested; and, when the  
round top was turned up against the wall, it formed  
tho back of the ebair, and was no more‘in the way than  
the wall itself, ‘This, we noticed, was the prevailing  
fashion in these log-houses, in order to economize in  
room. There were piping-hot wheaten cakes, the flour  
having been brought up the river in batteaux,— no In-  
dian bread, for the upper part of Maine, it will be re-  
membered, is a wheat country,—and ham, eggs, and  
potatoes, and milk and cheese, the produce of the farm ;  
‘and also shad and salmon, tea sweetened with molasses,  
‘and sweet cakes, in contradistinction to the hot eakes not  
sweetened, the one white, the other yellow, to wind up  
with, Such we found was the prevailing fare, ordinary  
and extraordinary, along this river. Mountain cran-  
berries (Vaccinium Vitis-Idaa), stewed and sweetened,  
‘were the common dessert. Everything here was in pro-  
fusion, and the best of its kind. Butter was in such  
plenty that it was commonly used, before it was salted,  
to grease boots with.  
  
In the night we were entertained by the sound of  
raindrops on the cedar-splints which covered the roof,  
and awaked the next morning with a drop or two in our  
eyes It had set in for a storm,and we made up our  
rinds not to forsake such comfortable quarters with this  
Prospect, but wait for Indians and fair weather. It  
rained and drizzled and gleamed by turns, the livelong  
day. What we did there, how we killed the time,  
‘would perhaps be idle to tell; how many times we but

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KTAADN. 28  
  
tered our boots, and how often a drowsy one was seen  
to sidle off to the bedroom. When it held up, I strolled  
up and down the bank, and gathered the harebell and  
‘eedar-berries, which grew there; or else we tried by  
‘turns the long-handled axe on the logs before the door.  
‘The axe-helves here were made to chop standing on the  
log, —a primitive log of course, — and were, therefore,  
nearly a foot longer than with us. One while we  
‘walked over the farm and visited his well-flled barns  
with McCauslin. There were one other man and two  
women only here. He kept horses, cows, oxen, and  
sheep. I think he said that he was the first to bring  
fa plough and a cow 60 far; and he might have added  
the last, with only two exceptions. ‘The potato-rot had  
found him out heré, too, the previous year, and got half  
‘or two thirds of his crop, though the seed was of his  
own raising. Oats, grass, and potatoes were his staples  
Dat he raised, also, a few carrots and turnips, and “a  
Title corn for the hens,” for this was all that he dared  
risk, for fear that it would not ripen. Melons, squashes,  
sweet-cor, beans, tomatoes, and many other vegetables,  
could not be ripened there.  
  
The very few settltrs along this stream were obvi-  
ously tempted by the cheapness of the land mainly.  
‘When I asked McCauslin why more settlers did not  
‘come in, he answered, that one reason was, they could  
not buy the land, it belonged to individuals or companies  
‘who were afraid that their wild lands would be settled,  
‘and s0 incorporated into towns, and they be taxed for  
‘thems but to settling on the States’ land there was no  
such hinderance. For his own part, he wanted no  
neighbors, —he did n't wish to see any road by his  
hhouse. Neighbors, even the best, were a trouble and

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24 THE MAINE Woops.  
  
expense, especially on the score of cattle and fences,  
‘They might live across the river, perhaps, but not on  
the same side.  
  
The chickens here were protected by the dogs. As  
‘McCauslin said, “‘The old one took it up first, and she  
‘aught the pup, and now they had got it into their heads  
that it would n't do to have anything of the bird kind  
fon the premises.” A hawk hovering over was not al-  
lowed to alight, but barked off by the dogs circling un-  
derneath ; and a pigeon, or a yellow-hammer,” a8 they  
called the pigeon-woodpecker, on a dead limb or stump,  
‘was instantly expelled. It was the main business of  
their day, and Kept them constantly coming and going.  
‘One would rash out of the house on the least alarm  
given by the other.  
  
‘When it rained hardest, we returned to the house,  
and took down a tract from the shelf, ‘There was the  
‘Wandering Jew, cheap edition, and fine print, the Crimi-  
nal Calendar, and Parish’s Geography, and flash novels  
two or three, Under the pressure of circumstances, we  
read a little in these. With such aid, the press is not  
0 feeble an engine, after all. ‘This house, which was a  
fair epecimen of those on this river, was built of huge  
logs, which peeped out everywhere, and were chinked  
swith clay and moss. Tt contained four or five rooms.  
‘Phere-were no sawed boards, or shingles, or elapboards,  
about its and scarcely any tool but the axe had been  
‘used in its construction. ‘The partitions were made of  
long clapboard-like splints, of spruce or cedar, turned  
to a delicate salmon color by the smoke. ‘The roof and  
fides were covered with the same, instead of shingles  
‘and elapboards, and some of a much thicker and larger  
size were used for the floor. These were all so straight

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BTAADN. 25  
  
‘and smooth, that they answered the purpose admirably ,  
‘and a careless observer would not have suspected that  
they were not sawed and planed. The chimney and  
hearth were of vast size, and made of stone. The  
‘broom was a few twigs of arbor-vite tied to a stick;  
‘and a pole was suspended over the hearth, close to the  
‘cilings, to dry stockings and clothes on. I noticed that  
the floor was full of small, dingy holes, as if made with  
a giumlet, but which were, in fact, made by the spike  
nearly an inch long, which the lumberers wear in their  
boots to prevent their slipping on wet logs. Just above  
‘MeCauslin’s there is a rocky rapid, where logs jam in  
the spring; and many “drivers” are there collected,  
who frequent his house for supplies; these were their  
tracks which T saw.  
  
‘At sundown McCauslin pointed away over the forest,  
across the river, to signs of fair weather amid the  
clouds, — some evening redness there. For even there  
the points of compass held; and there was a quarter  
‘of the heavens appropriated to sunrise and another to  
sunset.  
  
‘The next morning, the weather proving fair enough  
for our purpose, we prepared to start, and, the Indians  
having failed us, persuaded MeCanslin, who was not  
unwilling to revisit the scenes of his driving, to accom-  
pany us in their stead, intending to engage one other  
Doatiman on the way. A strip of cotton cloth for a  
tent, a couple of blankets, which would suffice for the  
‘whole party, fifteen pounds of hard bread, ten pounds  
of “clear” pork, and a little tea, made up “Uncle  
George's” pack. ‘The last three articles were ealeu-  
lated to be provision enough for six men for a week,  
with what we might pick up. A tea-kettle, a frying

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26 ‘THE MAINE WoouSs.  
  
pan, and an axe, to be obtained at the last house, would  
complete our outfit.  
  
‘We were soon out of McCauslin’s clearing, and in the  
fever green woods again. The obscure trail made by the  
‘wo settlers above, which even the woodman is some-  
‘times puzzled to discern, erelong crossed a narrow, open  
strip in the woods overrun with weeds, called the Burnt  
‘Land, where a fire had raged formerly, stretching north-  
‘ward nine or ten miles to Millinocket Lake. At the  
‘end of three miles, we reached Shad Pond, or Nolisee-  
‘mack, an expansion of the river. Hodge, the Assistant  
State Geologist, who passed through this on the 25th  
of June, 1837, says, “We pushed our boat through  
fan acre or more of buck-beans, which had taken root  
‘at the bottom, and bloomed above the surface in the  
sreatest profusion and beauty.” ‘Thomas Fowler's house  
is four miles from McCauslin’s, on the shore of the pond,  
at the mouth of the Millinocket River, and eight  
from the lake of the same name, on the latter stream.  
This lake affords a more direct course to Ktaadn, but  
we preferred to follow the Penobscot and the Pamadum-  
cook lakes. Fowler was just completing a new log-hut,  
and was sawing out a window through the logs, nearly  
two feet thick, when we arrived. He had begun to paper  
his house with sprace-bark, turned inside out, which had  
1 good effect, and was in keeping with the circumstances.  
Instead of water we got here a draught of beer, which,  
it was allowed, would be better; clear and thin, but  
strong and stringent as the cedar-sap. Tt was as if wo  
sucked at the very teats of Nature's pine-clad bosom in  
  
co parts, — the tap ofall Millinocket botany commin-  
ed, — the topmost, most fantastic, and spiciest sprays  
  
the primitive wood, and whatever invigorating and

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TADS. 7  
  
stringent gum or essence it afforded steeped and dise  
solved in it—a lumberer's drink, which would acclimate  
and naturalize a man at once,— which would make him  
sce green, and, if he slept, dream thet he heard the wind  
sough among the pines. Here was a fife, praying to be  
played on, through which we breathed » few tuneful  
strains,— brought hither to tame wild beasts. As we  
stood upon the pile of chips by the door, fish-hawks  
‘were ésiling overhead ; and here, over Shad Pond, might  
daily be witnessed the tyranny of the bali-eagle over  
that bird. ‘Tom pointed away over the lake to a bald-  
eagle's nest, which was plainly visible more than a mile  
off, on & pine, high above the surrounding forest, and  
vwas frequented from year to year by the same pair, and  
held sacred by him. ‘There were these two houses only  
‘there, his low hut and the eagles’ airy cart-load of fagots.  
‘Thomas Fowler, too, was persuaded to join us, for two  
men were necessary to manage the baitean, which was  
‘soon to be our carriage, and these men needed to be cool  
‘and skilfal for the navigation of the Penobscot. ‘Tom's  
pack was soon made, for he bad not fat to look for his  
‘waterman’s boots, and a red-lannel shirt. ‘This ia the  
favorite color with Iumbermen ; and red flannel is re  
puted to possess some mysterious virtues, to be most  
healthful and convenient in respect to perspiration. Ir  
‘every gang there will be a large proportion of red binds,  
‘We took here a poor and leaky batteau, and began to  
pole up the Millinocket two miles to the elder Fowler's,  
in order to avoid the Grand Falls of the Penobsect,  
intending to exchange our battean there for a better.  
‘The Millinocket is a small, shallow, and sandy stream,  
full of what I took to be lamprey-cels’ or suckers’ nests,  
‘and lined with musquash cabins, but free from

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28 THE MATE WOODS.  
  
acconting to Fowler, excepting at its outlet from the  
lake. He was at this time engaged in cutting the native  
‘grass, —rush-grass and meadow-clover, as he called it —  
fon the meadows and smal, low islands of this stream.  
‘We noticed flattened places in the grass on either side,  
‘where, he eaid, a moose had laid down the night before,  
‘adding, that there were thousands in these meadows.  
Old Fowler’s, on the Millinocket, six miles from M~  
Caustin’s, and twenty-four from the Point, is the last  
hhouse. Gibson's, on the Sowadnehunk, is the only clear-  
ing above, but that had proved a failure, and was long  
since deserted. Fowler is the oldest inhabitant of these  
‘woods. He formerly lived a few miles from here, on  
the south side of the West Branch, where he built his  
hhouse sixteen years ago, the first house built above the  
Five Islands. Here our new batteau was to be carried  
over the first portage of two miles, round the Grand  
Falls of the Penobscot, on a horse-sled made of sap-  
lings, to jump the numerous rocks in the way ; but we  
hhad to wait a couple of hours for them to catch the  
hhorses, which were pastured at a distance, amid the  
stumps, and had wandered stil farther off. ‘The last  
of the salmon for this season had just been caught, and  
‘were still fresh in pickle, from which enough was ex-  
tracted to fill our empty kettle, and 0 graduate our  
{introduction to simpler forest fare. ‘The week before  
they had lost nine sheep here out of their first flock,  
by the wolves. ‘The surviving sheep came round the  
hhouse, and seemed frightened, which induced them to go  
and look for the rest, when they found seven dead and  
lacerated, and two still alive. ‘These last they carried  
to the house, and, as Mrs. Fowler said, they were merely.  
‘seratched in the throat, and had no more visible wound

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TAADY. 29  
  
than would be produced by the prick of @ pin. Sho  
sheared off the wool from their throats, and washed  
them, and put on some salve, and turned them out, but  
in a few moments they were missing, and had not been  
found since. In fact, they were all poisoned, and thoso  
that were found swelled up at once, oo that they saved  
neither skin nor wool. This realized the old fables of  
the wolves and the sheep, and convinced me that that  
ancient hostility still existed. Verily, the shepherd-boy  
id not need to sound a false alarm this time. ‘There  
‘were steel trape by the door, of various sizes, for wolves,  
‘otter, and bears, with large claws instead of teeth, to  
catch in their sinews. Wolves are frequently killed  
‘with poisoned bait,  
  
‘At length, after we had dined here on the usual back-  
‘woods fare, the horses arrived, and we hauled our batteau  
‘out of the water, and lashed it to its wicker earriage, and,  
throwing in our packs, walked on before, leaving the  
boatmen and driver, who was Tom's brother, to manage  
the concern. ‘The route, which led through the wild  
‘pasture where the sheep were killed, was in some places  
the roughest ever travelled by horses, over rocky hills,  
where the sled bounced and slid along, like @ vessel  
pitching in» storm; and one man was as necessary to  
stand at the stern, to prevent the boat from being  
wrecked, as a helmsman in the roughest sea. ‘The  
philosophy of our progress was something like this  
‘when the runners strack a rock three or four fect high,  
the sled bounced back and upwards at the same time ;  
Dut, as the horses never ceased pulling, it eame down on  
the top of the rock, and so we got over. This portage  
probably followed the trail of an ancient Indian carry  
ound these falls. By two o'clock we, who had walked

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80 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘on before, reached the river above the fills, not far from  
the outlet of Quakish Lake, and waited for the battean  
to come up. We had been here but a short time, when  
‘8 thunder-shower was seen coming up from the west,  
over the still invisible lakee, and that pleasant wilder-  
‘ness which we were 6o eager to become acquainted  
with ; and soon the heavy drops began to patter on the  
leaves around us, I had just eelected the prostrate  
‘trunk of a huge pine, five or six fect in diameter, and  
was crawling under it, when, luckily, the boat arrived.  
It would have amused a sheltered man to witness the  
manner in which it was unlashed, and whirled over,  
while the frst water-spout burst upon us It was no  
sooner in tho hands of the eager company than it was  
abandoned to the first revolutionary impulse, and to  
gravity, to adjust it; and they might have been scen  
all stooping to its shelter, and wriggling under like so  
‘many eels, before it was fairly deposited on the ground.  
‘When all were under, we propped up the lee side, and  
busied ourselves there whiting thole-pins for rowing,  
‘when we should reach the lakes; and made the woods  
ring, between the claps of thunder, with such boat-songs  
9 we could remember. ‘The horses stood sleek and  
shining with the rain, all drooping and erestfallen, while  
deluge after deluge washed over us; but the bottom of a  
boat may be relied on for a tight root At length, after  
two hours’ delay at this place, a streak of fair weather  
‘appeared in the northwest, whither our course now Iny,  
promising a serene evening for our voyage; and the  
river retumed with his horses, while we made haste  
to launch our boat, and commence our voyage in good  
earnest.  
  
‘There were six of us, including the two boatmen,

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KTAADN. 81  
  
‘With our packs heaped up near the bows, and ourselves  
disposed as baggage to trim the boat, with instructions  
not to move in case we should strike @ rock, more than  
#0 many barrels of pork, we pushed out into the first  
‘rapid, a slight specimen of the stream we had to navi-  
gate. With Uncle George in the stern, and Tom in  
‘the bows, each“using a spruce pole about twelve feet  
Jong, pointed with iron, and poling on the eame side,  
‘we shot up the rapids like a salmon, the water rushing  
‘and roaring around, eo that only a practised eye could  
distinguish safe course, or tell what was deep water  
‘and what rocks, frequently grazing the latter on one or  
both sides, with a hundred as narrow escapes as ever  
‘the Argo had in passing through the Symplegades. I,  
‘who had had some experience in boating, had never  
experienced any half eo exhilarating before. We were  
lucky to have exchanged our Indians, whom we did not  
know, for these men, who, together with Tom's brother,  
‘were reputed the best boatmen on the river, and were at  
‘once indispensable pilots and pleasant companions. ‘The  
canoe is smaller, more easily upset, and sooner worn  
‘out ; and the Indian is said not to be so skilful in the  
management of the batteau. He ie, for the most part,  
less to be relied on, and more disposed to sulks and  
whims. ‘The utmost familiarity with dead streams, or  
With the ocean, would not prepare man for this pecu-  
liar navigation ; and the most skilful boatman anywhere  
‘else would here be obliged to take out his boat and earry  
round @ hundred times, still with great risk, as well as  
delay, where the practised batteau-man poles up with  
comparative ease and safety. ‘The hardy “ voyageur”  
pushes with incredible perseverance and success quite  
  
1 The Canadians cal it piogur de fond.

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82 ‘THE MATXE Woops  
  
up to the foot of the falls, and then only carries round  
some perpendicular ledge, and launches again in  
"The toret's smoothness, ee it dash below,"  
  
to struggle with the boiling rapids above. ‘The Indiar  
‘say that the river once ran both ways, one half up and  
‘the other down, but that, since the white man came, it  
all runs down, and now they must laboriously pole their  
canoes against the stream, and carry them over numerous  
portages. In the summer, all stores —the grindstone and  
the plough of the pioneer, flour, pork, and utensils for the  
‘explorer —must be conveyed up the river in batteaux 5  
‘and many a cargo and many a boatman is lost in these  
waters. In the winter, however, which is very equable  
and long, the ice is the great highway, and the loggers?  
team penetrates to Chesuncook Lake, and still higher  
up, even two hundred miles above Bangor. Imagit  
the solitary sled-track running far up into the snowy  
and evergreen wilderness, hemmed in closely for a hun-  
dred miles by the forest, and again stretching straight  
across the broad surfaces of concealed Inkes !  
  
‘We were soon in the smooth water of the Quakish  
Lake, and took our turns at rowing and padé  
it, Tt is a small, irregular, but handsome lake, shut in  
‘on all sides by the forest, and showing no traces of man  
but some low boom in a distant cove, reserved for spring  
ruse. ‘The spruce and cedar on its shores, bung with  
gray lichens, looked at a distance like the ghosts of trees,  
Ducks were sailing here and there on its surfice, and a  
solitary Toon, like more living wave, —a vital spot on  
‘the lake's surface, — laughed and frolicked, and showed  
its straight leg, for our amusement. Joe Merry Moune  
tain appeared in the northwest, as if it were looking  
down on this lake especially; and we bad our first, but

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KTAADN. 38  
  
pautial view of Ktandn, its summit veiled in clouds,  
like a dark isthmus in that quarter, connecting the  
hheavens with the earth, After two miles of smooth  
rowing across this lake, we found ourselves in the river  
again, which was continuous rapid for one mile, to  
the dam, requiring all the strength and ckill of our boat  
‘men to pole up it.  
  
This dam is a quite important and expensive work  
for this country, whither cattle and horses cannot pene-  
trate in the summer, raising the whole river ten feet,  
and flooding, a4 they said, some sixty square miles by  
‘means of the innumerable lakes with which the river  
connects. It is a lofty and solid structure, with sloping  
piers ome distance above, made of frames of logs filed  
with stones, to break the ice.\* Here every log pays toll  
as it passes through the sluices,  
  
‘We filed into the rude logger'a camp at this place,  
such as I have described, without ceremony, and the  
cook, at that moment the sole occupant, at once set about  
preparing tea for his visitors. His fireplace, which the  
rain had converted into a mud-puddle, was soon blazing  
again, and we sat down on the log benches around it  
to ary us. On the welllattened and somewhat faded  
beds of arbor-vitw leaves, which stretched on either  
hand under the eaves behind us, lay an odd leaf of the  
Bible, some genealogical chapter out of the Old Testa-  
ment ; and, half buried by the leaves, we found Emer-  
son's Address on West India Emancipation, which had  
been left here formerly by one of our company, and had  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
\* Bren the Jeruit misiontries, acoustomed to the St. Lawrence  
tnd other rivers of Canada, in ther first expeditions ta the Abent-  
Aquino, speak of vrs ferrds de rocker shod with rocks. $0 also  
No. 10 Halations, fr 1647, p. 186.  
  
a

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8h ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘made two converts tothe Liberty party here, as T was told  
also, an odd number of the Westminster Review, for  
1834, and a pamphlet entitled History of the Erection  
of the Monument on the grave of Myron Holly. ‘This  
‘was the readable, or reading matter, in a lumberer’s  
‘camp in the Maine woods, thirty miles from a road,  
which would be given up to the bears in a fortnight.  
‘These things were well thumbed and soiled. ‘This gang  
was headed by one John Morrison, a good specimen of «  
‘Yankee ; and was necessarily composed of men not bred  
to the business of dam-building, but who were Jacksat-  
alltrades, handy with the axe, and other simple imple-  
‘ments, and well skilled in wood and water craft. We  
had hot cakes for our supper even here, white as snow  
balls, but without butter, and the never-falling sweet  
cakes, with which we filled our pockets foresecing that  
‘we should not soon meet with the like again. Such  
delicate puffballs seemed a singular diet for backwoods-  
men. There was also tea without milk, sweetened with  
molasses, And 90, exchanging @ word with John Mor-  
rison and his gang when we had returned to the shore,  
and also exchanging our batteau for a better still, we  
rade haste to improve the little daylight that remained.  
‘This camp, exactly twenty-nine miles from Mattawam-  
keag Point, by the way we had come, and about one  
Ihundred from Bangor by the river, was the last human  
habitation of any kind in this direction. Beyond, there  
‘was no trail ; and the river and lakes, by batteaux and  
ceanoes, was considered the only practicable route. We  
‘were about thirty miles by the river from the summit  
of Ktaada, which was in sight, though not more than  
‘twenty, perbaps, in a straight lin  
  
It being about the full of the moon, and a warm and

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KTAADN. 35  
  
pleasant evening, we decided to row five miles by moon-  
light to the head of the North Twin Lake, lest the wind  
should rise on the morrow. After one mile of river, oF  
‘what the boatmen call \* thoroughfare,” —for the river  
becomes at length only the connecting link between the  
lakes, —and some slight rapid which had been mostly  
made smooth water by the dam, we entered the North  
‘Twin Lake just after sundown, and steered across for  
the river “thoroughfare,” four miles distant. ‘This is @  
noble sheet of water, where one may get the impression  
which @ new country and a “lake of the woods” are  
fitted to create. ‘There was the smoke of no log-hut nor  
camp of any kind to greet us, stil less was any lover of  
nature or musing traveller watching our batteau from  
the distant hilla; not even the Indian hunter was there,  
for he rarely elimbs them, but hugs the river like oure  
selves, No face welcomed us but the fine fantastic  
sprays of free and happy evergreen trees, waving one  
above another in their ancient home. At first the red  
clouds hung over the western shore as gorgeously as if  
over a city, and the lake lay open to the light with even  
a civilized aspect, as if expecting trade and commerce,  
‘and towns and villas. We could distinguish the inlet to  
the South Twin, which is said to be the larger, where  
the shore was misty and blue, and it was worth the while  
to look thus through narrow opening across the entire  
expanse of a concealed lake to its own yet more dim and  
distant shore. ‘The shores rose gently to ranges of low  
hills covered with forests ; and though, in fact, the most  
valuable white pine timber, even about this lake, had  
been culled out, this would never have been suspected  
by the voyager. ‘The impression, which indeed corre  
sponded with the fact, was, as if we were upon a high

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36 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
tableland between the States and Canada, the northern  
side of which is drained by the St. John and Chaudiero  
the southern by the Penobscot and Kennebee. There  
‘was no bold mountainous shore, as we might have ex-  
pected, but only isolated hills and mountains rising hero  
and there from the plateau. ‘The country is an archi-  
pelago of lakes, —the lake-country of New England.  
‘Pheir levels vary but a few feet, and the boatmen, by  
short portages, oF by none at all, pass easily from one to  
another. ‘They say that. at very high water the Penob-  
seot and the Kennebee flow into each other, or at any  
rate, that you may lie with your face in the one and  
‘your toes in the other. Even the Penobscot and St.  
John have been connected by a canal, so that the lumber  
of the Allegash, instead of going down the St. Jobo,  
comes down the Penobscot; and the Indian's tradition,  
that the Penobscot once ran both ways for his conven-  
‘ence, i, in one sense, partially realized to-day.  
  
None of our party but MeCauslin had been above this  
lake, so we trasted to him to pilot us, and we could not  
Dut confess the importance of a pilot on these waters.  
‘While itis river, you will not easily forget which way is  
vp stream ; but when you enter a lake, the river is come  
pletely lost, and you scan the distant shores in vain to  
find where it comes in. A stranger is, for the time at  
least, lost, and must set about a voyage of discovery frst  
of all to find the river. To follow the windings of the  
shore when the lake is ten miles, or even more, in length,  
and of an irregalarty which will not soon be mapped,  
‘8 wearisome voyage, and will spend is time and his  
provisions. They tell a story of a gang of experienced  
‘woodmen sent to a location on this stfeam, who were  
‘thus lost in the wilderness of lakes. ‘They cut their way

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RTAADY. 87  
  
through thickets, and carried their baggage and their  
boats over from lake to lake, sometimes several miles.  
‘They carried into Millinocket Lake, which is on another  
stream, and is ten miles equare, and contains a hundred  
islands. They explored its shores thoroughly, and then  
carried into another, and another, and it was a week of  
toil and anxiety before they found the Penobscot River  
again, and then their provisions were exhausted, and  
they were obliged to return.  
  
‘While Uncle George steered for a emall island near  
“the head of the lake, now just visible, like a speck on  
the water, we rowed by tums swiftly over its surface,  
singing such boat-songs as we could remember. ‘The  
shores seemed at an indefinite distance in the moonlight.  
‘Occasionally we paused in our singing and rested on our  
‘oars, while we listened to hear if the wolves howled, for  
this is a common serenade, and my companions aifirmed  
that it was the most dismal and unearthly of sounds ;  
bat we heard none this time. If we did not hear, how  
‘ever, we did listen, not without @ reasonable expectation 5  
that at least I have to tell, —only some utterly uncivil-  
ized, big-throated owl hooted load and dismally in the  
drear and boughy wilderness, plainly not nervous about  
his solitary life, nor afraid to hear the echoes of his  
voice there. We remembered also that possibly moose  
were silently watching us from the distant coves, or  
‘some surly bear or timid caribou had been startled by  
‘our singing. Tt was with new emphasis that we sang.  
  
there the Canadian boat-song, —  
“Row, brothers row, the stream rans fst,  
‘The Rapids are near andthe daylight» past!"  
which describes precisely our own adventure, and was  
inspired by the experience of a similar kind of lit,

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38 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
for the rapids wero over near, and the daylight long  
ppast; the woods on shore looked dim, and many an  
Utawas' tide here emptied into the lke. a  
  
Why shonld wo yet our eal uofurt?  
‘There i ota breath the blue wave to cast!  
But, when the wind blows of the shore,  
O sweety we rst our weary oa”  
“Tawa! tide! this trembling moon,  
‘Shall te us oat ofr thy surges 000."  
  
At last we glided past the “green isle” which had  
‘been our landmark, all joining in the chorus; as if by  
‘the watery links of rivers and of lakes we were about  
to float over unmeasured zones of earth, bound on un~  
imaginable adventures, —  
  
“Salat of this gro isle! hear our prayers  
( grant us ooo! heavens and favoring ar"  
  
About nine o'clock we reached the river, and ran our  
boat into a natural haven between some rocks, and drew  
her out on the sand. ‘This camping-ground MeCavslin  
hhad been familiar with in his lumbering days, and ho  
now struck it unerringly in the moonlight, and we heard  
the sound of the rill which would supply us with cool  
‘water emptying into the lake. ‘The first business was to  
make a fire, an operation which was a little delayed by  
the wetness of the fuel and the ground, owing to the  
heavy showers of the afternoon. ‘The fire is the main  
comfort of the camp, whether in summer or winter, and  
is about as ample at one season as at another. It is as  
fell for cheerfulness as for warmth and dryness. Tt  
forms one side of the eamp ; one bright side at any rate.  
Some were dispersed to fetch in dead trees and boughs,  
‘while Uncle George felled the birches and beeches which  
stood convenient, and soon we had a fire some ten feet

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TAADY. 30  
  
long by three or four high, which rapidly dried the  
sand before it. ‘This was calculated to burn all night.  
‘We next proceeded to pitch our tent ; which operation  
‘was performed by sticking our two spike-poles into the  
ground in a slanting direction, about ten fect apart, for  
rafters, and then drawing our cotton cloth over them,  
‘and tying it down at the ends, leaving it open in front,  
shed-fashion, Bat this evening the wind carried the  
sparks on to the tent and bumed it. So we hastily drew  
‘up the batteau just within the edge of the woods before  
the fire, and propping up one side three or four feet  
high, spread the tent on the ground to lie on and with  
the comer of a blanket, or what more or Jess we could  
get to put over us, lay down with our heads and bodies  
‘under the boat, and our feet and legs on the sand toward  
the fire. At first we lay awake, talking of our course,  
fand finding oureelves in so convenient a posture for  
studying the heavens, with the moon and stars shining,  
in our faces, our conversation naturally turned upon  
astronomy, and we recounted by turns the most inter-  
esting discoveries in that science. But at length we  
composed ourselves seriously to sleep. It was inter-  
esting, when awakened at midnight, to watch the gro-  
tesque and fiend-like forms and motions of some one  
of the party, who, not being able to sleep, had got up  
silently to arouse the fire, and add fresh fuel, for a  
change ; now stealthily lugging dead tree from cut  
‘the dark, and heaving it on, now stirring up the embers  
with his fork, or tiptoeing about to observe the stars,  
watched, perchance, by half the prostrate party in  
breathless silence; so much the more intense because  
they were awake, while each supposed his neighbor  
sound asleep. Thus aroused, I too brought fresh fuel

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40 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
to the fire, and then rambled along the sandy sbore in  
the moonlight, hoping to meet @ moose, come down to  
drink, or else & wolf. ‘The litle rill tinkled the louder  
and peopled all the wilderness for me; and the glassy  
smoothness of the sleeping Inke, laving the shores of »  
new world, with the dark, fantastic rocks rising here and  
there from its surface, made a scene not easily described  
It has lef such an impression of stern, yet gentle, wild  
ress on my memory as will not soon be effaced. Not  
far from midnight we were one after another awakened  
by rain falling on our extremities; and as each was  
made aware of the fact by cold or wet, he drew a long  
sigh and then drew up his legs, until gradually wo had  
I sidled round from lying at right angles with the boat,  
{ill our bodies formed an acute angle with it, and wére  
wholly protected. When next we awoke, the moon and  
stars were ehining again, and there were signs of dawn  
in the east. Ihave been thus particular in order to con-  
vey some idea of a night in the woods.  
  
‘We had soon launched and loaded our boat, and,  
leaving our fire blazing, were off again before breakfast.  
‘The lumberers rarely trouble themselves to put out their  
fires, such is the dampness of the primitive forest; and  
thie ia one cause, no doubt, of the frequent fires in  
‘Maine, of which we hear so much on smoky days in  
‘Massachusetts. The forests are held cheap after the  
white pine bas been culled outs and the explorers and  
hunters pray for rain only to clear the atmosphere of  
‘smoke. ‘The woods were 80 wet today, however, that  
‘there was no danger of our fire spreading. After poling  
up half a mile of river, or thoroughfare, we rowed a mile  
‘across the foot of Pamadumcook Lake, which is the  
name given on the map to this whole chain of lakes, as

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TAADN. a  
  
if there was but one, though they are, in each instance,  
distinctly separated by a reach of the river, with its nar-  
row and rocky channel and its rapids. ‘This lake, which  
fs one of the largest, stretched northweat ten miles, to  
hills and mountains in the distance. MeCauslin pointed  
to some distant, and as yet inaccessible, forests of white  
pine, on the sides of mountain in that direction. ‘The  
Joe Merry Lakes, which lay between us and Moose-  
head, on the west, were recently, if they are not still  
surrounded by some of the best timbered land in the  
State” By another thoroughfare we passed into Deep  
Cove, a part of the same lake, which makes up two  
niles, toward the northeast, and rowing two miles across  
this, by another short thoroughfare, entered Ambejjis  
Lake.  
  
‘At the entrance to a lake we sometimes observed  
‘what is technically called “fencing stuf,” or the unhewn  
timbers of which booms are formed, either secured to-  
gether in the water, or laid up on the rocks and lashed  
to trees, for spring use. But it was always startling to  
discover 60 plain a tral of civilized man there. I re-  
member that I was strangely affected, when we were  
returning, by the sight of a ring-bolt well drilled into a  
rock, and fastened with lead, at the head of this solitary  
Ambejijis Lake.  
  
Tt was easy to se0 that driving logs must be an ex  
citing as well as arduous and dangerous business. All  
winter long the logger goes on piling up the trees which  
hhe has trimmed and hauled in some dry ravine at the  
head of @ stream, and then in the spring. he stands on  
the bank and whistles for Rain and ‘Thaw, ready to  
wring the perspiration out of his shirt to swell the tide,  
‘ill suddenly, with a whoop and halloo from him, ehute

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a2 THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
ting his eyes, as if to bid farewell tothe existing state of  
‘thigs,a fair proportion of his winter’s work goes scrame  
bling down the country, followed by his faithful dogs,  
‘Thaw and Rain and Freshet and Wind, the whole pack  
in fall ery, toward the Orono Mills. Every log is  
marked with the owner's name, cut in the sapwood with  
‘on axe or bored with an auger, so deep as not to be  
‘worn off in the driving, and yet not so as to injure the  
simber; and it requires considerable ingenuity to invent  
tew and simple marks where there are eo many owners.  
They have quite an alphabet of their own, which only  
the practised can read. One of my companions read off  
{rom his memorandum-book some marks of his own logs,  
mong which there were crosses, belts, crow’s feet, gir-  
les, &e, as, “Y—gindle— erow-foot” and various  
other devices. When the logs have run the gauntlet of  
innumerable rapids and falls, each on its own account,  
with more or less jamming and bruising, those bearing  
various owners’ marks being mixed up together, — since  
all must take advantage ofthe same freshet, —they are col-  
lected together at the heads of the lakes, and surrounded  
by a boom fence of floating logs, to prevent their being  
persed by the wind, and are thus towed altogether,  
like a flock of sheep, across the Inke, where there is no  
‘current, by a windlass, or boom-head, such as we some=  
‘times saw standing on an island or head-land, and,  
  
circumstances permit, with the aid of sails and oars  
Sometimes, notwithstanding, the logs are dispersed over  
‘many miles of lake surface in a few hours by winds and  
freshets, and thrown up on distant. shores, where the  
driver can pick up only one or two at a time, and re-  
turn with them to the thoroughfare; and before he gets  
his fock well through Ambejjis or Pamadumcook, he

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TAADY. 3  
  
‘makes many @ wet and uncomfortable camp on the  
shore. He must be able to navigate a log as if it were  
‘& canoe, and be as indifferent to cola and wet as a musk-  
rat, He uses « few efiicient tools, — « lever commonly  
‘of rock-maple, six or seven feet long, with a stout spike  
in it, strongly feruled on, and a long epike-pole, with  
1 screw at the end of the spike to make it hold. ‘The  
boys along shore learn to walk on floating logs as city  
‘boys on sidewalks. Sometimes the logs are thrown up  
‘on rocks in such positions as to be irrecoverable but  
by another freshet as high, or they jam together at  
rapids and falls, and acoumulate in vast piles, which the  
driver must start at the risk of his lif. Such is the  
umber business, which depends on many accidents, a¢  
the early freezing of the rivers, that the teams may get  
up in season, a sufficient freshet in the spring, to fetch  
the logs down, and many others. I quote Michanx on  
Lambering on the Kennebec, then the source of the  
best white-pine lamber carried to England. “The per~  
‘sons engaged in this branch of industry are generally emi  
‘grants from New Hampshire. .... In the summer they  
unite in small companies, and traverse these vast sol  
tudes in every direction, to ascertain the places in whict  
the pines abound. After cutting the grass and converting  
it into hay for the nourishment of the cattle to be em-  
ployed in their labor, they return home. In the begi  
ning of the winter they enter the forests again, establish  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
rapidly, the water atthe reid.  
Alo of tho river ls couslderably higher than at tho shores, —s0 mach  
to a1 to bo distinctly perceived by the eye of a epeciatr on the  
Danke, presenting an appearance like « turnpike road. ‘The lumber,

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44 ‘THE MAINE WOODS,  
  
‘themselves in huts covered with the bark of the canoe:  
bireh, or the arbor-vitw ; and, though the cold is so  
intense that the mercury sometimes remains for several  
‘weeks from 40° to 50° [Fahr.] below the point of cone  
gelation, they persevere, with unabated courage, in their  
work.” According to Springer, the company consists of  
choppers, swampers,— who make roads, — barker and  
loader, teamster, and cook. “When the trees are felled,  
they cut them into logs from fourteen to eighteen feet long,  
‘and, by means of their cattle, which they employ with  
great dexterity, drag them to the river, and after stamp-  
ing on them a mark of property, roll them on its frozen  
‘bosom. At the breaking of the ice, in the epring, they  
float down with the current... . . The logs that are not  
drawn the first year,” adds Michaux, “are attacked by  
lange worms, which form holes about two lines in diam-  
ter, in every direction ; but, if stripped of their bark,  
‘they will remain uninjured for thirty years.”  
  
Ambejijis, this quiet Sunday morning, struck me as  
‘the most beautiful lake we had scen. It is enid to be  
fone of the deepest. We bad the fairest view of Joe  
‘Merry, Double Top, and Ktaadn, from its surface. ‘The  
summit of the latter had a singularly flat, table-land ap-  
pearance, like a short highway, where demigod might  
be let down 16 take @ turn or two in an afternoon, to  
settle his dinner. We rowed a mile and a half to near  
the head of the lake, and, pushing through a field of lily-  
pads, landed, to cook our breakfast, by the side of a large  
rock, known to McCauslin. Our breakfast consisted of  
tea, with hard bread and pork, and fried salmon, which  
wwe ate with forks neatly whittled from alder-twigs, which  
grew there, off strips of birch-bark for plates. ‘The tea  
‘was black tea, without milk to color or sugar to sweeten

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KTAADN. 6  
  
it, and two tin dippers wore our tea-cups. ‘This bever-  
age is as indispensable to the loggers as to any gossiping  
‘old women in the land, and they, no doubt, derive great  
comfort from it, Here was the site of an old logger’s  
camp, remembered by MeCauslin, now overgrown with  
‘weeds and bushes. In the midst of a dense underwood  
wwe noticed a whole brick, on @ rock, in a small run,  
lean and red and square as in a brick-yard, which bad  
been brought thus far formerly for tamping. Som: of  
us afterward regretted that we had not carried this on  
‘with us to the top of the mountain, to be left there for our  
mark. It would certainly have been a simple evidence of  
Civilized man. MeCauslin eaid, that large wooden crosses,  
‘made of oak, atll sound, were sometimes found standing.  
in this wilderness, which were set up by the first Catholic  
missionaries who eame through to the Kennebee.  
  
In the next nine miles, which were the extent of our  
voyage, and which it took us the rest of the day to get  
lover, we rowed across several small lakes, poled up nu-  
‘merous rapids and thoroughfares, and carried over four  
portages. Iwill give the names and distances, for the  
Denefit of future tourists. Firs, after leaving Ambejiis  
Lake, we had a quarter of a mile of rapids to the port-  
‘age, or carry of ninety rods around Ambejijis Falls;  
  
   
  
   
  
then a mile and a half through Pascamagamet Lake,  
which is narrow and river-like, to the falls of the same  
name, — Ambejijis stream coming in on the right; then  
two miles through Katepskonegan Lake to the portage  
of ninety rods around Katepskonegan Falls, which name  
signifies“ earrying-place;’ — Passamagamet stream com-  
  
   
  
mus Lake, a slight expansion of the river, to the porte  
age of forty rods around the falls of the same name,—

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46 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘Katepskonegan stream coming in on the left; then three  
‘quarters of a mile through Aboljacarmegus Lake, simi-  
Jar to the last, to the portage of forty rods around the  
falls of the same name; then half a mile of rapid water  
to the Sowadnehunk dead-water, and the Aboljacknagesic  
stream,  
  
‘This is generally the order of names as you ascend the  
river: First, the lake, or, if there is no expansion, the  
dead-water; then the falls; then the stream emptying  
into the lake, or river above, all of the same name. First  
‘we came to Passamagamet Lake, then to Passamagamet  
Falls, then to Passamagamet stream, emptying in. ‘This  
order and identity of names, it will be peresived, is quite  
philosophical, since the dead-water or lake is always at  
Teast partially produced by the stream emptying in above s  
tnd the first fall below, which is the outlet of that lake,  
‘and where that tributary water makes its first plunge,  
also naturally bears the same name.  
  
At the portage around Ambejijis Falls I observed a  
pork-barrel on the shore, with a hole eight oF nine inches  
‘square cut in one side, which was set against an upright  
rock; but the bears, without turning or upsetting the  
Darrel, had gnawed a hole in the opposite side, which  
looked exactly like an enormous rat hole, big enough to  
put their heads in; and at the bottom of the barrel were  
still lef a few mangled and slabbered slices of pork. It  
is usual for the lumberers to leave such supplies as they  
cannot conveniently earry along with them at carries or  
‘camps, to which the next comers do not scruple to help  
themselves, they being the property, commonly, not of  
fan individual, but a company, who can afford to deal  
liberally.  
  
I will describe particularly how we got over some of

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KTAADN. ar  
  
these portages and rapids, in order that the reader may  
get an idea of the boatman’s life. At Ambejijis Falls,  
for instance, there was the roughest path imaginable cut,  
through the woods; at first up hill, a an angle of nearly  
forty-five degrees, over rocks and logs without end. ‘This  
‘was the manner of the portage. We firt carried over  
‘our baggage, and deposited it on the shore atthe other  
end; then returning to the battean, we dragged it up the  
hill by the painter, and onward, with frequent pauses,  
over half the portage, But this was a bungling way  
  
‘and would soon have worn out the boat. Commonly,  
three men walk over with a batteau weighing from three  
to five or six hundred pounds on their heads and shoul-  
ders, the tallest standing under the middle of the boat,  
which is turned over, and one at each end, or else there  
are two at the bows. More cannot well take hold at  
‘once. But this requires some practice, as well as strength,  
and is in any case extremely laborious, and wearing to  
the constitution, to follow. We were, on the whole,  
rather an invalid party, and could render our boatmen  
but lle assistance. Our two men at length took the  
‘atteau upon their shoulders, and, while two of us steadied  
it, to prevent it from rocking and wearing into their  
shoulders, on which they placed their hats folded, walked  
wravely over the remaining distance, with two or threo  
pauses In the same manner they accomplished the  
‘other portages. With this crushing weight they must  
climb and stumble along over fallen trees and slippery  
rocks of all sizes, where those who walked by the sides  
‘were continually brashed off, such was the narrowness  
of the path, But we were fortunate not to have to cut  
four path in the first place. Before we launched our  
beat, we scraped the bottom smooth again, with our

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43 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
knives, where it had rubbed on the rocks, to save frio-  
tion.  
  
‘To avoid the dificulties of the portage, our men deter~  
‘mined to “warp up” the Passamagamet Falls; 20 while  
the rest walked over the portage with the baggnge, I re-  
mained in the battean, to assist in warping up. We  
‘were soon in the midst of the rapids, which were more  
swift and tumultuous than any we had poled up, and had  
‘turned to the side of the stream for the purpose of warp-  
ing, when the boatmen, who felt some pride in their skill,  
and were ambitious to do something more than usual, for  
my benefit, as I surmised, took one more view of the  
rapids, or rather the falls; and, in answer to our ques-  
tion, whether we couldn't get up there, the other an-  
swered that he guessed he'd try it. So we pushed again  
into the midst of the stream, and began to struggle with  
the current. I sat in the middle of the boat to trim it,  
moving slightly to the right or left as it grazed a rock.  
‘With an uncertain and wavering motion we wound and  
Dolted our way up, until the bow was actually raised two  
feet above the stern at the steepest pitch and then, when  
everything depended upon his exertions, the bowman's  
pole snapped in two; but before he had time to take the  
‘spare one, which I reached him, he had saved himself  
‘with the fragment upon a rock; and so we got up.by  
hair's breadth and Uncle George exclaimed that that  
‘was never done before, and he had not tried it if he bad  
not known whom be had got in the bow, nor he in the  
bow, if he had not known him in the stern. At this  
place there was a regular portage cut through the woods,  
‘and our bontmen had never known a batteau to ascend  
the falls. As near as I can remember, there was a per-  
pendicular fall here, at the worst place of the whole

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KTAADN. 49  
  
‘Penobscot River, two or three feet at least. T could not  
sufficiently admire the skill und coolness with which they  
performed this feat, never speaking to each other. ‘The  
bowman, not looking behind, but knowing exactly what  
the other is about, works as if he worked alone. Now  
sounding in vain for a bottom in fifteen feet of water,  
hile the boat falls back several rods, held straight only  
‘with the greatest skill and exertion; or, while the stern-  
‘man obstinately holds his ground, like a turtle, the bow=  
san springs from side to side with wonderful suppleness  
and dexterity, scanning the rapids and the rocks with  
‘thousand eyes; and now, having got a bite at ast, with  
‘lusty shove, which makes his pole bend and quiver, and  
the whole boat tremble, he gains a few feet upon the  
river. To add to the danger, the poles are liable at any  
time to be caught between the rocks, and wrenched out  
of their hands, leaving them at the mercy of the rapids,  
—the rocks, as it were, lying in wait, like so many alli-  
gators, to catch them in their teeth, and jerk them from  
your hands, before you have stolen an effectual shove  
‘against their palates. ‘The pole is set close to the boat,  
and the prow is made to overshoot, and just turn the  
corners of the rocks, in the very teeth of the rapids.  
Nothing but the Jength and lightness, and the slight  
draught of the battenu, enables them to make any head~  
way. ‘The bowman must quickly choose his course;  
there is no time to deliberate, Frequently the boat is  
shoved between rocks where both sides toueb, and the  
waters on either hand are a perfect maelstrom.  
  
Half a mile above this, two of us tried our bands at  
poling up a slight rapid; and we were just surmounting  
the last difficulty when an unlucky rock confounded our  
calculations; and while the hattenn was sweeping round

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50 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
irrecoverably amid the whirlpool, we were obliged to  
resign the poles to more skilful hands.  
‘Katepskonegan is one of the shallowest and weediest  
of the lakes, and looked as if it might abound in pick-  
rel. ‘The falls of the same name, where we stopped to  
diee, are considerable and quite picturesque. Here Ui  
ele George had seen trout caught by the barrelfil; bat  
they would not rise to our bait at this hour. Halfway  
over this carry, thus far in the Maine wilderness on its  
way to the Provinces, we noticed a Turze, flaming, Oak  
Hall hand-bill about two feet long, wrapped round the  
trunk of a pine, from which the bark had been stript  
and to which it was fast glued by the pitch. ‘This should  
be recorded among the advantages of this mode of ad-  
vertising, that so, possibly, even the bears and wolves,  
moose, deer, otter, and beaver, not to mention the Indian,  
may learn where they can fit themselves according to the  
Jatest fashion, or, atleast, recover some of their own lost  
garments. We christened this, the Oak Hall carry.  
‘The forenoon was as serene and placid on this wild  
stream in the woods, as we are apt to imagine that Sun-  
day in summer usually is in Massachusetts. We were  
‘occasionally startled by the seream of a bald-eagle, sai  
ing over the stream in front of our batteau; or of the  
{ish-hawks, on whom he levies his contributions. ‘There  
were, at intervals, small meadows of a few acres on the  
sides of the stream, waving with uncut grass, which at-  
‘tracted the attention of our boatmen, who regretted that  
they were not nearer to their clearings, and caleulated  
hhow many stacks they might cut. Two or three men  
sometimes spend the summer by themselves, cutting the  
grass in these meadows, to sell to the loggers in the wi  
ter, since it will fetch a higher price on the spot than ia

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RTAADY. a1  
  
any market in the State. On a small isle, covered with  
this kind of rush, or cut grass, on which we landed, to con-  
sult about our further course, we noticed the recent track  
‘of a moose, a large, roundish hole, in the soft wet ground,  
cevincing the great size and weight of the animal that  
made it. ‘They are fond of the water, and visit all theso  
{sland-meadows, swimming as easily from island to island  
as they make their way through the thickets on land.  
‘Now and then we passed what McCauslin called a poke-  
logan, an Indian term for what the drivers might have  
reason to call a poke-logs-in, an inlet that leads nowhere.  
If you get in, you have got to get out again the same  
‘way. These, and the frequent “ run-rounds” which come  
{nto the river again, would embarrass an inexperienced  
‘voyager not a litle.  
  
The carry around Pockwockomus Falls was exceed~  
ingly rough and rocky, the batteau having to be lifted  
directly from the water up four or five feet on to a rock,  
‘and launched again down a similar bank. The rocks on  
this portage were covered with the dents made by the  
spikes in the lumberérs? boots while staggering over  
‘under the weight of their batteaux ; and you could see  
‘where the surface of some large rocks on which they  
hhad rested their batteaux was worn quite smooth with ”  
use. As it was, we had carried over but half the usual  
portage at this place for this stage of the water, and  
launched our boat in the smooth wave just curving to  
the fall, prepared to struggle with the most violent rapid  
‘we had to encounter. ‘The rest of the party walked over  
the remainder of the portage, while I remained with the  
boatmen to assist in warping up. One had to hold the  
boat while the others got in to prevent it from going  
over the falls. When we had pushed up the rapids as

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32. ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
far as possible, Keeping close to the shore, Tom seized  
the painter and leaped out upon a rock just visible in  
the water, but he lost his footing, notwithstanding hit  
spiked boots, and was instantly amid the rapids; but  
recovering himself by good luck, and reaching another  
rock, ho passed the painter to me, who had followed  
hhim, and took his place again in the tows. Learing  
{from rock to rock in the shoal water, close to the share,  
‘and now and then getting a bite with the rope round au  
upright one, I held the boat while one reset his pole,  
fand then all three forced it upward against any rapid.  
‘Thi was “warping up.” When a part of us walked  
round at such a place, we generally took the precaution  
to take out the most valuable part of the baggage, for  
fear of being swamped.  
  
“As we poled up a swift rapid for half a mile above  
Aboljacarmegus Falls, some of the party read their own  
marks on the huge logs which lay piled up high and dry  
‘on the rocks on either hand, the relics probably of a jam  
which had taken place here in the Great Freshet in the  
spring. Many of these would have to wait for another  
great freshet, perchance, if they lasted #0 long, before  
‘they could be got off: It was singular enough to meet  
with property of theirs which they had never seen, and  
where they had never been before, thus detained by  
freshets and rocks when on its way to them. Methinks  
that must be where all my property lies, cast up on the  
rocks on some distant and unexplored stream, and wai  
{ng for an unheard-of freshet to fetch it down. make  
hhaste, ye gods, with your winds and rains, and start the  
jam before it rots!  
  
‘The last half-mile carried us to the Sowadnchunk  
dead-water, so called from the stream of the same name,

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KTAADN. 58.  
  
signifying “running between mountains,” an important  
tributary which comes ina mile above. Here we de-  
ided to camp, about twenty miles from the Dam, at the  
‘month of Murch Brook and the Aboljacknagesic, moun-  
tain streams, broad off from Ktaadn, and about a dozen  
miles from its summit; having made fifteen miles this  
aay  
  
‘We had been told by MeCauslin that we should here  
find trout enough : 0, while some prepared the camp,  
the rest fell to fling, Seizing the birch-poles which  
‘some party of Indians, or white hunters, had left on the  
shore, and baiting our hooks with pork, and with trout,  
1s soon as they were caught, we cast oar lines into the  
month of the Aboljacknagesic, a clear, swift, shallow  
stream, which came in from Kiaadn. Instantly a shoal  
‘of white chivin (Leuoiset pulchelli), silvery roaches,  
‘cousin-rout, or what not, large and small, prowling  
thereabouts, fell upon our bait, and one after another  
‘were landed amidst the bushes. Anon their cousins,  
the true trout, took their turn, and alternately the  
speckled trout, and the silvery roaches, ewallowed the  
bait as fast as we could throw in; and the finest speci-  
‘mens of both that I have ever seen, the largest one  
‘weighing three pounds, were heaved upon the shore,  
‘though at first in vain, to wriggle down into the water  
again; for we stood in the boat; but soon we learned to  
remedy this evil: for one, who had lost his hook, stood  
fon shore to catch them as they fell in a perfect shower  
around him,— sometimes, wet and slippery, full in his  
face and bosom, as his arms were outstretched to receive  
them. While yet alive, before their tints had faded,  
they glistened like the fairest flowers, the product of  
primitive rivers; and he could hardly trust his senses,

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a ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
1s he stood over them, that these jewels should have  
fawam away in that Aboljacknagesio water for 60 long,  
0 many dark ages ;— these bright fluviatile flowers,  
seen of Indians only, made beautiful, the Lord only  
knows why, to swim there! I could understand better  
for thia, the truth of mythology, the fables of Proteus,  
and all those beautiful sea-monstere, — how all history,  
indeed, put to a terrestrial use, is mere history, but  
put to a celestial, ia mythology always.  
  
But there is the rough voice of Uncle George, who  
commands at the frying-pan, to send over what you 've  
got, and then you may stay till morning. ‘The pork  
sizzles, and cries for fish. Luckily for the foolish race,  
‘and this particularly foolish generation of trout, the  
night shut down at last, not a little deepened by the  
dark side of Ktaadn, which, like a permanent shadow,  
reared itself from the eastern bank. Lescarbot, writing  
in 1609, tells us that the Sieur Champdoré, who, with  
‘one of the people of the Bieur de Monts, ascended some  
‘ty leagues up the St. John in 1608, found the fish 60  
plenty, “qu’en mettant la chaudiére eur le feu ils on avo  
cut pris euffisamment pour eux disner avant que Veau fust  
chaude.” ‘Their descendants here are no less numergus.  
So we accompanied Tom into the woods to cut sedir-  
twigs for our bed. While he went ahead with the axe,  
‘and lopt off the smallest twigs of the flat-leaved cedar,  
the arbor-vite of the gardens, we gathered them up,  
and returned with them to the boat, until it was loaded.  
Our bed was made with as much care and skill as a  
roof is shingled; beginning at the foot, and laying the  
twig end of the cedar upward, we advanced to the  
hhead, a course at a time, thus successively covering the  
stub-ends, and producing a soft and level bed. For us

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KTAADY. 35  
  
six it was about ten feet long by six in breadth. This  
‘time we lay under our tent, having pitched it more pra-  
dently with reference to the wind and the flame, and the  
usual huge fire blazed in front. Supper was eaten off  
flange log, which some freshet had thrown up. This  
night we bad a dish of arbor-vite, or cedar-tea, which the  
Iumberer sometimes uses when other herbs fail, —  
  
A quarto arborsite,  
  
‘To make him song aod mighty,"  
but I had no wish to repeat the experiment. It had  
‘too medicinal a taste for my palate. There was the  
skeleton of a moose here, whose bones some Indian  
hhunters had picked on this very spot.  
  
In the night I dreamed of trout-fishing; and, when at  
length T awoke, it seemed a fable that this painted fish  
swam there s0 near my couch, and rose to our hooks the  
last evening, and I doubted if I had not dreamed it all.  
So I arose before dawn to test its truth, while my com  
anions were still sleeping. ‘There stood Ktaadn with  
istinet and cloudless outline in the moonlight; and the  
rippling of the rapids was the only sound to break the  
stillness. Standing on the shore, I once more east my  
line into the stream, and found the dream to be real and  
the fable true. ‘The speckled trout and silvery roach,  
like flying-fsh, sped swiftly through the moonlight  
deszribing bright arcs on the dark side of Ktaadn, until  
t, now fading into daylight, brought satiety to  
my mind, and the minds of my companions, who had  
Joined me.  
  
By six o'clock, having mounted our packs and a good  
Dblanketful of trout, ready dressed, and swung up such  
‘baggage and provision as we wished to leave behind, upon  
‘the tops of saplings, to be out of the reach of bears, wa

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56 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
started for the summit of the mountain, distant, as Uncle  
George said the boatmen called it, about four miles, but  
as I judged, and as it proved, nearer fourteen. He had  
never been any nearer the mountain than this, and there  
‘was not the slightest trace of man to guide us farther in  
thie direction. At first, pushing a few rods up the Abole  
Jacknagesic, or “open-land stream,” we fastened our  
batteau to a tree, and travelled up the north side, through  
burnt lands, now partially overgrown with young aspens,  
‘and other shrubbery; but soon, recrossing this stream,  
‘where it was about fity or sixty feet wide, upon a jam  
of logs and rocks, —and you could eross it by this means  
‘almost anywhere,—we struck at once for the highest  
peak, over mile or more of comparatively open land, still,  
very gradually ascending the while. Here it fell to my  
lot, as the oldest mountain-limber, to take the lead. So,  
scanning the woody side of the mountain, which lay still,  
ft an indefinite distance, stretched out some seven or  
eight miles in Tength before us, we determined to steer  
directly for the base of the highest. peak, leaving a large  
slide, by which, as I have since learned, some of our  
predecessors ascended, on our left. This course would  
lead us parallel to a dark seam im the forest, which  
marked the bed of a torrent, and over a slight spur,  
which extended southward from the main mountain, from  
‘whose bare summit we could get an outlook over the  
country, and climb directly up the peak, which would  
then be close at hand. Seen from this point, a bare  
‘idge at the extremity of the open land, Ktaadn present  
ed a different aspect from any mountain I have seen,  
there being a greater proportion of naked rock rising  
abruptly from the forest; and we looked up at this blue  
Darrier as if it were some fragment of a wall which

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RTAADN. oT  
  
   
  
‘anciently bounded the earth in that direct Setting  
the compass for a northeast course, which was the bear-  
ing of the southern base of the highest peak, we were  
toon buried in the woods.  
  
‘We soon began to mect with traces of bears and  
moose, and those of rabbits were everywhere visible.  
‘The tracks of moose, more or less recent, to speak lter-  
ally, covered every square rod on the sides of the moun-  
tain; and these animals are probably more nomerous  
there now than ever before, being driven int this wilder-  
ness, from all sides, by the settlements. ‘The track of  
full-grown moose is like that of a cow, oF larger, and of  
‘the young, like that of a calf. Sometimes we found our-  
scives travelling in faint paths, which they had made,  
Tike cow-paths in the woods, only far more indistint,  
bing rather openings, affording imperfect vistas through  
the dense underwood, than trodden paths; and every-  
where the twigs had been browsed by them, clipt as  
smoothly a8 if by a knife. ‘The bark of trees was stript  
up by them to the height of eight or nine fect, in long,  
narvow strips, an inch wide, sill showing the distinct  
marks of their teeth. We expected nothing less than to  
meet a herd of them every moment, and our Nimrod  
Iheld his shooting-iron in readinese; but we did not go  
‘ut of our way to look for them, and, though numerous,  
they are so wary that the unskilul hunter might range  
the forest long time before he could get sight of one.  
‘They aro sometimes dangerous to encounter, and will  
not turn out for the hunter, but furiously rush upoo him  
and trample him to death, unless he is lucky enough to  
faveid them by dodging round a tree. ‘The largest aro  
arly as Inrge as a horse, and weigh sometimes one thous  
sand pounds; and itis said that they can step over a five  
  
a

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88 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
feet gate in their ordinary walk. ‘They are described as  
excoedingly awkward-looking animals, with their long lege  
and short bodies, making a ludicrous figure when in full  
run, but making great headway nevertheless. Tt seemed  
mystery to us how they could thread these woods,  
which it required all our suppleness to accompli  
climbing, stooping, and winding, alternately. ‘They aro  
said to drop their long and branching. horns, which  
usually spread five or six feet, on their backs, and make  
their way easily by the weight of their bodies. Our  
oatmen said, but I know not with how much truth, that  
their horns are apt tobe gnawed away by vermin while  
they sleep. Their flesh, which is more like beef than  
‘venison, is common in Bangor market,  
  
‘We had proceeded on thus seven or eight miles, till  
about noon, with frequent pauses to refresh the weary  
‘ones, erossing a considerable mountain stream, which we  
conjectured to be Murch Brook, at whose mouth we had  
‘camped, all the time in woods, without having once seen  
‘the summit, and rising very gradually, when the boat-  
‘men, beginning to despair @ little, and fearing that we  
‘were leaving the mountain on one side of us, for they  
Ihad not entire faith in the compass, McCauslin climbed a  
tree, from the top of which he could see the peak, when  
it appeared that we had not swerved from a right lino,  
the compass down below still ranging with his arm, which  
pointed to the summit. By the side of cool mountain  
Fill, amid the woods, where the water began to partake  
of the purity and transparency of the air, we stopped to  
‘cook some of our fishes, which we had brought thus far  
in order to save our hard bread and pork, in the use of  
which we had put ourselves on short allowance. We  
soon had a fire blazing, and stood around it, under the

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KTAADN. 39,  
  
damp and sombre forest of firs and birches, each with a  
sharpened stick, three or four feet in length, upon which  
he had epitted his trout, or roach, previously well gushed  
and salted, our sticks radiating like the spokes of a wheel  
from one centre, and each crowding his particular fish  
into the most desirable exposure, not with the truest re-  
gard always to bis neighbor's rights. ‘Thus we regaled  
ourselves, drinking meanwhile at the epring, till one  
‘man's pack, at least, was considerably lightened, when  
we again took up our line of march.  
  
At length we reached an elevation sufficiently bare to  
afford a view of the summit till distant and blue, almost  
fas if retreating from us. A torrent, which proved to be  
‘the same we had crossed, was seen tumbling down in  
front, literally from out of the clouds. But this glimpse  
‘at our whereabouts was soon lost, and we were buried in  
the woods again. ‘The wood was chiefly yellow birch,  
spruce, fir, mountain-ash, or round-wood, as the Maine  
people call it, and moose-wood. It was the worst  
of travelling ; sometimes like the densest scrub-oak.  
patches with us. ‘The comnel, or bunch-berries, were  
very abundant, as well as Solomon's seal and moose-  
berries. Blueberries were distributed along our whole  
route; and in one placo the bushes were drooping with  
the weight of the fruit, still as fresh as ever. It was  
the 7th of September. Such patches afforded @ grate-  
ful repast, and served to bait the tired party forward.  
‘When any lagged behind, the ery of “blueberries” was  
‘most effectual to bring them up. Even at this elevation  
wwe passed through a moose-yard, formed by a large flat  
rock, four or five rods squere, where they tread down  
the snow in winter. At length, fearing that if we held  
the direct course to the summit, we ehould not find any

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60 ‘THE MATNE WOODS.  
  
‘water near our camping-ground, we gradually swerved  
to the sees, till, at four o'clock, we struck again the tore  
rent which I have mentioned, and here, in view of the  
‘summit, the weary party decided to camp that night  
‘While my companions were secking a suitable spot  
for this purpose, I improved the little daylight that was  
lef, in climbing the mountain alone. We were in a deep  
‘an? narrow ravine, sloping up to the clouds, at an angle  
of nearly forty-five degrees, and hemmed in by walls of  
rock, which were at first covered with low trees, then  
with impenetrable thickets of scragey birches and spruce-  
trees, and with moss, but at last bare of all vegetation  
‘but lichens, and almost continually draped in cloud  
Following up the course of the torrent which occupied  
‘hia, —and I mean to lay some emphasis on this word  
up,— polling myself up by the side of perpendicular  
falls of twenty or thirty feet, by the roots of firs and  
birches, and then, perhaps, walking a level rod or two in  
the thin stream, for it ok up the whole road, ascending  
bby huge steps, as it were, a giant’s stairway, down which  
a river flowed, I had soon cleared the trees, and paused  
‘on the successive shelves, to look back over the country.  
‘The torrent was from fiftcen to thirty feet wide, without  
a tributary, and seemingly not diminishing in breadth as  
T advanced ; but still it eame rushing and roaring down,  
with a copious tide, over and amidst masses of bare rock,  
from the very clouds, as though a waterspout had just  
burst over the mountain. Leaving this at lat, I began  
to work my way, scarcely less arduous than Satan’s an-  
ciently through Chaos, up the nearest, though not the  
highest peak. At first scrambling on all fours over the  
tops of ancient black spruce-trees (Abies nigra), old as  
the flood, from two to ten or twelve feet in height, their

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TAADY. 1  
  
tops flat and spreading, and their foliage blue, and 1i  
with old, aa if for centuries they had ceased growi  
upward against the bleak sky, the solid cold. I walked  
some good rods erect upon the tops of these trees, which  
‘were overgrown with moss and mountain-cranberries.  
It seemed that in the course of time they had filed up  
the intervals between the huge rocks, and the cold wind  
‘had uniformly levelled all over. Here the principle of  
vegetation was hard put to it, ‘There was apparently  
fa belt of this kind running quite round the mountain  
though, perhaps, nowhere so remarkable as here. Once  
slamping through, I looked down ten feet, into a dar}  
‘and cavernous region, and saw the stem of a spruce, ot  
whose top I stood, as on mass of coarse basket-work  
fully nine inches in diameter at the ground. ‘Thess  
holes were bears’ dens, and the bears were even then  
‘tt home. This was the sort of garden T made my way  
‘over, for an eighth of a mile, at the isk, it is true, of \*  
treading on some of the, plants, not secing any path  
through it, —certainly the most treacherous and porou  
cocntry I ever travelled,  
"Nigh foundered on he fares,  
  
“Treading th crude consatnce, half on foot  
  
Half ying.”  
But nothing could exceed the tonghness of the twigs, —  
not one snapped under my weight, for they had slowly  
grown. Having slumped, scrambled, rolled, bounced,  
‘and walked, by turns, over this scragay country, I ar-  
rived upon a side-hill, or rather side-mountain, where  
rocks, gray, silent rocks, were the flocks and herds that  
pastured, chewing a rocky end at sunset. ‘They looked  
‘at me with hard gray eyes, without a bleat or a low.  
‘This brought me to the skirt of a cloud, and bounded

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62 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
ry walk that wight, But I had already seen that Maine  
country when I turned about, waving, flowing, rippling,  
down below.  
  
‘When I returned to my companions, they had select-  
‘ed a camping-ground on the torrent’s edge, and were  
resting on the ground; one was on the sick list, rolled  
in a blanket, on a damp shelf of rock. It was a savage  
sand dreary scenery enough ; s0 wildly rough, that they  
looked long to find a level and open space for the tent.  
‘We could not well camp higher, for want of fuel; and  
the trees here seemed so evergreen and sappy, that we  
‘almost doubted if they would acknowledge the influence  
of fire; but fre prevailed at last, and blazed here, too,  
like a good citizen of the world, Even at this height  
wwe met with frequent traces of moose, as well as of  
bears. As here was no cedar, we made our bed of  
coarser feathered spruce ; but at any rate the feathers  
were plucked from the live tree. It was, perhaps, even  
amore grand and desolate place for a night’s lodging  
‘than the summit would have been, being in the neigh-  
Dorhood of those wild trees, and of the torrent. Some  
sore aerial and finer-spirited winds rushed and roared  
‘through the ravine all night, from time to time arousing  
‘our fre, and dispersing the embers about. Tt was as if  
wwe lay in the very nest of a young whirlwind. At mid-  
night, one of my bedfellows, being startled in his dreams  
by the sudden blazing up to its top of a firtree, whose  
green boughs were dried by the heat, sprang up, with a  
‘ery, from his bed, thinking the world on fire, and drew  
‘the whole camp after him.  
  
Jn the morning, after whetting our appetite on some  
raw pork, a wafer of hard bread, and a dipper of cone  
Gensed cloud or waterspout, we all together began to

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KTAADN. 6  
  
make our way up the falls, which I have described ; this  
time choosing the right hand, or highest peak, which waa  
not the one I had approached before. But soon my.  
companions were lost to my sight behind the mountain  
Fidge in my rear, which still seemed ever retreating be-  
fore me, and I climbed alone over huge rocks, loosely  
poised, a mile or more, still edging toward the clouds;  
for though the day was clear elsewhere, the summit was  
concealed by mist. Tho mountain seemed a vast aggre-  
gation of loose rocks, as if wome time it had rained rocks,  
‘and they lay as they fell on the mountain sides, nowhere  
fairly at rest, but leaning on each other, all rocking-  
stones, with cavities between, but scarcely any soil oF  
smoother shelf, ‘They were the raw materials of @  
planet dropped from an unseen quarry, which the vast  
chemistry of nature would anon work up, or work down,  
{nto the smiling and verdant plains and valleys of earth.  
‘This was an undone extremity of the globe ; as in lignite,  
‘we see coal in the process of formation.  
  
‘At length I entered within the skirts of the cloud  
which seemed forever drifting over the summit, and yet  
‘would never be gone, but was generated out of that  
pure air as fast as it lowed away ; and when, a quarter  
of a mile farther, I reached the summit of the ridge,  
hich those who have seen in clearer weather say is  
‘about five miles long, and contains a thousand acres of  
table-land, I was deep within the hostile ranks of clouds,  
and all objects were obscured by them. Now the wind  
would blow me out a yard of clear sunlight, wherein I  
stood 5 then a gray, dawning light was all it could ac-  
complish, the cloud-line ever rising and falling with the  
wind’s intensity. Sometimes it seemed as if the summit  
would be cleared in a few moments, and smile in sune

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4 ‘THE MAINE WooDs,  
  
‘shine: but what was gained on one side was lost on  
‘another. It was like sitting in a chimney and waiting  
for the smoke to blow away. It was, in fact, a cloud  
factory,—these were the cloud-works, and the  
turned them off done from the cool, bare rocks. Ocea-  
sionally, when the windy columns broke in to me, I  
caught sight of a dark, damp crag to the right or left  
the mist driving ceaselessly between it and me. Tt re-  
‘minded me of the ereations of the old epie and dramatio  
poets, of Atlas, Vulcan, the Cyclops, and Prometheus.  
‘Such was Caucasus and the rock where Promethens was  
ound. ABschylus had no doubt visited such scenery as  
this, Yt was vast, Titanic, and such as man never in-  
Ihabitel, Some part of the beholder, even some vital  
part, ecems to escape through the loose grating of  
ribs as he ascends He is more lone than you can  
imagine. ‘There is less of substantial thought and fair  
understanding in him, than in the plains where men  
inhabit. His reason is dispersed and shadowy, more  
thin and subfile, ike the air. Vast, Titanic, inhuman  
Nature has got him at disadvantage, caught him alone,  
fand pilfers him of some of his divine faculty. She  
does not smile on him as in the plains. She seems to  
say sternly, why came ye here before your time? T'  
‘ground is not prepared for you. Is it not enough that I  
‘smile in the valleys? have never made this soil for  
thy feet, this air for thy breathing, these rocks for thy  
neighbors. I cannot pity nor fondle thee here, but for-  
ever relentlessly drive thee hence to where I am kind.  
‘Why seck me where I have not called thee, and then  
complain because you find mo but a stepmother?  
Shouldst thou freeze or starve, or shudder thy Ii  
way, here is no shrine, nor altar, nor any access to  
my ear. |)

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KTAADN. 65  
  
‘Gans and ancient Night, I come n0 py  
With purpose to explore or to disturb  
  
‘The secrets of your realm, bat - » -  
ce mam may  
Lies through your spacions empire up to light”  
  
J} rhe tops of mountains are among the unfinished parts  
Af the globe, whither it is a slight ineult to the gods 10  
climb and pry into their secrets, and try their effect om  
our humanity. // Only daring and insolent men, per-  
bance, go therey| Simple races, as savages, do not  
climb mountains, — their tops are sacred and mysterious  
tracta never visited by them. ' Pomola is always angry  
with those who climb to the suramit of Ktands,  
‘According to Jackson, who, in is eapacity of geologi  
cal surveyor of the State, has accurately measured it, —  
the altitude of Kuaadn is 5,800 feet, or a little more  
than one mile above the level of the sea,— and he adds,  
It is then evidently the highest point in the State of  
‘Maine, and is the most abrupt granite mountain in New  
England” The peculiarities of that spacious tableland  
on which T was standing, as well as the remarkable  
temi-ireular precipice or basin on the eastern side,  
were all concealed by the mist: I had brought my  
whole pack to the top, not knowing but I should have  
to make my descent to the river, and possibly to the  
settled portion of the State alone, and by some other  
route, and wishing to have a complete outfit with me.  
But at length, fearing that my companions would be  
anxious to reach the river before night, and knowing  
that the clouds might rest on the mountain for days, I  
‘was compelled to descend. Occasionally, as I camo  
dows, the wind would blow me a vista open, through  
  
which T could see the country eastward, boundless for

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66 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
ests, and lakes, and streams, gleaming in the sun, some  
‘of them emptying into the East Branch. ‘There were  
‘also new mountains in sight in that direction. Now and  
‘then some small bird of the sparrow family would lit  
away before me, unable to command its course, like a  
fragment of the gray rock blown off by the wind.  
  
T found my companions where I had left them, on the  
side of the peak, gathering the mountain cranberries,  
which filled every crevice between the rocks, together  
with blueberries, which had a spicier flavor the higher  
up they grew, but were not the less agreeable to our  
palates. When the country is settled, and roads are  
made, these cranberries will perhaps become ain article  
of commerce. From this elevation, just on the skirts of  
the clouds, we could overlook the country, west and  
south, for a hundred miles. ‘There it was, the State of  
Maine, which we had seen on the map, but not much  
like that, — immeasurable forest for the sun to shine on,  
that eastern stuff we hear of in Massachusetts. No  
clearing, no house. It did not look as if a solitary trav-  
eller had eut 60 much as a walking-tick there. Count-  
Jess lakes,— Moosehead in the southwest, forty ‘miles  
long by ten wide, like @ gleaming silver platter at the  
‘end of the table; Chesuncook, eighteen long by threo  
wide, without an island ; Millinocket, on the south, wit  
its hundred islands; and a hundred others without a  
name; and mountains also, whose names, for the most  
part, are known only to the Indians. ‘The forest looked  
like a firm grass sward, and the effect of these lakes in  
its midst has been well compared, by one who has since  
  
ed this same spot, to that of a mirror broken into a  
thousand fragments, and wildly scattered over the grass,  
reflecting the full blaze of the sun.” It was a large

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KTAADY. 67  
  
farm for somebody, when cleared. According to tho  
Guzetteer, which was printed before the boundary ques-  
tion was settled, this single Penobscot county, in which  
wwe were, was"larger than the whole State of Vermont,  
with its fourteen counties; and this was only a part of  
the wild lands of Maine. We are concerned now, how-  
fever, about natural, not political limits. We were about  
eighty miles, as the bird fies, from Bangor, or one hun  
dred and fifteen, as we had rode, and walked, and pad-  
dled. We had to console ourselves with the reflection  
‘that this view was probably as good as that from the  
peak, as far as it went; and what were a mountain with-  
‘out its attendant clouds and mists? ourselves,  
neither Bailey nor Jackson had obiained a clear view  
from the summit,  
  
Setting out on our return to the river, still at an early  
hour in the day, we decided to follow the course of the  
torrent, which we supposed to be Murch Brook, as long  
1s it would not lead us too far out of our way. We thus  
travelled about four miles in the very torrent itself, con  
‘timually crossing and recrossing it, leaping from rock to  
rock, and jumping with the stream down falls of seven  
or eight feet, or sometimes sliding down on our backs in  
‘thin sheet of water. This ravine had been the scene  
of an extraordinary freshet in the epring, apparently ac-  
‘companied by a slide from the mountain. Tt must have  
been filled with a stream of stones and water, at least  
twenty feet above the present level of the torrent. For  
rod or two, on either side ofits channel, the trees were  
barked and splintered up to their tops, the birches bent  
over, twisted, and sometimes finely split, like a stable-  
broom ; some, a foot in diameter, snapped off, and whole  
clumps of trees bent over with the weight of rocks piled

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68 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
‘on them. In one place we noticed a rock, two or three  
feet in diameter, lodged nearly twenty feet high in the  
crotch of a tree. For the whole four miles, we aw but  
‘one rill emptying in, and the volume of water did not  
‘seem to be inereased from the firs. We travelled thus  
very rapidly with a downward impetus, and grew re«  
markably expert at leaping from rock to rock, for leap  
‘we must, and leap we did, whether there was any rock  
‘at the right distance or not. It was a pleasant picture  
‘wen the foremost turned about and looked up the wind-  
ing ravine, walled in with rocks. and the green forest, to  
‘ee, at intervals of rod or two, a red-shirted or green-  
Jacketed mountaineer against the white torrent, leaping  
down the channel with his pack on his back, or pausing  
‘upon @ convenient rock in the midst of the torrent to  
mend a rent in his clothes, or unstrap the dipper at his  
belt to take a draught of the water. At one place we  
were startled by seeing, on a little sandy shelf by the  
tide of the stream, the fresh print of a man's foot, and  
for a moment realized how Robinson Crusoe felt in a  
similar case; but at last we remembered that we had  
struck this stream on oar way up, though we could not  
have told where, and one had descended into the ravine  
for a drink. ‘The cool air above, and the continual  
bathing of our bodies in mountain water, alternate foot,  
sitz, douche, and plunge baths, made this walk exceed-  
ingly refreshing, and we had travelled only mile or  
‘twa, after leaving the torrent, before every thread of our  
clothes was as dry as usual, owing perhaps to a peculiar  
‘quality in the atmosphere.  
  
After leaving the torrent, being in doubt about our  
course, ‘Tom threw down his pack at the foot of the lof:  
test spruce tree at hand, and shinred up the bare trunky

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KTAADN. 69  
  
some twenty feet, and then climbed through the green  
tower, los to our sight, until he held the topmost spray  
in his hand. MeCauslin, in his younger days, had  
marched through the wilderness with a body of troops,  
‘under General Somebody, and with one other man dia all  
the scouting and spying service. ‘The General's word  
‘was, “Throw down the top of that tree,” and there was no  
tree in the Maine woods go high that it did not lose its  
top in euch a case, I have heard a story of two men  
being lost once in these woods, nearer to the settlements,  
‘than this, who climbed the loftiest pine they could find,  
some six feet in diameter at the ground, from whose  
top they discovered a solitary clearing and its smoke.  
‘When at this height, some two hundred feet from the  
ground, one of them became dizzy, and fainted in his  
companion’s arms, and the latter had to accomplish the  
descent with him, alternately fainting and reviving, as  
Dest he could. ‘To ‘Tom we cried, Where away does the  
summit bear? where the burnt lands? ‘The last he  
could only conjecture ; he deseried, however, a little  
meadow and pond, lying probably in our course, whicl  
we concluded to steer for. On reaching this secluded  
‘meadow, we found fresh tracks of moose on the shore of  
the pond, and the water was still unsettled as if they had  
fled before us. A little farther, ina dense thicket, we  
‘+ The spruces; sys Springer in°01, is generally slete,  
‘neal forthe superoe facilites which fs nomerous inte af.  
{ord the eliber. To gai th Gt Timbo af ths tre, which are from  
twenty t forty feet from the ground, a smaller tests undercut and  
Iniged agaicat tt clambering up which the top of the sprace is  
reached. In some cates, when a very elevated potion Is  
{be epruce-ree is lodged ageinet the trunk of some 1ty pipe, up  
hich we ascend ta height orice that ofthe suroanding forest."  
‘To indicate the deecton of pues, he throws dowa a branch, and  
‘min th ground takes the Darog

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0 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘seemed to bo still on their tral. It was a small meadow,  
of afew acres, on the mountain side, concealed by the  
forest, and perhaps never seen by a white man before,  
‘where one would think that the moose might browse and  
bathe, and rest in peace. Pursuing this course, we soon  
reached the open land, which went sloping down some  
miles toward the Penobscot  
  
Perhaps I most fully realized that this was primeval,  
‘untamed, and forever untameable Nature, or whatever  
else men call it, while coming down this part of the  
mountain, We were passing over “Burnt Lands,”  
burnt by lightning, perchance, though they sbowed no  
recent marks of fire, hardly so much as a charred stump,  
‘but looked rather like a natural pasture for the moose  
‘and deer, exceedingly wild and desolate, with occasional  
strips of timber crossing them, and low poplars springing  
up, and patches of blueberries here and there. I found  
myself traversing them familiarly, like some pasture run  
to waste, or partially reclaimed by man; but when I  
reflected what man, what brother or sister or kinsman of  
our race made it and claimed it, I expected the propri-  
tor to rise up and dispute my passage. It is dificult to  
conceive of a region uninhabited by man. We habitue  
ally presume his presence and influence everywhere.  
And yet we have not seen pure Nature, unless we have  
seen her thus vast and drear and inhuman, though ta  
the midst of cities. Nature was here something savage  
‘and awful, though beautiful. I looked with awe at the  
ground I trod on, to see what the Powers had made  
there, the form and fashion and material of their work.  
This was that Earth of which we have heard, made out  
of Chaos and Old Night. Here was no man’s gurden,  
‘but the unhandselled globe. It was not lawn, nor pase

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KTAADY. n  
  
tare, nor mead, nor woodland, nor lea, nor arable, nor  
‘waste-land. It was the fresh and natural surface of the  
planet Earth, as it was made for ever and ever, —to bo  
the dwelling of man, we say,—so Nature made it, and  
‘man may use it if he can. ‘Man was not to be associ  
ated with it, It was Matter, vast, terrific, —not his  
Mother Earth that we have heard of, not for him to  
tread on, or be buried in, —no, it were being too fami  
ar even to let his bones lie there, — the home, this, of  
Necessity and Fate. ‘There was there felt the presence  
of a force not bound to be kind to man. Tt was a place  
for heathenism and superstitious rites, — to be inhabited  
bby men nearer of kin to the rocks and to wild animals  
‘than we. We walked over it with certain awe, stop-  
ping, from time to time, to pick the blueberries which  
grew there, and had a smart and spicy taste. Perchance  
‘where our wild pines stand, and leaves Tie on their forest  
floor, in Concord, there were once reapers, and husband-  
men planted grain; but here not even the surface had  
been scarred by man, but it was a specimen of what  
God saw fit to make this world. What is it to be ad~  
mitted to a museum, to see a myriad of particular things,  
compared with being shown some star’s surface, some  
hard matter in its home! I stand in awe of my body,  
this matter to which I am bound lias become so strango  
tome. I fear not spirits, ghosts, of which I am one,—  
that my body might,— but I fear bodies, I tremble to  
meet them. What is this Titan that has possession of  
me? Talk of mysteries! — Think of our life in nature,  
daily to be shown matter, to come in contact with it,  
—rocks, trees, wind on our checks! the solid carth!  
the actual world! the common sense! Contact! Cone  
tact! Who are we? where are we?

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1 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
Erelong we recognized some rocks and other features  
in the landscape which we bad purposely impressed on  
our memories, and, quickening our pace, by two o'clock  
wwe reached the batteau.\* Here we had expected to  
dine on trout, but in this glaring sunlight they were slow  
to take the bait, 60 we were compelled to make the most  
of the crumbs of our hard bread and our pork, which  
were both nearly exhausted. Meanwhile we deliberated  
whether we should go up the river a mile farther, to  
Gibson's clearing, on the Sowadnehunk, where there was  
‘8 deserted log-hut, in order to get » half-inch auger, to  
‘mend one of our spike-poles with. ‘There were young,  
spruce-trees enough around us, and we had a spare  
spike, but nothing to make a hole with. But as it was  
‘uncertain whether we should find any tools left there,  
wwe patched up the broken pole, as well as we could, for  
the downward voyage, in which there would be but little  
use for it, Moreover, we were unwilling to lose any  
time in this expedition, lest the wind should rise before  
‘we reached the larger lakes, and detain us; for a moder-  
‘ate wind produces quite a sea on these waters, in which  
1 batteau will not live for a moment and on one occa  
sion McCauslin had been delayed a week at the head of  
the North Twin, which is only four miles across. We  
‘were nearly out of provisions, and ill prepared in this  
respect for what might possibly prove a week's journey  
round by the shore, fording innumerable streams, and  
threading a trackless forest, should any accident happen  
to our boat.  
  
Tt was with regret that we turned our backs on Che-  
  
   
  
1 The bonrs had not touched things on our posessions. ‘They

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‘RTAADN 73  
  
suncook, which MeCauslin had formerly logged on, and  
the Allegash lakes. ‘There were still longer rapids and  
portages above; among the last the Rippogenus Port-  
‘age, which he described as the most difficult on the  
river, and three miles long. The whole length of the  
Penobscot is two hundred and seventy-five miles, and  
‘we aro still nearly one hundred miles from its source.  
Hodge, the assistant State Geologist, passed up this  
river in 1837, and by a poriage of only one mile and  
three-quarters crossed over into the Allegash, and so  
went down that into the St. John, and up the Mada-  
waska to the Grand Portage across to the St. Lawrence.  
His is the only account that I know, of an expedition  
through to Canada in this direction. He thus describes,  
his first sight of the latter river, which, to compare small  
things with great, is like Balboa’s first sight of the  
Pacific from the mountains of the Isthmus of Darien.  
“When we first caine in sight of the St. Lawrence,” he  
says, “from the top of a high ‘ill, the view was most  
striking, and much more interesting to me from having  
been shut up in the woods for the two previous months.  
Directly before us lay the broad river, extending across  
nine oF ten miles, its surface broken by a few islands  
‘and reefs, and two ships riding at anchor near the shore.  
Beyond, extended ranges of uncultivated bills, parallel  
with the river. ‘The sun was just going down behind  
them, and gilding the whole scene with its parting rays.”  
  
‘About four o'clock, the same afternoon, we commenced  
‘our return voyage, which would require but litle if any  
poling. In shooting rapids the boatmen use large and  
broad paddles, instead of poles, to guide the boat with,  
‘Though we glided so swilly, and often smoothly, down,  
where it had ost us no slight effort to get mp, anr pres

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-“ THE MAINE WooDs,  
  
ent voyage was attended with far more danger: for i  
‘once fairly struck one of the thousand rocks by w  
‘we were surrounded the boat would be swamped in  
instant, When a boat is swamped under these circun  
stances, the boatmen commonly find no difficulty in  
keeping afloat at first, for the current keeps both them  
and their cargo up for a long way down the stream ; and  
if they can swim, they have only to work their way  
‘gradually to the shore. ‘The greatest danger is of being  
caught in an eddy behind some larger rock, where the  
‘water rushes up stream faster than elsewhere it does  
down, and being carried round and round under the sur-  
face till they are drowned, MeCauslin pointed out  
some rocks which had been the scene of fatal accident  
of this kind. Sometimes the body is not thrown out for  
several hours. He himself lind performed such a cir  
cuit once, only his legs being visible to his companions ;  
‘but he was fortunately thrown out in season to recover  
his breath.\* In shooting the rapids, the boatman has  
this problem to solve: to choose a circuitous and safe  
course amid a thousand sunken rocks, scattered over  
quarter or half a mile, at the same time that he ia mov-  
ing steadily on at the rate of fifteen miles an hour.  
Stop he cannot; the only question is, where will he go?  
‘The bow-man chooses the course with all his eyes about  
him, striking broad off with his paddle, and drawing the  
boat by main force into her course. ‘The stern-man  
{ithfally follows the bow.  
  
‘We were soon at the Aboljacarmegus Fall, Anx-  
  
‘Tout thin from a newspaper. On the 1th instant?) (May, 0],  
‘on Rappogenes Falls Mr. Joha Delantes of Orono, Me, was drowed  
‘while running logs. "Ho was a citizen of Orono, and was twentyonix  
  
years of age. His companions found his body encloed tin bark,  
‘and Daried i in the solemn woods."

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A<TAADY. %  
  
+ to avoid the delay, as well as the labor, of the port-  
“Nee, our boatmen went forward frst reconnoitre,  
id concluded to let the batteau down the falls, earrying  
  
‘fhe baggage only over the portage. Jumping from rock  
to rock until nearly in the middle of the stream, we  
vere ready to reeeive the boat and let her down over  
the first fall, some six or seven feet perpendicular. Tho  
boatmen stand upon the edge of a shelf of rock, where  
the fall is perbaps nine or ten feet perpendicular, in  
from one to two feet of rapid water, one on each side of  
the boat, and let it slide gently over, tll the bow is run  
‘ut ten or twelve feet in the air; then, leting it drop  
squarely, while one holds the painter, the other Teaps  
in, and his companion following, they are whirled down  
the rapids to new fll, or to smooth water. In a very  
few minutes they had accomplished a passage in safety,  
which would be as foolhanly for the unskilfal to. ate  
tempt as the descent of Niagara itself. It seemed as if  
it needed only alittle familiarity, and a Ltle more skill,  
to navigate down such falls as Niagara itself with safety.  
‘At any rate, Ishould not despair of such men in the  
rapids above table-rock, until I saw them actually go  
over the falls, so cool, so collected, so fertile in resources  
are they. One might have thought that these were  
fall, and that falls were not to be waded through with  
impunity, ike a mud-puddle, ‘There was really danger  
of their losing their sublimity in losing their power to  
harm us. Familiarity breeds contempt. ‘The boatman  
pauses, perchance, on some shelf beneath a table-rock  
under the fll, standing in some cove of back-water two  
fect deep, and you hear his rough voice come up through  
the spray, cooly giving direetions how to launch the boat  
this time.

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7 ‘HE MAINE WooDs.  
  
Having carried round Pockwockomus Falls, our oars  
‘soon brought us to the Katepskonegan, or Oak Hall  
carry, where we decided to camp half way over, leaving  
‘our batteau to be carried over in the morning on fresh  
shoulders, One shoulder of each of the boatmen showed  
1 red spot as large as one’s hand, worn by the batteau  
on this expedition ; and this shoulder, as it did all the  
work, was perceptibly lower than its fellow, from long  
service. Such toil soon wears out the strongest consti-  
tution, ‘The drivers are accustomed to work in the cold  
water in the spring, rarely ever dry ; and if one falls in  
all over he rarely changes his clothes cll night, if then,  
even. One who takes this precaution is called by a par  
ticular nickname, or is turned off. None can lead this  
life who are not almost amphibious. MCauslin said  
soberly, what is at any rate a good story to tell, that he  
had seen where six men were wholly under water at  
once, at a jam, with their shoulders to handspikes. If  
the log did not start, then they had to put out their  
heads to breathe. ‘The driver works as long as he can  
see, from dark to dark, and at night has not time to eat  
hhis supper and dry his clothes fairly, before he is asleep  
on his cedar bed. We lay that night on the very bed  
made by such a party, stretching our tent over the poles  
Which were still standing, but reshingling the damp and  
faded bed with fresh leaves.  
  
In the morning we carried our boat over and  
launched it, making haste lest the wind should rise.  
‘The boatmen ran down Passamagamet, and, soon after,  
Ambejijis Falls, while we walked round with the bag-  
gage. We made a hasty breakfast at the head of Am-  
‘Lake, on the remainder of our pork, and were soon  
rowing across its smooth surfuce again, under a pleasant

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TAADS. 7  
  
‘y, the mountain being now clear of clouds, in tho  
northeast, ‘Taking turns at the oars, we shot rapidly  
across Deep Cove, the foot of Pamadumoook, and the  
North Twin, atthe rate of six miles an hour, the wind not  
being high enough to disturb us, and reached the Dam  
4 noon. ‘The boatmen went through one of the log  
‘luices in the batteau, where the fall was ten feet at the  
Vottom, and took us in below. Here was the longest  
rapid in our voyage, and perbaps the running this was  
3 dangerous and arduous a task as any. Shooting  
down sometimes at the rate, as we judged, of fifteen  
niles an hour, if we struck a rock we were split from  
end to end in an instant, Now, like a bait bobbing for  
‘some river monster, amid the eddies, now darting to this  
‘ide of the stream, now to that, gliding swift and smooth  
near to our destruction, or striking broad off with the  
paddle and drawing the boat to right or leftwith all our  
might, in order to avoid a rock. I suppose that it was  
like running the rapids of the Saute de St. Marie, at  
the outlet of Lake Superior, and our boatmen probably  
displayed no less dexterity than the Indians there do.  
‘We soon ran through this mile, and floated in Quakish  
Lake.  
  
‘After such a voyage, the troubled and angry waters,  
‘which once had seemed terrible and not to be trifled  
with, appeared tamed and subdued; they had been  
bearded and worried in their channels, pricked and  
‘hipped into submission with the spike-pole and paddle,  
gone through and through with impunity, and all their  
it and their danger taken out of them, and the most  
swollen and impetuous rivers seemed bat playthings  
henceforth. I began, at length, to understand the boat=  
‘man’s familiarity with, and contempt for, the ray

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8 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
“Those Fowler boys,” said Mrs. McCauslin, “are per.  
fect ducks for the water.” ‘They had rin down to Lin-  
coln, according to her, thirty or forty miles, in a batten,  
in the night, for a doctor, when it was so dark that they  
could not see rod before them, and the river was ewol-  
Jen #0 08 to be almost a continuous rapid, so that the  
doctor eried, when they brought him up by daylight,  
“Why, Tom, how did you seo to steer?” “We did n't  
‘steer much,—only kept her straight” And yet they  
‘met with no accident. It is true, the more dificult  
rapids are higher up than this.  
  
‘When we reached the Millinocket opposite to Tom's  
house, and were waiting for his folks to set us over, for  
‘we had left our batteau above the Grand Falls, we dis-  
‘covered two canoes, with two men in each, turning up  
this stream from Shad Pond, one keeping the opposite  
side of a sthall island before us, while the other ape  
proached the side where we were standing, examining  
the banks carefully for muskrats as they came along.  
‘The last proved to be Louis Neptune and his companion,  
now; at last, on their way up to Chesuncook alter moose ;  
Dut they were s0 disguised that we hardly knew them.  
‘At a little distance they might have been taken for  
‘Quakers, with their broad-brimmed hats, and overcoats  
with broad capes, the spoils of Bangor, seeking a settle~  
ment in this Sylvania, — or, nearer at hand, for fashion  
able gentlemen the morning after a spree. Met face to  
face, these Indians in their mative woods looked like the  
iter and slouching fellows whom you meet picking  
up strings and paper in the streets of @ city. ‘There is,  
in fact, a remarkable and unexpected resemblance be-  
tween the degraded savage and tho lowest clases ina  
great city. Tho one is no more # fild of nature than

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RTAADY. 0  
  
the other. In the progress of degradation the distinction  
‘of races is soon lost. Neptune at fret was only anxious  
to know what we “kill” seeing some partridges in the  
hhands of one of the party, but we had assumed too  
much anger to permit of a reply. We thought Indians  
hhad some honor before. But—“Me been sick, 0,  
me unwell now. You make bargain, then me go.”  
‘They had in fact been delayed so long by a drunken  
frolic at the Five Islands, and they had not yet. recov-  
‘ered from its effects. They had some young musquash  
in their canoes, which they dug out of the banks with  
‘8 oe, for food, not for their skins, for musquash are their  
principal food on these expeditions. So they went on  
up the Millinocket, and we kept down the bank of the  
Penobscot, after recruiting ourselves with a dranght of  
Tom's beer, leaving Tom at his home.  
  
‘Thus a man shall lead his life away here on the edge  
‘of the wilderness, on Indian Millinocket stream, in a  
new world, far in the dark of a continent, and have a  
flute to play at evening here, while his strains echo to  
the stars, amid the howling of wolves; shall live, as it  
were, in the primitive age of the world, primitive  
man. Yet he shall spend a sunny day, and in this cen-  
tury be my contemporary; perchance shall read some  
scattered leaves of literature, and sometimes talk with  
me. Why read history, then, if the ages and the gen-  
erations are now? He lives three thousand years deep  
into time, an age not yet described by poets. Can you  
well go farther back in history than this? Ay! ay!—  
for there turns up but now into the mouth of Millinocket  
still more ancient and primitive man, whose  
not brought down even to the former. Ina  
bark vessel sewn with the roots of the spruce, with

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80 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
hornbeam paddles, he dips his way along. He is but  
dim and misty to me, obscured by the sons that lie be-  
tween the bark-canoe and the batteau, He builds no  
house of logs, but a wigwam of skins. He eats no hot  
Dread and sweet cake, but musquash and moose-meat  
and the fat of bears. He glides up the Millinocket and  
is lost to my sight, as a more distant and misty cloud  
seen fitting by behind a nearer, and is lost in space.  
So he goes about his destiny, the red face of man.  
  
‘After having passed the night, and buttered our boots  
for the last time, at Uncle George’s, whose dogs almost  
devoured him for joy at his return, we kept on down the  
river the next day, about eight miles on foot, and then  
took a batteau, with a man to pole it, to Mattawamkeag,  
ten more. At the middle of that very night, to make  
‘8 swift conclusion to a long story, we dropped our  
‘buggy over the half-finished bridge at Oldtown, where  
wo heard the confused din and clink of @ hundred  
‘sows, which never rest, and at six o'clock the next  
‘morning one of the party was steaming his way to Mas-  
sachusetis  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘What is most striking in the Maine wildernese is the  
‘ontinuousness of the forest, with fewer open intervals  
for glades than you had imagined. Except the few  
‘burnt-lands, the narrow intervals on the rivers, the baro  
tops of the high mountains, and the lakes and streams,  
the forest is uninterrupted. It is even more grim and  
wild than you had anticipated, a damp and intricate  
wilderness, in the spring everywhere wet and miry.  
‘The aspect of the country, indeed, is universally stern  
and eavage, excepting the distant views of the forest  
from hills, and the Inke prospects, which are mild and

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KTAADY. al  
  
civilizing in a degree. ‘The lakes are something which  
you are unprepared for; they lie up so high, exposed  
to the light, and the forest is diminished to a fine fringe  
on their edges, with here and there a blue mountain,  
like amethyst jewels set around some jewel of the first  
‘water, —c0 anterior, 0 superior, to all the changes that  
are to take place on their shores, even now civil and  
refined, and fair as they can ever be. These are not  
‘the artifical forests of an English king,—a royal pre-  
serve merely. Here prevail no forest laws but those  
of nature. ‘The aborigines have never been dispos-  
sessed, nor nature disforested.  
  
It is a country fall of evergreen trees, of mossy silver  
es and watery maples, the ground dotted with in-  
‘pid, small, red berries, and strewn with damp and  
moss-grown rocks,—a country diversified with innu-  
merable lakes and rapid streams, peopled with trout and  
various species of leucisei, with salmon, shad, and pick-  
erel, and other fishes ; the forest resounding at rare in-  
tervals with the note of the chicadee, the blue-jay, and  
the woodpecker, the scream of the fsh-bawk and the  
eagle, the laugh of the loan, and the whistle of ducks  
‘along the solitary streams; at night, with the hooting  
of owls and howling of wolves; in summer, swarmi  
with myriads of black fies and mosquitoes, more formi-  
dable than wolves to the white man. Such is the home  
of the moose, the bear, the caribou, the wolf, the beaver,  
and the Indian. . Who shall deecribe the inexpressible  
tenderness and immortal life of the grim forest, where  
Nature, though it be mid-winter, is ever in her epring,  
where the mose-grown and decaying Pees are not old,  
Dat seem to enjoy a perpetual youth and blissful, inno-  
cent Nature, like a serene infant, is too happy to make  
  
“ ,

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e ‘THE MAINE WooDS.  
  
‘8 noise, except by a fow tinkling, lisping birds and  
trickling wills?  
  
What a place to live, what a place to die and bo  
buried in! ‘There certainly men would live forever,  
and laugh at death and the grave. There they could  
have no such thoughts as are associated with the village  
graveyard, —that make a grave out of one of those  
moist evergreen hummocks |  
  
ie and be bared who wil,  
mean to live here stil;  
  
‘My nator grows ever more young  
‘The primitive plnes among. /  
  
   
  
I am reminded by my journey how exceedingly new  
this country still is. You have only to travel for a few  
ays into the interior and back parts even of many of  
the old States, to come to that very America which the  
‘Northmen, and Cabot, and Gosnold, and Smith, and Ra-  
leigh visited. IF Columbus was the first to discover the  
islands, Americus Vespucius and Cabot, and the Pori-  
tans, and we their descendants, have discovered only the  
‘shores of America, While the republic has already  
‘acquired a history world-wide, America is still unsettled  
‘and unexplored. Like the English in New Holland,  
wwe live only on the shores of a continent even yet, and  
hardly know where the rivers come from which float”  
our navy. ‘The very timber and boards and shingles of  
which our houses are made, grew but yesterday in a  
wilderness where the Indian still hunts and the moose  
runs wild. New York bas her wilderness within her  
‘own borders; and though the sailors of Europe are  
familiar with the soundings of her Hudson, and Fulton  
Jong since invented the steamboat on its waters, an In~

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KTAADN. 83  
  
dian is stil necessary to guide her scientitic men to its  
hhead-waters in the Adirondae country.  
  
Have we even so much as discovered and settled the  
shores? Let a man travel on foot along the coast, from  
the Passamaquoddy to the Sabine, or to the Rio Bravo,  
‘or to wherever the end is now, if he is swift enough to  
overtake it, faithfully following the windings of every  
inlet and of every cape, and stepping to the music of  
the surf—with a desolate fishing-town once a week,  
and a city’s port once a month to cheer him, and patting  
up at the light-houses, when there are any,—and tell  
ime if it looks like a discovered and settled country, and  
not rather, for the most part, like a desolate island, and  
‘No-man's Land,  
  
‘We have advanced by leaps to the Pacific, and left  
many a lesser Oregon and California unexplored behind  
tus, Though the railroad and the telegraph have been  
established on the shores of Maine, the Indian still  
Tooks out from her interior mountains over all these to  
the sea. There stands the city of Bangor, fifty miles  
up the Penobscot, at the head of navigation for vessels  
of the largest class, the principal lumber depot on this  
continent, with a population of twelve thousand, like a  
star on the edge of uight, still hewing at the forests of  
which it is built, already overflowing with the luxuries  
and refinement of Europe, and sending its vessels to  
Spain, to England, and to the West Indies for its gro-  
ceries, —and yet only a few axe-men have gone “up  
river,” into the howling wilderness which feeds it. ‘The  
bear and deer are still found within its limits; and the  
‘moose, as he swims the Penobscot, is entangled amid  
its shipping, and taken by foreign sailors in its harbor.  
Twelve miles in the rear, twelve miles of railroad, are  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
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8h ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
Orono and the Indian Island, the home of the Penob-  
scot tribe, and then commence the batteau and the  
‘canoe, and the military road; and sixty miles above,  
‘the country is virtually unmapped and unexplored, and  
‘there sill waves the virgin forest of the New World.

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CHESUNCOOK,  
  
Ar 5 7.x, September 18th, 1858, I left, Boston, in  
the steamer, for Bangor, by the outside course. Ttwas a  
‘warm and still night, — warmer, probably, on the water  
‘than on the land,—and the sea was as smooth as a  
‘small lake in summer, merely rippled. ‘The passengers  
went singing on the deck, as in « parlor, tll ten o'clock.  
‘We passed a vessel on her beamends on a rock just  
‘outside the islands, and some of ‘us thought that she was  
the “rapt ship” which ran  
“on be ide 90 low  
‘That ae drack water, and her Kel ploughed ale"  
  
‘ot considering that there was no wind, and that she was  
‘under bare poles. Now we have left the islands behind  
‘and are off Nahant. We bebold those features which  
‘the discoverers saw, apparently unchanged. Now we  
ee the Cape Ann lights, and now pass near a small  
villagerlike fleet of mackerel‘ishers at anchor, probably  
off Gloucester. ‘They salute us with a shout from their  
low decks; but I understand their “Good evening” to  
‘mean, “Don't run against me, Sir.” From the wonders  
of the deep we go below to yet deeper sleep. And  
then the absurdity of being waked up in the night by  
‘a man who wants the job of blacking your boots! It is,  
more inevitable than seasickness, and may have some-

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86 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
thing to do with it, It is like the ducking you get on  
crossing the line the first time. I trusted that these old  
customs were abolished. ‘They might with the same  
propriety insist on blacking your face. I heard of one  
man who complained that somebody had stolen his boots  
in the night; and when he found them, he wanted to  
Keiow what they had done to them, — they had spoiled  
them, —he never pat that stuff on them ; and the boot  
Dlack narrowly escaped paying damages. i  
  
‘Anxious to get out of the whale’s belly, I rose early,  
and joined come old salts, who were smoking by a dim  
light on a sheltered part of the deck. We were just  
getting into the river. ‘They knew all about it, of  
course. I was proud to find that I had stood the voy-  
age 60 well, and was not in the least digested. We  
brushed up and watched the first signs of dawn through  
‘an open port; but the day seemed to hang fire. We  
inquired the time; none of my companions had a chro-  
nometer. At length an African prince rushed by, ob-  
serving, “ Twelve o'clock, gentlemen !” and blew out the  
light. Tt was moon-tise. So I slunk down into the  
‘monster's bowels again.  
  
‘Phe first land we make is Manbegan Island, before  
dawn, and next St. George’s Islands, sesing two or three  
lights. Whitehead, with its bare rocks and funereal  
bell, is interesting. Next I remember that the Camden  
Hills attracted my eyes, and afterward the hills sbout  
Frankfort, We reached Bangor about noon.  
  
‘When I arrived, my companion that was to be had  
gone up river, and engaged an Indian, Joe Aitteon, «  
s0n of the Governor, to go with us to Chesuncook Lake.  
Joe bad conducted two white mon a-moose-husting in  
the same direction the year before. He arrived by ears

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CHESUNCOOK. 87  
  
   
  
at Bangor that evening, with his canoe and a compane  
jon, Sabattis Solomon, who was going to leave Bangor  
the following Monday with Joe's father, by way of the  
Penobscot, and join Joe in moose-hunting at Chesun-  
cook, when we had done with him. ‘They took supper  
‘at my friend’s house and lodged in his barn, saying that  
‘they should fare worse than that in the woods. They  
only made Watch bark a little, when they came to the  
door in the night for water, for he does not like In-  
inns.  
  
‘The next morning Joe and his canoe were put on  
board the stage for Moosehead Lake, sixty and odd  
‘miles distant, an hour before we started in an open  
wagon, We carried hard bread, pork, smoked beef, tes,  
sugar, etc, seemingly enough for a regiment; the sight  
of which brought together reminded me by what ignoble  
imeans we had maintained our ground hitherto. We  
went by the Avenue Road, which is qaite straight and  
very good, north-westward toward Moosehead Lake,  
through more than a dozen flourishing towns, with al-  
most every one its academy, — not one of which, how-  
ever, is on my General Atlas, published, alas ! in 1824 j  
to much are they before the age, or I behind it! The  
arth must have been considerably lighter to the shoul-  
ders of General Atlas then.  
  
Tt rained all this day and till the middle of the next  
forenoon, concealing the landscape almost entirely ; but  
wwe had hardly got out of the streets of Bangor before I  
began to be exhilarated by the sight of the wild fir and  
sprace-tops, and those of other primitive evergreens,  
peering throngh the mist in the horizon. It was like  
the sight and odor of cake to @ schoolboy. He who  
rides and keeps the beaten track studies the fences

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88. ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
chiefly. Near Bangor, the fence-posts, on secount of  
‘the frosts heaving them in the clayey soil, were not  
planted in the ground, but were mortised into a transe  
verse horizontal beam Tying on the surface. After  
‘wards, the prevailing fences were log ones, with some~  
‘times a Virginia fence, or else rails slanted over crossed  
stakes, — and these zigeagged or played leap-frog all  
the way to the lake, Keeping just ahead of us After  
getting out of the Penobscot Valley, the country was  
‘unexpectedly level, or consisted of very even and equal  
swells, for twenty or thirty miles, never rising above the  
‘general level, but affording, it is eaid, a very good prose  
ppect in clear weather, with frequent views of Ktaadn, —  
straight roads and long hills. ‘The houses were far  
apart, commonly small and of one story, but framed.  
‘There was very little land under cultivation, yet the forest  
did not often border the road. ‘The stumps were fre-  
quently as high as one’s head, sbowing the depth of  
the snows. The white hay-caps, drawn over small  
stacks of beans or com in the fields, on account of the  
rain, were a novel sight to me, We saw large flocks of  
pigeons, and several times came within a rod or two of  
artridges in the road. My companion said, that, in  
one journey out of Bangor, he and his son had shot sixty  
ppartridges from his buggy. ‘The mountain-ash was now  
ery handsome, as also the wayfarer’s-tree or hobble  
bush, with its ripe purple berries mixed with red. ‘The  
Canada thistle, an introduced plant, was the prevailing  
wwoed all the way to the lake,— the road-side in many  
places, and fields not long ¢leared, being densely filled  
‘with it as with a erop, to the exclusion of everything  
else. ‘There were also whole fields fall of ferns, now  
rusty and withering, which in older countries are com

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(cHESUNCOOK. 89  
  
monly confined to wet ground. ‘There were very few  
flowers, even allowing for the lateness of the season. It  
chanced that I saw no asters in bloom along the road for  
fifty miles, though they were so abundant then in Masea-  
chusetts, — except in one place one or two of the Aster  
acuminatus,—and no golden-rods till within twenty  
miles of Monson, where I saw a three-ribbed one.  
There were many late buttercups, however, and the  
two fire-weeds, Erechthites and Epilobium, commonly  
where there had been a burning, and at last the pearly  
everlasting. I noticed occasionally very Jong troughs  
which supplied the road with water, and my companion  
ssid that three dollars annually were granted by the  
State to one man in. each schoobdistrict, who provided  
and maintained a suitable water-trongh by the rosd-side,  
for the use of travellers, —a piece of intelligence as  
refreshing to me as the water itself, That legislature  
id not sit in vain, Tt was an Oriental act, which made  
‘me wish that I was still farther down East, — another  
Maine law, which T hope we may got in Massachusetts,  
That State is banishing bar-rooms from its highways,  
‘and conducting the mountain-springs thither.  
  
‘The country was first decidedly mountainous in Gar~  
land, Sangerville, and onwards, twenty-five or thirty  
niles from Bangor. At Sangerville, where we stopped  
at mid-afternoon to warm and dry oureelves, the land  
lord told us that he had found a wilderness where we  
found him. At a fork in the rond between Abbot and  
‘Monson, about twenty miles from Moosehead Lake, I  
saw a guide-post surmounted by a pair of Moose-horns,  
spreading four or five feet, with the word “Monson ”  
painted on one blade, and the name of some other town  
‘on the other. ‘They are sometimes used for ornamental

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90 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
hhat-trees, together with deers’ horns, in front entries 5  
but, after the experience which I shall relate, I trust  
that I shall have a better excuse for killing a moose  
‘than that I may hang my hat on his horns. We reached  
‘Moneon, fifty miles from Bangor, and thirteen from the  
lake, after dark.  
  
At four o'clock the mext morning, in the dark, and  
still in the rain, we pursued our journey. Close to the  
academy in this town they have erected a sort of gal-  
lows for the pupils to practice on. I thought that they  
might as well hang at once all who need to go through  
such exercises in 60 new a country, where thero is noth-  
{ng to hinder their living an out-door life. Better omit  
Blair, and take the air. ‘The country about the south  
end of the lake is quite mountainous, and the road began  
to feel the effects of it, There is one bill which, itis  
calculated, it takes twenty-five minutes to ascend. In  
many places the road w: at condition called ree  
paired, baving just been whittled into the required sem  
cylindrical form with the shovel and scraper, with all  
the softest inequalities in the middle, like a hog’s back  
with the bristles up, and Jehu was expected to keep  
astride of the epine. As you looked off each side of the  
Dare sphere into the horizon, the ditches were awful to  
bbehold,—a vast hollowness, like that between Saturn  
‘and his ring. At a tavern hereabouts the hosiler  
greeted our horse as an old acquaintance, though he did  
not remember the driver. He suid that he had taken  
care of that litle mare for short time, a year or two  
before, at the Mount Kineo House, and thought she was  
not in as good condition as then. Every man to hie  
trade. I am not acquainted with a single horse in the  
‘world, not even the one that kicked me.

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(CRESUNCOOK. 1  
  
Already we had thought that we saw Moosehead  
Lake from a hill-top, where an extensivo fog filled the  
distant lowlands, but we were mistaken. It was not  
{ill we were within mile or two of its south end that  
wo got our firt view of it,—a suitably wild-looking  
‘sheet of water, sprinkled with small, low islands, which  
‘were covered with shaggy spruce and other wikl wood,  
— teen over the infant port of Greenville, with moun-  
tains on each side and far in the north, and a steamer’s  
smoke-pipe rising above a roof. A pair of moose-horns  
omamented a comer of the publichouse where we left  
oar horse, and a few rods distant lay the emall steamer  
‘Moosehead, Captain King. ‘There was no village, and  
‘no summer road any farther in this direction, — but a  
‘winter road, that is, one passable only when deep  
snow covers its inequalities, from Greenville up the  
cast side of the lake to Lily Bay, about twelve miles.  
  
I was here first introduced to Joe. He had ridden  
all the way on the outside of the stage, the day before,  
in the rain, giving way to ladies, and was well wetted.  
‘As it still rained, he asked if we were going to “put  
it through.” He was a good-looking Indian, twenty-  
four years ola, apparently of unmixed blood, short and  
stout, with a broad face and reddish complexion, and  
eyes, methinks, narrower and more turned-up at the  
outer corners than ours, answering to the deseri  
of hia race. Beside his under-clothing, he wore a red-  
fiannel shirt, woollen pants, and ® black Kossuth hat,  
the ordinary ress of the Iumberman, and, to @ consid-  
erable extent, of the Penobscot Indian. When, after  
‘ward, he had occasion to take off his shoes and stock-  
ings, I was struck with the smallness of his feet. Ho  
hhad worked a good deal as a lumberman, and appeared

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92 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
to identify himself with that class. He was the only  
fone of the party who possessed an India-rubber jacket.  
‘The top stzip or edge of his canoe was worn nearly  
through by friction on the stage.  
  
‘At eight o'clock the steamer, with her bell and whistle,  
scaring the moose, summoned us on board. She was a  
‘well-appointed little boat, commanded by a gentlemanly  
captain, with patent life-seats and metallic life-boat, and  
dinner on board, if you wish. She is chiefly used by  
lumberers for the transportation of themselves, their  
oats, and supplies, but also by hunters and tourists,  
‘There was another steamer, named Amphitrite, laid up  
close by ; but, apparently, her name was not more trite  
than her hull. ‘There were also two or three large sail  
boats in port. ‘These beginnings of commerce on a  
Jake in the wilderness are very interesting, — these  
larger white birds that come to keep company with the  
gulls. There were but few passengers, and not one  
female among them: a St. Francis Indian, with his  
‘canoe and moose-hides, two explorers for lumber, three  
‘men who landed at Sandbar Island, and a gentleman  
‘who lives on Deer Island, eleven miles up the lake,  
and owns also Sugar Island, between which and the  
former the steamer runs; these, I think, were all be-  
side ourselves. In the saloon was some kind of musical  
instrument, cherubim, or seraphim, to soothe the angry  
‘waves; and there, very properly, was tacked up the  
‘map of the public lands of Maine and Massachusetts,  
‘a copy of which I had in my pocket  
  
‘The heavy rain confining us to the saloon awhile, I  
iscoursed with the proprietor of Sugar Island on the  
condition of the world in Old Testament times. But  
at length, leaving this subject as fresh as we found it,

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(CHESUNCOOK. 98  
  
hie told me that he had lived about this lake twenty or  
thirty years, and yet had not been to the head of it for  
twenty-one years. He faces the other way. ‘The ex-  
pplorers had @ fine new birch on board, larger than ours,  
jn which they bad come up the Piscataquis from How-  
land, and they had had several messes of trout already.  
‘They were going to the neighborhood of Eagle and  
Chamberlain Lakes, or the head-waters of the St.John,  
and offered to keep us company as far as we went.  
‘The lake today was rougher than I found the ocean,  
either going or returning, and Joe remarked that it  
‘ould swamp his birch. Off Lily Bay it is a dozen  
miles wide, but it is much broken by islands. The  
scenery is not merely wild, but varied and interesting;  
mountains were seen, farther or nearer, on all sides but  
the northwest, their eummits now lost in the clouds;  
but Mount Kineo is the principal feature of the lake,  
and more exclusively belongs to it. After leaving  
Greenville, at the foot, which is the nucleus of a town  
some eight or ten years ald, you see but three or four  
houses for the whole length of the lake, or about forty  
rmiles, three of them the public houses at which the  
steamer is advertised to stop, and the shore is an un-  
broken wilderness. ‘The prevailing wood seemed to be  
spruce, fir, birch, and rock-maple. You could easily  
distinguish the hard wood from the soft, or “black  
growth,” a it is called, at a great distance,—the for-  
‘mer being smooth, round-lopped, and light green, with a  
bowery and cultivated look.  
  
‘Mount Kineo, at which the boat touched, is a penin-  
sula with a narrow neck, about midway the lake on the  
east side. The celebrated precipice is on the east oF  
land side of this, and is so high and perpendicular that

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4 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
you can jump from the top, many hundred feet, into the  
‘water, which makes up behind the point. A man on  
board told us that an anchor had been sunk ninety fathe  
coms at its base before reaching bottom! Probably it,  
will be discovered erelong that some Indian maiden  
jumped off it for love once, for true love never could  
hhave found a path more to its mind. We passed quite  
close to the rock here, since it is a very bold shore, and  
I observed marks of a rise of four or five feet on it.  
‘The St. Francis Indian expected to take in his boy here,  
but he was not at the landing. ‘The father’s sharp eyes,  
however, detected a canoe with his boy in it far away  
under the mountain, though no one else could see it.  
“Where is the canoe?” asked the captain, “I don't see  
it” but he held on, nevertheless, and by and by it hove  
in sight.  
  
‘We reached the head of the lake about noon. ‘The  
‘weather had, in the meanwhile, cleared up, though the  
‘mountains were still eapped with clouds. Seen from  
point, Mount Kineo, and two other allied mountains rang-  
ing with it northeasterly, presented a very strong family  
likeness, as if all east in one mould. ‘The steamer here  
approached a long pier projecting from the northern  
wilderness, and built of some ofits logs, — and whistled,  
where not a cabin nor a mortal was to be seen. ‘The  
shore was quite low, with flat rocks on it, overhung with  
Dlack ash, arbor-vite, ete, which at first looked as if  
they did not eare a whistle for us. ‘There was not a  
single eabman to cry “Coach!” or inveigle us to the  
United States Hotel. At length a Mr. Hinckley, who  
has a camp at the other end of the “carry,” appeared  
with a truck drawn by an ox and a horse over a rude  
log-railway through the woods. The next thing was to

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(CHESUNCOOK. Es  
  
   
  
get our canoe and effects over the carry from this lake,  
‘one of the heads of the Kennebec, into the Penobscot  
River. ‘This railway from the lake to the river oceu  
pied the middle of a clearing two or three rods wide  
fand perfectly straight through the forest. We walked  
across while our baggage was drawn behind. My com-  
anion went ahead to be ready for partridges, while I  
followed, looking at the plants.  
  
‘This was an interesting botanical locality for one com~  
ing from the South to commence with; for many plants  
which are rather rare, and one-or two which are not  
found at all, inthe eastern part of Massachusetts, grew  
abundantly between the rails, —as Labrador tea, Kalmia  
glauca, Canada blueberry (which was still in fruit, and  
‘8 second time in bloom), Clintonia and Linnma borealis,  
‘which last a lumberer called mazon, creeping snowberry,  
painted trlliam, lange-fowered bellwort, etc. I fancied  
that the Aster radula, Diplopappus umbellatus, Solidago  
lanceolatus, red trumpet-weed, and many others which  
‘were conspicuously in bloom on the shore of the lake  
and on the carry, had a peculiarly wild and primitive  
Jook there. The spruce and fir trees crowded to tho  
track on each side to welcome us, the arbor-vite, with  
  
changing leaves, prompted us to make haste, and tho  
ight of the canoe-birch gave us spirits to do so. Some  
times an evergreen just fallen lay across the track with  
its rich barden of cones, looking, stl, fuller of life than  
four trees in the most favorable positions. You did not  
expect to find such spruce trees in the wild woods, but  
they evidently attend to their toilets each morning even  
there. Through such a front-yard did we enter that  
wilderness.  
  
There was a very slight rise above the lake,— the

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96 THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
country appearing like, and perhaps being, partly a  
ssxamp,—and at length a gradual descent to the Penob-  
scot, which I was surprised to find here a large stream,  
from twelve to fifteen rods wide, flowing from west to  
‘east, oF at right angles with the lake, and not more than  
‘two and a half miles from it. ‘The distance is nearly  
‘twice too great on the Map of the Public Lands, and on  
Colton’s Map of Maine, and Russell Stream is placed  
too far down. Jackson makes Moosehead Lake to be  
nine hundred and sixty feet above high water in Port-  
land harbor. It is higher than Chesuncook, for the um-  
Derers consider the Penobscot, where we struck it,  
twenty-five feet lower than Moosehead, — though eight  
ales above it is said to be the highest, o that the water  
‘ean be made to flow either way, and the river falls a  
‘good deal between here and Chesuncook. ‘The carry-  
‘man called this about one hundred and forty miles  
above Bangor by the river, or two hundred from the  
‘ocean, and fifty-five miles below Hilton's, on the Canada  
road, the first clearing above, which is four and a half  
miles from the source of the Penobscot.  
  
‘At the north end of the carry, in the midst of a clear-  
ing of sixty acres or more, there was a.log camp of the  
usual construction, with something more like a house  
adjoining, for the accommodation of the carryman’s fam-  
sly and passing lamberers. ‘The bed of withered fir-  
twigs smelled very sweet, though really very dirty.  
‘Where was also a store-house on the bank of the river,  
containing pork, flour, iron, batteaux, and birches, locked  
q  
  
Ce  
turned out to be tea, and to pitch canoes, for which pur-  
pose a large iron pot lay permanently on the bank.

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‘CHESUNCOOK. 97  
  
‘This we did in company with the explorers. Both In-  
dians and whites use a mixture of rosin and gresse for  
  
purpose, — that is, for the pitching, not the dinner.  
Joe took a small brand from the fire and blew the heat  
and flame against the pitch on his birch, and so melted  
and spread it, Sometimes he put his mouth over the  
suspected spot and sucked, to see if it admitted air; and  
at ono place, where we stopped, he set his eanoe high on  
cerossod stakes, and poured water into it. I narrowly  
‘watched his motions, and listened attentively to his  
observations, for we bad employed an Indian mainly  
that I might have an opportunity to study his ways. I  
heard him swear once, mildly, during this operation,  
boat his knife being as dull as a hoe,—an accomplish-  
ment which he owed to his intercourse with the white  
and he remarked, “We ought to have some tea before  
wo start; we shall be hungry before we kill that  
moose.”  
  
‘At mid-afternoon we embarked on the Penobscot.  
Our birch was nineteen and a half feet long by two and  
half at the widest part, and fourteen inches deep with-  
both ends alike, and painted green, which Joe thought  
affected the pitch and made it leak. This, I think, was  
fa midiling-sized one. That of the explorers was much  
larger, though probably not much longer. This carried  
us three with our baggage, weighing in all between five  
hundred and fifty and six hundred pounds. We had  
two heavy, though slender, rock-maple paddles, one of  
them of bird's-eye maple. Joe placed birch-bark on  
the bottom for us to sit on, and slanted cedar splints  
against the cross-bars to protect our backs, while he him-  
self cat upon a cross-bar in the stern. ‘The baggage  
  
‘occupied the middle or widest part of the canoe. We

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98. THE MAINE, WooDs.  
  
‘also paddled by turns in the bows, now sitting with oar  
legs extended, now sitting upon our legs, and now rising  
‘upon our knees; but I found none of these positions en-  
durable, and was reminded of the complaints of the ol  
Jesuit missionaries of the torture they endured from  
long confinement in constrained positions in eanoes, in  
their long voyages from Quebec to the Huron country ;  
but afterwards I sat on the eross-bars, or stood up, and  
‘experiencod no inconvenience.  
  
Tt was dead water for a couple of miles. ‘The river  
hhad been raised about two feet by the rain, and lumber-  
‘ers were hoping for a flood sufficient to bring down the  
logs that were left in the spring. Its banks were seven  
‘or eight feet high, and densely covered with white and  
black spruce, — which, I think, must be the commonest  
trees thereabouts, — fir, arbor-vite, canoe, yellow, and  
Diack birch, rock, mountain, and a few red maples,  
beech, black and mountain ash, the large-toothed aspen,  
many civil looking elms, now imbrowned, along the  
stream, and at first a few hemlocks also. We had not  
gone far before I was startled by seeing what I thought  
‘was an Indian encampment, covered with a red flag, on  
the bank, and exclaimed, “Camp!” to my comrades. I  
wwas slow to discover that it was a red maple changed  
by the frost. ‘The immediate shores were also densely  
covered with the speckled alder, red osier, shrubby  
willows or sallows, and the like. ‘There were a few  
yellow-lily-pads still left, half-drowned, along the sides,  
‘and sometimes a white one. Many fresh tracks of  
moose were visible where the water was shallow, and  
‘on the shore, and the lily-stems were freshly bitten off  
by them,  
  
After paddling about two miles, we parted company

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(CHESUNCOOK. 99  
  
with the explorers, and turned up Lobster Stream,  
‘hich comes in on the right, from the southeast. This  
was six or eight rods wide, and appeared to run nearly  
parallel with the Penobscot. Joe said that it was 0  
called from small fresh-water lobsters found in it. It is  
the Matahumkeag of the maps. My companion wished  
to look for moose signs, and intended, if it proved worth  
the while, to camp up that way, since the Indian ad-  
vised it. On account of the rise of the Penobscot the  
water ran up this stream quite to the pond of the same  
name, one or two miles. The Spencer Mountains, east  
of the north end of Moosehead Lake, were now in plain  
  
ight in front of us. ‘The kingfher flew before us, the  
igeon woodpecker was seen and heard, and nuthatches ,  
‘and chicadees close at hand. Joe said that they called  
the chieadee ecunnilessu in his language. I will not  
ouch for the spelling of what possibly was never spelt  
before, but I pronounced after him til he said it would  
do, We passed close to a woodcock, which stood per-  
feetly still on the shore, with feathers puffed up, as if  
sick. ‘This Joe said they called nipsquecohossus. ‘The  
Kingfisher was skuscumonsuck ; bear was tassus ; I  
dian Devil, lunzus; the mountain-ash, ypahsis. Thi  
was very abundant and beautiful. Moose-tracks were  
rot so fresh along this stream, except in a small creek  
about a mile up it, where a large log had lodged in the  
spring, marked “ W-cross-gindle-erow-foot” We saw  
pair of moose-horns on the shore, and T asked Joe  
if a moose had shed them; but he said there was a  
head attached to them, and I knew that they did not  
shed their heads more than once in their ives.  
  
‘After ascending about a mile and a half, to with  
1 short distance of Lobster Lake, we returned to the

Page-8915

100 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
Penobscot. Just below the mouth of the Lobster we  
found quick water, and the river expanded to twenty or  
thirty rods in width, ‘The moose-tracks were quite nu-  
‘merous and fresh here. We noticed in a great many  
places narrow and well-trodden paths by which they had  
‘come down to the river, and where they had slid on the  
steep and clayey bank. Their tracks were either close  
to the edge of the stream, those of the calves distinguis  
fable from the others, or in shallow water; the holes  
made by their feet in the soft bottom being visible for  
‘a long time. ‘They were particularly numerous where  
‘there was a small bay, or pokelogan, as it is called,  
ordered by a strip of meadow, or separated from 1!  
iver by a low peninsula covered with coarse grass,  
‘wool-grass, ete, wherein they had waded back and forth  
‘and eaten the pads. We detected the remains of one  
in such a spot. At one place, where we landed to pi  
up @ summer duck, which my companion had shot, Joe  
peeled a canoe-birch for bark for his hunting-hora. | He  
then asked if we were not going to get the other duck,  
for his sharp eyes had seen another fall in the bushes  
4 Title farther along, and my companion obtained it.  
now began to notice the bright red berries of the tree-  
cranberry, which grows eight or ten feet high, mingled  
with the alders and cornel along the shore. ‘There was  
less hard wood than at fist.  
  
F After proceeding a mile and three quarters below the  
mouth of the Lobster, we reached, about sundown, a  
small island at the head of what Joe called the Mloose-  
hhorn Dead-water, (the Booschorn, in which he was go-  
ing to unt that night, coming in about three miles  
below,) and on the upper end of this we decided to  
camp. On a point at the lower end lay the carcass of

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‘CHESUNCOOK. 101  
  
‘8 moose killed a month or more before. We concluded  
merely to prepare our camp, and leave our baggage  
here, that all might be ready when we returned from  
‘moose-hunting- ‘Though I had not come a-bunting, and  
felt some compunctions about accompanying the hunters,  
1 wished to see a moose near at hand, and was not sorry  
to learn how the Indian managed to kill one. I went  
4 reporter or chaplain othe hunters, —and the chaps —7-—  
lain has been known to carry a gun himself, After  
clearing small space amid the dense spruce and fir  
trees, we covered the damp ground with g of  
fircwigs, and, while Joe was preparing his birch-horn  
and pitching his canoe,—for this haa to be done when-  
fever we stopped long enough to build a fire, and was  
‘the principal labor which he took upon himself at such  
times, —wo collected fuel for the night, large wet and  
rotting logs, which had lodged at the head of the island,  
for our hatchet was too small for effective chopping but  
we did not kindle a fire, lest the moose should smell it,  
Joo set up a couple of forked stakes, and prepared half  
fa dozen poles, ready to cast one of our blankets over  
in case it rained in the night, which precaution, how-  
ever, was omitted the next night. We also plucked the  
ducks which had been killed for breakfast  
  
While we were thus engaged in the twilight we  
heard faintly, from far down the stream, what sounded  
like two strokes of a woodchopper’s axe, echoing dully  
‘through the grim solitude. We are wont to liken many  
sounds, heard at a distance in the forest, to the stroke  
“of an axe, because they resemble each other under those  
cireamstances, and that is the one we commonly hear  
there. When we told Joe of this, he exclaimed, “By  
George, I'll bet that was a moose! ‘They make noise

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102 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
like that” ‘These sounds affected us strangely,'and by  
their very resemblance to a familiar one, where they  
probably had so different an origin, enhanced the im-  
pression of solitude and wildness.  
  
‘At starlight we dropped down the stream, which was  
1 dead-water for three miles, or as far as the Moose-  
horn ; Joo telling us that we must be very eilent, and  
he himeelf making no noise with his paddle, while he  
‘urged the canoe along with effective impulses. Tt was  
1 oill night, and suitable for this purpose, — for if there  
is wind, the moose will smell you,—and Joo was very  
confident that he should get some. The harvest moon  
Ihad just risen, and its level rays began to light up the  
forest on our right, while we glided downward in the  
shade on the same side, against the little breeze that  
‘was stirring. The lofty, spiring tops of the spruce and  
fir wore very black against the sky, and more distinct  
‘than by day, close bordering this broad avenue on each  
side; and the beauty of the scene, as the moon rose  
above the forest, it would not be eary to describe, A  
Dat flew over our heads, and we heard a few faint notes  
of birds from time to time, perhaps the myrtle-bird for  
one, or the sudden plunge of a mucquash, or saw one  
crossing the stream before us, or heard the sound of  
rill emptying in, swollen by the recent rain. About a  
rile below the island, when the solitude seemed to be  
growing more complete every moment, we suddenly saw  
the light and heard the crackling of a fre on the bank,  
and discoverd the camp of the two explorers; they stand~  
ing before it in their red shirts, and talking aloud of the  
adventures and profits of the day. ‘They were just  
then spesking of @ bargain, in which, as I understood,  
somebody had cleared twenty-five dollars. We glided

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CHESUNCOOK. 103  
  
by without speaking, closo under the bank, within a  
couple of rods of them; and Joe, taking his horn, imi-  
tated the call of the moose, till we suggested that they  
‘migt fire on us. ‘This was the last we saw of them,  
‘and we never knew whether they detected or suspected  
  
T have often wished since that I was with them.  
‘Phey search for timber over a given section, climbing  
Lills and often high trees to look off,— explore the  
streams by which it is to be driven, and the like, —  
spend five or six weeks in the woods, they two alone, a  
hundred miles or more from any town,—roaming about,  
‘and sleeping on the ground where night overtakes them,  
—depending chiefly on the provisions they carry with  
them, though they do not decline what. game they come  
across, —and then in the fall they return and make  
report to their employers, determining the number of  
‘teams that will be required the following winter. Ex-  
perienced men get three or four dollars a day for this  
work. Itis a solitary and adventurous life, and comes,  
earest to that of the trapper of the West, perhaps  
‘They work ever with a gun aswell as an axe let their  
Deards grow, and live without neighbors, not on an open  
plain, but far within a wilderness.  
  
This discovery accounted for the sounds which we  
hhad heard, and destroyed the prospect of seeing moose  
yet awhile. At length, when we had left the explorers  
far behind, Joe Iaid down his paddle, drew forth his  
fh horn, —a straight one, about fifteen inches long  
fan three or four wide at the mouth, tied round with  
strips of the same bark, — and standing up, imitated the  
call of the moose,— ugh-ugh-ugh, oF 00-00-00-00, and then  
1 prolonged 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0, nd listened attentively

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104 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
for several minutes. We asked him what kind of  
noise he expected to hear. He said, that, if a moose  
heard it, he guessed we should find out; we should  
hear him coming half a mile of; he would come close  
to, perhaps into, the water, and my companion must  
‘wait tll he got fair sight, and then aim just behind the  
shoulder.  
  
‘The moose venture out to the riverside to feed and  
rink at night. Earlier in the season the hunters do  
not use a horn to call them out, but steal upon them as  
they are feeding along the sides of the stream, and often  
the first notice they have of one is the sound of the  
water dropping from its muzzle. An Indian whom I  
hheard imitate the voice of the moose, and also that of  
the caribou and the deer, using a mach longer horn than  
‘Joe’, told me that the first could be heard eight or ten  
miles, sometimes ; it was @ loud sort of bellowing sound,  
clearer and more sonorous than the lowing of cattle, —  
the caribou's a sort of snort, —and the small deer’s like  
that of @ lamb,  
  
‘At length we turned up the Moosehorn, where the  
Indians at the carry had told us that they killed a moose  
the night before. ‘This is a very meandering stream,  
only a rod or two in. width, but comparatively deep,  
coming in on the righ, fitly enough named Moosehorn,  
whether from its windings or its inhabitants. Tt was  
Dordered here and there by narrow meadows between  
the stream and the endless forest, affording favorable  
places for the moose to feed, and to call them out on.  
‘We proceeded half a mile up this, as through a narrow,  
winding canal, where the tall, dark spruce and firs and  
arbor-vite towered on both sides in the moonlight, form  
ing « perpendicular forest-edge of great height, ike the

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(CHESUNCOOK. 105  
  
spires of a Venice in the forest. In two places stood a  
‘small stack of hay on the bank, ready for the Iumberer’s  
ruse in the winter, looking strange enough there. Woe  
thought of the day when this might be a brook winding  
through smooth-shaven meadows on some geutlem:  
grounds; and seen by moonlight then, excepting the  
forest that now hems it in, how little changed it would  
appear!  
  
‘Again and again Joe called the moose, placing the  
canoe close by some favorable point of meadow for them  
to come out on, but listened in vain to hear one come  
rushing through the woods, and concluded that they had  
‘been hunted too much thereabouts. We saw, many  
times, what to our imaginations looked like a gigantic  
moose, with his horns peering from out the forest-edge;  
but we saw the forest only, and not its inhabitants that  
night. So at last we tuned about. ‘There was now a  
Title fog on the water, though it was a fine, clear night  
above. There were very few sounds to break the still  
ness of the forest. Several times we heard the hooting  
of a great horned-onl, as at home, and told Joe that I  
‘would call out the moose for him, for he made a sound  
considerably like the horn, —bat Joe answered, that the  
‘moose had heard that sound a thousand times, and knew  
better; and oftener still we were startled by the plunge  
of a musquash. Once, when Joe had called again, and  
wwe were listening for moose, we heard, come faintly  
echoing, or ereeping from far, through the moss-clad  
aiales, a dull, dry, rushing sound, with a solid core to it,  
yet as if half smothered under the grasp of the luxurie  
fant and fungus-like forest, like the shatting of a door in  
some distant entry of the damp and shagay wilderness,  
  
If we had not been there, no mortal had heard it,  
oe

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106 THE MAIRE WooDs.  
  
‘When we asked Joe in a whisper what it was, he an-  
swered,—“Tree fall” ‘There is something singularly  
grand and impressive in the sound of a tree falling in a  
perfectly calm night like this, as if the agencies which  
overthrow it did not need to be excited, but worked with  
1 subile, deliberate, and conscious free, like a boa-con-  
ttrictor, and more effectively then than even in a windy  
day. If there is any such difference, perhaps it is be-  
trees with the dews of the night on them are  
than by day.  
  
Having reached the camp, about ten o'clock, we kine  
dled our fire and went to bed. Each of ,us had a  
Dlanket, in which he lay on the fr-twigs, with his ex-  
tremities toward the fire, but nothing over his head. Tt  
‘was worth the while to lie down in a country where you  
could afford such great fires; that was one whole side,  
fand the bright side, of our world. We had first rolled  
up a large log some eighteen inches through and ten feet  
Jong, for a back-log, to last all night, and then piled on  
the trees to the height of three or four feet, no matter  
hhow green or damp. In fact, we burned as much wood  
that night as would, with economy and an air-tight stove,  
last a poor family in one of our cities all winter. It was,  
very agreeable, as well as independent, thus lying in the  
‘open air, and the fire kept our uncovered extremities  
warm enough. ‘The Jesuit missionaries used to say,  
‘that in their journeys with the Indians in Canada, they  
Jay on a bed which had never been shaken up since thé  
creation, unless by earthquakes. It is surprising with  
‘what impanity and comfort one who has always Iain in  
‘a warm bed in a close apartment, and studiously avoided  
drafts of air, can lie down on the ground withcut a shel-  
ter, roll himself in a blanket, and sleep before a fire, in

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. (CHESUNCOOK. 107  
  
a frosty, autumn night, just after a long rainstorm, and  
‘even come soon to enjoy and value the fresh air.  
  
I lay awake awhile, watching the ascent of the sparks  
through the firs, and sometimes their descent in half  
extinguished cinders on my blanket. ‘They were as  
interesting as fireworks, going up in endless, successive  
‘rowds, each after an explosion, in an eager, serpentine  
course, some to five or six rods above the tree-tops be-  
fore they went out. We do not suspect how much our  
chimneys have concealed; and now airtight stoves have  
come to conceal all the rest. In the course of the night,  
T got up once or twice and put fresh logs on the fire,  
making my companions curl up their legs.  
  
‘When we awoke in the morning, (Saturday, Septem-  
ber 17,) there was considerable frost whitening the  
leaves. We heard the sound of the chicadee, and a  
fow faintly lisping birds, and also of ducks in the water  
about the island. I took a botanical account of stock of  
four domains before the dew was off, and found that the  
‘ground-hemlock, or American yew, was the prevailing  
undershrub, We breakfasted on tea, hard bread, and  
ducks.  
  
Before the fog had fairly cleared away, we paddled  
down tho stream again, and were soon past the mouth of  
the Mooschorn, ‘These twenty miles of the Penobscot,  
between Moosehead and Chesuncook Lakes, are com-  
paratively smooth, and a great part dead-waters but  
from time to time itis shallow and rapid, with rocks or  
gravel-beds, where you can wade across. ‘There is no  
expanse of water, and no break in the forest, and the  
meadow is a mere edging here and there. ‘There are  
no hills near the river nor within sight, exeept one oF  
two distant mountains seen in a few places. ‘The banks

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108 THE MAINE WOODS,  
  
fare from six to ten feet high, but once or twice rise  
gently to higher ground. In many places the forest on  
the bank was but a thin strip, letting the light through  
from some alder-swamp or meadow behind. ‘The con-  
spicuous berry-bearing bushes and trees along the shore  
‘were the red osier, with its whitish fruit, hobble-busb,  
‘mouritain-ash, tree-cranberry, choke-cherry, now ripe,  
alternate cornel, and naked viburaum. Following Joe's  
example, Tate the fruit of the last, and also of the hob-  
ble-basb, but found them rather insipid and seedy. 1  
looked very narrowly at the vegetation, as we glided  
‘along close to the shore, and frequently made Joe turn  
aside for me to pluck a plant, that I might see by com-  
parison what was primitive about my native river.  
Horehound, horsemint, and the sensitive fern grew close  
to the edge, under the willows and alders, and wool  
grass on the islands, as along the Assabet River in Con-  
cord. It was too late for flowers, except a few asters,  
golden-rods, etc. In several places we noticed the slight  
frame of a camp, such as we had prepared to set up,  
amid the forest by the river-side, where some lumberers  
or hunters had passed a night,—and sometimes steps  
cat in the muddy or clayey bank in front of i  
  
‘We stopped to fish for trout at the mouth of a small  
stream called Ragmuff, which came in from the west,  
bout two miles below the Moosehorn, Here were the  
ruins of an old Iumbering-eamp, and a small space,  
which had formerly been cleared and burned over, was  
now densely overgrown with the red cherry and rasp-  
erties. While we were trying for trout, Joe, Indian-  
like, wandered off up the Ragmuf on his own errands,  
and when we were ready to start was far beyond call  
So we were compelled to make a fire and get our din

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(CHESUNCOOR. 109  
  
nner here, aot to lose time, Some dark reddish birds,  
with grayer females, (perhaps purple finches,) and myr-  
le-birds in their summer dress, hopped within six or  
ight feet of us and our smoke. Perhaps they smelled  
the frying pork. The latter bird, or both, made the  
lisping notes which I had heard in the forest. They  
suggested that the few small birds found in the wilder  
ness are on more familiar terms with the Iumberman  
‘and hunter than those of the orchard and clearing with  
the farmer. T have since found the Canada jay, and  
partridges, both the black and the common, equally  
fame there, as if they had not yet learned to mistrust  
man entirely. The chicadee, which is at home slik  
the primitive woods and in our wood-lots sill retains its  
confidence in the towns to a remarkable degree.  
  
Joe at length returned, after an hour and a half, and  
said that he had been two miles up the stream exploring,  
and had seen # moose, but, not having the gun, he did  
not get him. We made no complaint, but concluded to  
took out for Joo the next time. However, this may  
have been a mere mistake, for we had no reason to coms  
plain of him afterwards. As we continued down the  
stream, I was surprised to hear him whistling “O Sue  
sanna,” and several other such airs, while his padille  
urged us along. Once he said, “Yes, Siree.” His  
‘common word was “ Sartain.” He paddled, as usual, on  
one side only, giving the birch an impulse by using the  
‘side as a falcrum. T asked him how the ribs were fas-  
tened to the side rails, He answered, “I don’t know, I  
never noticed.” Talking with him about subsisting  
wholly on what the woods yielded, game, fish, berries,  
ete, I suggested that his ancestors did so; but he an-  
swered, that be had been brought up in such a way that

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10 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
hhe could not do it, “Yes,” said he, “that’s the way  
‘they got living, like wild fellows, wild as bears. By  
George! I shan't go into the woods without provision,  
—hard bread, pork, ete” He had brought on a barrel  
of hard bread and stored it at the carry for his hunting,  
However, though he was a Governor's son, he had not  
earned to read.  
  
At one place below this, on the east side, where the  
‘bank was higher and drier than usual, rising gently from  
‘the shore to a slight elevation, some one had felled the  
trees over twenty or thirty acres, and left them drying  
in order to burn. ‘This was the only preparation for a  
Ihouse between the Moosehead carry and Chesuncook,  
‘but there was no hut nor inhabitants there yet. The  
pioneer thus selects a site for his house, which will, per-  
‘haps, prove the germ of a town.  
  
‘My eyes were all the while on the trees, distinguish-  
jing between the black and white spruce and the fir.  
‘You paddle along in a narrow eanal through an endless  
forest, and the vision T have in my mind's eye, still, is  
of the small, dark, and sharp tops of tall fr and spruce  
trees, and pagoda-like arbor-vites, crowded together on  
each side, with various hard woods, intermixed. Some  
of the arbor-vitms were at least sixty feet high. ‘The  
hard woods, occasionally occurring exclusively, were less  
wild to my eye. I fancied them ornamental grounds,  
with farm-houses in the rear. ‘The canoe and yellow  
birch, beech, maple, and elm are Saxon and Norman;  
but the spruce and fir, and pines generally, are Indian.  
‘The soft engravings which adorn the annuals give no  
idea of a stream in such a wilderness as this. The  
rough sketches in Jackson’s Reports on the Geology of  
‘Maine answer much better. At one place we saw a)

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CHESUNCOOK. ut  
  
small grove of slender sapling white-pines, the only col-  
lection of pines that I saw on this voyage. Here and  
there, however, was a full-grown, tall, and slender, but  
defective one, what lambermen call a konchus tree,  
which they ascertain with their axes, or by the knots.  
T did not learn whether this word was Indian or Eng-  
lish. It reminded me of the Greek xéyyn, @ conch or  
shell, and Iamused myself with fancying that it might  
signify the dead sound which the trees yield when  
struck. All the rest of the pines had been driven off  
  
How far men go for the material of their houses!  
The inhabitants of the most civilized cities, in all ages,  
fend into far, primitive forests, beyond the bounds of  
their civilization, where the moose and bear and savage  
dwell, for their pine-boards for ordinary use. And, on  
the other hand, the savage soon receives from cites, iron  
sarrow-points, batchets, and guns, to point his savageness  
with.  
  
‘The solid and well-defined fir-tops, like sharp and  
regular spear-heads, black against the sky, gave a pocu-  
liar, dark, and sombre look to the forest. The spruce-  
tops have a similar, but more ragged outline, — their  
shafts also merely feathered below. The firs were  
tomewhat oftener regular and dense pyramids. I was  
ruck by this universal spiring upward of the forest  
evergreens. ‘The tendency is to slender, spiring tops,  
while they are narrower below. Not only the spruce  
and fir, but even the arbor-vite and white-pine, unlike  
the soft, spreading second-growth, of which T saw none,  
all spire upwards, lifting a dense spear-head of cones to  
the light and air, at any rate, while their branches strag-  
gle after as they may; a8 Indians li the ball over the  
hheads of the crowd in their desperate game. In this

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ug ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
they resemble grasses, as also palms somewhat. ‘The  
hhemlock is commonly @ tentlike pyramid from the  
ground to its summit.  
  
‘After passing through some long rips, and by a large  
island, wo reached an interesting part of the river called  
the Pine-Stream Dead-Water, about six miles below  
Ragmuff, where the river expanded to thirty rods in  
‘width and had many islands in it, with elms and canoe-  
birches, now yellowing, along the shore, and we got our  
first sight of Ktaadn,  
  
‘Here, about two o'clock, we turned up a small branch  
three or four rods wide, which comes in on the right  
from the south, called Pine-Stream, to look for moose  
figns, We had gone but a few rods before we eaw very  
recent signs along the water's edge, the mud lifted up by  
their feet being quite fresh, and Joe declared that they  
hhad gone along there but a short time before. We soon  
reached @ small meadow on the east side, at an angle in  
the stream, which was, for the most patt, densely cov  
ered with alders. As we were advancing along the edge  
of this, rather more quietly than usual, perhaps, on  
account of the freshness of the signs,— the design be-  
ing to camp up this stream, if it promised well, —1  
heard a slight crackling of twigs deep in the alders, and  
turned Joe's attention to it; whereupon he began to push  
the canoe back rapidly; and we had receded thus half a  
dozen rods, when we suddenly spied two moose standing  
just on the edge of the open part of the meadow which  
‘wo had passed, not more than six or seven rods distant,  
looking round the alders at us. ‘They made me think  
of great frightened rabbits, with their long ears and half  
inquisitive, half-frightened looks; the true denizens of  
‘the forest, (I saw at once) filing a vacuum which now

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(CHESUNCOOK. us  
  
first I discovered had not been filled for me,— moose  
men, wood-eaters, the word is said to mean,—clad in a  
sort of Vermont gray, or homespun. Our Nimrod, ow-  
ing to the retrograde movement, was now the farthest  
from the game; but being warned of its neighborhood,  
he hastily stood up, and, while we ducked, fired over our  
hheads one barrel at the foremost, which alone he saw,  
though he did not know what kind of creature it was;  
‘whereupon this one dashed across the meadow and up a  
high bank on the northeast, so rapidly as to leave but an  
indistinct impression ofits outlines on my mind. At the  
same instant, the other, a young one, but as tall as a  
horse, leaped out into the stream, in full sight, and there  
stood cowering for a moment, or rather its disproportion=  
ate lowness behind gave it that appearance, and uttering  
two or three trumpeting squeaks. Ihave an indistinct  
recollection of seeing the old one pause an instant on the  
top of the bank in the woods, look toward its shivering  
‘young, and then dash away again. ‘The second barrel  
wwas levelled at the calf, and when we expected to see it  
drop in the water, after a little hesitation, it, too, got out  
of the water, and dashed up the hill, though in a some~  
‘what different direction. All this was the work of a few  
seconds, and our hunter, having never seen a moose be-  
fore, did not know but they were deer, for they stood  
partly in the water, nor whether he had fired at the same  
‘one twice or not From the style in which they went  
off, and the fact that he was not used to standing up and  
firing from a canoe, I judged that we should not seo  
anything more of them. ‘The Indi that they  
‘were a cow and her calf,—a yearling, or perhaps two  
years old, for they accompany their dams so long; but,  
for my part, I had not noticed much difference in theie

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us ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
size, Tt was but two or three rods across the meadow  
to the foot of the bank, which, like all the world there-  
abouts, was densely wooded; but I was surprised to  
notice, that, as coon as the'moose had passed behind the  
veil of the woods, there was no sound of footsteps to be  
hheard from the soft, damp moss which carpets that for-  
est, and long before we landed, perfect silence reigned.  
‘Joe said, “If you wound ’em moose, me sure get ’em.”  
‘We all landed at once. My companion reloaded ; the  
Indian fastened his bireb, threw off his hat, adjusted his  
waistband, seized the hatchet, and set out. He told me  
afterward, casually, that before we landed he had seen «|  
rop of blood on the bank, when it was two or three  
rods off: He proceeded rapidly up the bank and through  
the woods, with a peculiar, elastic, noiseless, and stealthy  
tread, looking to right and left on the ground, and step-  
ping in the faint tracks of the wounded moose, now  
and then pointing in silence to a single drop of blood on  
the handsome, shining leaves of the Clintonia Borealis,  
which, on every side, covered the ground, or to @ dry  
. fernstem freshly broken, all the while chewing some  
leaf or else the spruce gum. I followed, watching his  
‘motions more than the trail of the moose. After follow-  
{ng the trail about forty rods in @ pretty direct course,  
stepping over fallen trees and winding between standing  
‘ones, he at length lost it, for there were many other  
‘moose-tracks there, and, returning once more to the last  
Dlood-stain, traced it a little way and lost it again, and,  
too soon, I thought, for @ good hunter, gave it up en-  
tirely. He traced a few steps, also, the tracks of the  
calf but, seeing no blood, soon relinguished the search.  
J observed, while he was tracking the moose, a cer-  
tain reticence or moderation in him. He did not com

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municate several observations of interest which he  
‘made, as a white man would have done, though they  
may have leaked out afterward. At another time, when  
wwe heard a slight crackling of twigs and he landed to  
reconnoitre, he stepped lightly and gracefully, stealing  
through the bushes with the least possible noise, in a  
no white man does, —as it were, finding  
1 place for hie foot each time,  
  
‘About half an hour after seeing the moose, we pur  
sued our voyage up Pine-Stream, and soon, coming to a  
part. which was very shoal and also rapid, we took out  
the baggage, and proceeded to carry it round, while Joe  
got up with the canoe alone. We were just completing  
our portage and I was absorbed in the plants, admiring  
the leaves of the aster macrophylius, ten inches wide  
tnd plucking the seeds of the great round-leaved orchis,  
when Joe exclaimed from the stream that he had killed  
‘moose. He had found the cow-moose lying dead, but  
quite warm, in the middle of the stream, which was so  
shallow that it rested on the bottom, with hardly a third  
of its body above water. It was about an hour after it  
was shot, and it was swollen with water. It bad run  
about « bundred rods and sought the stream again, cut-  
ting off @ slight bend. No doubt, a better hunter would,  
sve tracked it to this spot at once. I was surprised at  
its great size, horse-like, but Joe eaid it was not a large  
‘cow-moose. My companion went in search of the calf  
again. I took hold of the ears of the moose, while Joo  
pushed his canoe down stream toward a favorable shore,  
and so we made out, though with some difficulty, its lng.  
nose frequently sticking in the bottom, to drag it into  
still shallower water. Tt was a brownish black, or per-  
Ibnps a dark iron-gray, on the back and sides, but lighter

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16 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘beneath and in front. I took the cord which served for  
the canoe’s painter, and with Joe's assistance measured  
it carefully, the greatest distances first, making « knot  
each time. ‘The painter being wanted, T reduced these  
‘measures that night with equal care to lengths and frac~  
tiors of my umbrella, beginning with the smallest meas  
tures, and untying the knots as I proceeded; and when  
we arrived at Chesuncook the next day, finding a two-  
foot rule there, I reduced the last to feet and inches;  
‘and, moreover, I made myself @ two-foot rule of a thin  
‘and narrow strip of black ash which would fold up  
conveniently to six inches. All this pains I took be-  
cause I did not wish to be obliged to say merely that  
the moose was very large. Of the various dimensions  
which I obtained I will mention only two. ‘The dis  
tance from the tips of the hoofs of the fore-feet, stretched,  
out, to the top of the back between the shoulders, was  
even feet and five inches. I can hardly believe my  
own measure, for this is about two feet greater than tho  
height of a tall horse. [ndeed, I am now satisfied that  
this measurement was incorrect, but the other measures  
given here I can warrant to be correct, having proved  
them in a more tecent visit to those woods.] ‘The ex-  
treme length was eight feet and two inches. Another  
‘cow-moose, which I have since measured in those woods  
with a tape, was just six feet from the tip of the hoof  
to the shoulders, and eight feet long as she lay.  
  
When afterward I asked an Indian at the carry how  
muck taller the male was, he answeréd, “Eighteen  
inches,” and made me observe the height of a cross-stake  
over the fire, more than four feet from the ground, to  
give me some idea of the depth of his chest. Another  
Indian, at Oldtown, told me that they were nine feet

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high to the top of the back, and that one which he  
tried weighed eight hundred pounds. The length of  
the spinal projections between the shoulders is very  
great. A white hunter, who was the best authority  
‘among hunters that I could have, told me that the  
male was not eighteen inches taller than the female;  
‘yet he agreed that he was sometimes nine feet high to  
the top of the back, and weighed a thousand pounds.  
Only the male has horns, and they rise two feet or  
more above the shoulders,— spreading three or four,  
and sometimes six feet,—which would make him in  
all, sometimes, eleven feet high! According to this cal-  
celation, the moose is as tall though it may not be as  
large, as the great Irish elk, Megaceros Hibernicus, of  
‘a former period, of which Mantell says that it “very  
far exceeded in magnitude any living species, the skele-  
ton” being “upward of ten feet high from the ground  
to the highest point of the antlers” Joe said, that,  
‘though the moose shed the whole horn annually, etch  
new hom has an additional prong; but I have noticed  
that they sometimes have more prongs on one side  
than on the other. Iwas struck with the delicacy and  
tenderness of the hoofs, which divide very far up, and  
the one half could be pressed very much behind tho  
other, thus probably making the animal surer-footed on  
the uneven ground and slippery moss-covered logs of  
the primitive forest. They were very unlike the sti  
‘and battered feet of our horses and oxen. The bare,  
horny part of the fore-foot was just six inches long,  
tnd the two portions could be separated four inches at  
the extremities.  
  
‘The moose is singularly grotesque and awkward to  
look at. Why sbould it stand so high at the shoulders?

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us THE MAINE WOODS. -  
  
‘Why nave 00 long a head? Why hive no tail to epeak  
of? for in my examination I overlooked it entirely.  
‘Naturalists say it ia an inch and a half long. It re-  
jed me at once of the camelopard, high before and  
  
low behind, — and no wonder, for, like it, itis fitted to  
Dbrowse on trees. ‘The upper lip projected two inches  
yond the lower for this purpose. ‘This was the kind  
‘of man that was at home there; for, as near as I can  
Tear, that has never been the residence, but rather  
‘the hunting-ground of the Indian. ‘The moose will  
perhaps one day become extinct; but how naturally  
then, when it exists only as a fossil relic, and unseen  
  
‘as that, may the poet or sculptor invent @ fabulous  
animal with similar branching and leafy horns,—a sort  
  
‘of fucus or lichen in bone,— to be the inhabitant of  
uch a forest as  
‘ere, just at the head of the murmuring rapids, Joe  
  
now proceeded to skin the moose with a pocket-knife,  
while I looked on; and a tragical business it was,—to  
  
see that still warm and palpitating body pierced with  
  
‘a knife, to see the warm milk stream from the rent  
udder, and the ghastly naked red carcass appearing  
from within its seemly robe, which was made to hide  
  
it, The ball had passed through the shoulder-blade  
diagonally and lodged under the skin on the opposite  
side, and was partially flattened. My companion keeps  
  
it to show to his grandchildren. He has the shanks of  
another moose which he has since shot, skinned and  
stuffed, ready to be made into boots by patting in a 1  
leather sole. Joe said, if moose stood fronting you,  
you must not fire, but advance toward him, for he will  
‘turn slowly and give you a fair shot. In the bed of  
  
> this narrow, wild, and rocky stream, between two lofty

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walls of spruce and firs, a mere cleft in the forest which  
the stream had made, this work went on. At length  
Joe had stripped off the hide and dragged it trailing to  
the shore, declaring that it weighed a hundred pounds,  
though probably fifty would have been nearer the truth.  
He cut off a large mass of the meat to earry along, and  
another, together with the tongue and nose, he put with  
the hide on the shore to lie there all night, or till we  
returned. I was surprised that he thought of leaving  
‘meat thus exposed by the side of the carcans, as  
the simplest course, not fearing that any creature would  
touch it; but nothing did. ‘This could hardly have  
‘happened on the bank of one of our rivers in the east  
em part of Massachusetts; but I suspect that fewer  
small wild animals are prowling there than with us.  
‘Twice, however, in this excursion I had a glimpse of a  
epecies of large mouse.  
  
‘This stream was so withdrawn, and the moose-tracks  
‘were #0 freab, that my companions, still bent on bunt-  
ing, concluded to go farther up it and camp, and then  
hhunt up or down at night. Half a mile above this, at  
1a place where I saw the aster puniceus and the beaked  
hazel, as we paddled along, Joe, hearing a slight rusting  
amid the alders, and seeing something black about two  
ods off jumped up and whispered, « Bear !” bat before  
the hunter had discharged his piece, he corrected him-  
self to “Beaver!” —“ Hedgehog!” The bullet filled  
‘large hedgehog more than two feet and eight inches  
long. The quills were rayed out and flattened on the  
hhindér part of its back, even as if it had Iain on that  
part, but were erect and long between this and the tail.  
‘Their points, closely examined, were seen to be finely  
bearded or barbed, and shaped like an awl, that is, a

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120 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
Tittle concave, to give the barbs effect. After about a  
rile of still water, we prepared our camp on the right  
side, just at the foot of a considerable fall. Little chop-  
ping was done that night, for fear of scaring the moose.  
‘We had moose-meat fried for supper. Tt tasted like  
tender beef, with perhaps more flavor,— sometimes like  
veal.  
  
“After supper, the moon having risen, we proceeded to  
hhunt a mile up this stream, first “carrying” about the  
fall, We made a picturesque sight, wending single-fle  
along the shore, climbing over rocks and loge, — Joe,  
‘who brought up the rear, twirling his canoe in his hands  
‘as if it were a feather, in places where it was difftcult  
to got along without a burden. We launched the canoe  
again from the ledge over which the stream fell, but  
after half a mile of still water, suitable for bunting, it  
became rapid again, and we were compelled to make  
our way along the shore, while Joc endeavored to get  
up in the birch alone, though it was still very difficult  
for him to pick his way amid the rocks in the night.  
‘We on the shore found the worst of walking, a perfect  
chaos of fallen and drifted trees, and of bushes project-  
ing far over the water, and now and then we made our  
‘way across the mouth of a %mall tributary on a kind  
of network of alders. So we went tumbling on in  
the dark, being on the shady side, effectually searing  
all the moose and bears that might be thereabouts.  
At length we eame to a standstill, and Joe went forward  
to reconnoitre ; but he reported that it was still a con-  
tinuous rapid as far as he went, or half a mile, with  
no prospect of improvement, as if it were coming down,  
from a mountain. So we turned about, bunting back  
to the camp through the still water. It was a splendid

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moonlight night, and I, getting sleepy as it grew laie,—  
for I had nothing to do,—found it difficult to realize  
where I was. This stream was much more unfie-  
quented than the main one, lumbering operations being  
tno longer carried on in this quarter. It was only three  
‘or four rods wide, but the firs and spruce through whieh  
it tricklcd seemed yet taller by contrast. Being in this  
Areamy state, which the moonlight enhanced, I did not  
clearly discern the shore, but seemed, most of the time,  
to be floating through ornamental grounds, — for T as-  
‘sociated the firtops with such scenes; — very high up  
some Broadway, and beneath or between their tops,  
I thought I saw an endless succession of portioos and  
‘columns, comices and fagades, verandas and churches  
I did not merely fancy this, but in my drowsy state  
ssuch was the illusion. I fairly lost myself in sleep  
several times, still dreaming of that architecture and  
the nobility that dwelt behind and might issue from its  
bbut all at once I would be aroused and brought back  
to a sense of my actual position by the sound of Joe's  
birch horn in the midst of all this silence calling the  
‘moose, ugh, ugh, 00-00-00-00-00-00, and I prepared to  
hear a furious moose come rushing and crashing through  
the forest, and see him burst out on to the little strip of  
meadow by our side.  
  
But, on more accounts than one, T had had enough  
fof moose-hunting. I had not come to the woods for  
this purpose, nor had I forescen it, though I had been  
willing to learn how the Indian mancuvred ; but one  
moose killed was as good, if not as bad, as a dozen,  
The afternoon's tragedy, and my share in it, as it af  
fected the innocence, destroyed the pleasure of my ad-  
  
venture, It is true, I came av near as is possible to

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122 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
   
  
come to being a hunter and mise it, myself; and as it  
is, think that T could spend a year in the woods, fish-  
fing and hunting, just enough to sustain myself,  
satisfction. This would be next to living like a phic  
Josopher on the fruits of the earth which you had raised,  
which also attracts me. But this bunting of the moose  
merely for the satisfaction of killing him,—not even  
for the sake of his hide,— without making any extraom  
dinary exertion or running any risk yourself, is too  
ouch like going out.by night to some wood-side pasture  
‘and shooting your neighbor's horses. ‘These are Goi’s  
‘own horses, poor, timid creatures, that will run fast  
enough as soon as they smell you, though they are nine  
fect high. Joo told us of some hunters who a year or  
‘two before ad shot down several oxen by mi  
where in the Maine woods, mistaking them for moose.  
And so might any of the hunters; and what isthe aif  
ference in the sport, but the name? In the former case,  
having killed one of God's and your own oxen, you strip,  
‘off its hide,— because that is the common trophy, and,  
moreover, you have heard that it may be sold for moc~  
ceasing, —cut a steak from its haunches, and leave the  
hhuge carcass to smell to heaven for you. It is no better,  
at least, than to assist at a slaughter-house,  
  
This afternoon's experience suggested to me how base  
‘or coarse are the motives which commonly carry men |  
into the wilderness. ‘The explorers and lumberers gen- |  
erally are all hieelings, paid so much a day for their |  
labor, and as auch they have no more love for wild  
ature than wood-sawyers have for forests. Other white  
men and Indians who como here are for the most part |  
hunters, whose object is to slay as many moose and  
‘other wild animals as possible. But, pray, could not

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fone spend some wecks or years in the solitude of this  
‘vast wilderness with other employments than these, —  
employments perfectly sweet and innocent and enno-  
ling? For one that comes with a pencil to sketch or  
fing, a thonsand come with an axe or rifle. What a  
‘coarse and imperfect use Indians and hunters make of  
Nature! No wonder that their race is 90 soon exter  
inated. I already, and for weeks afterward, felt my  
nature the coarser for this part of my woodland ex-  
perience, and was reminded that our life should be  
lived as tenderly and daintily as one would pluck a  
flower.  
  
‘With these thoughts, when we reached our eamping-  
ground, I decided to leave my companions to continue  
moose-hunting down the stream, while I prepared the  
camp, though they requested me not to chop much nor  
make a large fire, for fear I should scare their game.  
Jn the midst of the damp fir-wood, high on the mossy  
Dank, about nine o'clock of this bright moonlight night,  
I kindled fire, when they were gone, and, sitting on  
the Sirtwigs, within sound of the falls, examined by its  
light the botanical specimens which I had collected that  
afternoon, and wrote down some of the reflections which  
T have here expanded; or I walked along the shore and.  
gazed up the stream, where the whole space above the  
falls was filled with mellow light. As I sat before the  
fire on my fir-twig seat, without walls above or around  
me, I remembered how far on every hand that wilder-  
ness stretched, before you came to cleared or cultivated  
fields, and wondered if any bear or moose was watchiug  
the light of my fre; for Nature looked sternly upon me  
‘on account of the murder of the moose.  
  
Strange that so few ever come to the woods to see

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124 THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
hhow the pine lives and grows and spires, lifting its ever:  
‘green arms to the light, — to see its perfect success ; but  
‘most are content to behold it in the shape of many  
broad beards brought to market, and deem that its true  
success! But the pine is no more lumber than man is,  
‘and to be made into boards and houses is no more its  
true and highest use than the truest use of a man is to  
be cut down and made into manure. ‘There is a higher  
Jaw affecting our relation to pines as well as to men. A.  
pine cut down, a dead pine, is no more a pine than a  
dead human carcage is man. Can he who has discov-  
ered only some of the values of whalebone and whale  
oil be said to have discovered the true use of the whale?  
Can he who slays the elephant for his ivory be said to  
have “seen the elephant”? ‘These are petty and acc  
ental uses; just as if @ stronger race were to kill us in  
order to make buttons and flagecléts of our bones for  
everything may serve @ lower as well as a higher use.  
Every creature is better alive than dead, men and moose  
and pine-trees, and he who understands it aright will  
rather preserve its life thay destroy it.  
  
Is it the lumberman, then, who is the friend and lover  
of the pine, stands nearest to it, and understands its  
nature best? Is it the tanner who has barked it, or he  
who as boxed it for turpentine, whom posterity will  
fable to have been changed into pine at last? No!  
no! it is the poet; he it is who makes the truest use of  
the pine,—who does not fondle it with an axe, nor  
tickle it with a saw, nor stroke it with a plane, — who  
knows whether its heart is false without eutting into it,  
—who has not bought the stumpage of the township on  
which it stands, All the pines shudder and heave a sigh  
‘when that man steps on the forest floor. No, it is the

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poet, who loves them as his own shedow in the air, and  
Tets them stand. I have been into the lumber-yaré, and  
the carpenter’s shop, and the tannery, and the lampblack-  
factory, and the tarpentine clearing; but when at length  
I saw the tops of the pines waving and reflecting tho  
light at a distance high over all the rest of the forest, I  
realized that the former were not the highest use of tho  
pine. It is not their bones or hide or tallow that I love  
most. It is the living spirit of the tree, not its spirit of  
turpentine, with which I sympathize, and which heals  
my cuts. It is as immortal as Iam, and perchance will  
¢g0 to as high a heaven, there to tower above me still.  
  
Erelong, the hunters returned, not having seen a  
‘moose, but, in consequence of my suggestions, bringing  
fa quarter of the dead one, which, with ourselves, made  
quite a load for the canoe.  
  
After breakfasting on moose-meat, we retumed down  
Pine Stream on our way to Chesuncook Lake, whieh  
‘was about five miles distant. We could see the red car-  
cass of the moose lying in Pine Stream when nearly  
half a mile off Just below the mouth of this stream  
were the most considerable rapids between the two  
lakes, called Pide-Stream Falls, where were large fat  
rrocks washed smooth, and at this time you could  
‘wade across above them. Joe ran dowa alone while we  
‘walked over the portage, my companion collecting spruce  
gum for his friends at home, and I looking for flowers.  
‘Near the lake, which we were approaching with as much  
expectation as if it, had been a university, —for itis not  
often that the stream of our life opens into such expan-  
sions,— were islands, and a low and meadowy shore  
with scattered trees, birches, white and yellow, slanted.  
over the water, and maples, — many of the white birches

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126 ‘THE MAINE WooDSs.  
  
killed, apparently by inundations. ‘There was consider  
‘able native grase; and even a few caitle—whose move~  
‘ments we heard, though we did not see them, mistaking  
‘them at first for moose — were pastured there.  
  
On entering the lake, where the stream runs southe  
easterly, and for some time before, we had a view of the  
mountains about Ktaadn, (Katahdinauguoh one says  
they are called,) like a cluster of blue fungi of rank  
growth, apparently twenty-five or thirty miles distant, in  
‘a southeast direction, their summits concealed by clouds.  
‘Joe called some of them the Souadneunk mountains.  
‘This is the name of a stream there, which another In-  
dian told us meant “Running between mountains”  
‘Though some lower summits were afterward uncovered,  
we got no more complete view of Kinadn while we were  
in the woods. The clearing to which we were bound  
was on the right of the mouth of the river, and was  
reached by going round a low point, where the water  
was shallow to a great distance from the shore. Che-  
suncook Lake extends northwest and southeast, and is  
called eighteen miles Jong and three wide, without an  
island. We had entered the northwest comer of it, and  
‘hen near the shore could see only part way down it.  
‘Tho principal mountains visible from the land here were  
those already mentioned, between southeast and east,  
and a few summits a litle west of north, but generally:  
the north and northwest horizon about the St. Jobn and  
the British boundary was comparatively level.  
  
Ansell Smith’s, the oldest and principal clearing about  
this Inke, appeared to be quite a harbor for bateaur and  
‘canoes; seven or eight of the former were lying about,  
and there was a small scow for bay, and a capstan on a  
platform, now high and dry, ready to be floated! and ane

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chored to tow rafts with. It was a very primitive kind  
of harbor, where boats were drawn up amid the stuimps,  
—such a one, methought, as the Argo might have been  
launched in. ‘There were five other huts with small  
earings on the opposite side of the lake, all at this end  
and visible from this point. One of the Smiths told me  
that it was so far cleared that they came here to live  
and built the present house four years beforg, though  
the family had been here but a few months.  
  
Twas interested to see how a pioneer lived on this  
side of the country. His life is in some respects more  
‘adventurous than that of his brother: in the West for  
he contends with winter as well as the wilderness, and  
there is a greater interval of time at least between him  
‘and the army which isto follow. Here immigration is a  
tide which may ebb when it has swept away the pines;  
there it is not a tide, but an inundation, and roads and  
‘other improvements come steadily rushing after.  
  
‘As we approached the log-house, a dozen rods from  
the lake, and considerably elevated abore it, the project-  
ing ends of the logs lapping over each other irregularly  
several feet at the comers gave it a very rich and pictu>  
esque look, far removed from the meanness of weather-  
boards. It was a very spacious, low building, about  
‘eighty feet long, with many large apartments. ‘The wal  
‘were well clayed between the logs, which were large and  
roand,’except on the upper and under sides, and as vise  
ible inside as out, suecessive bulging cheeks gradually  
lessening upwards and tuned to each other with the axe,  
like Pandean pipes. Probably the musial forest-gods bad  
not yet cast them aside; they never do till they are split,  
or the bark is gone. It was a style of architecture not  
described by Vitruvius, I suspect, though possibly hinted

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128 ‘THE MAINE Woos.  
  
at in the biography of Orpheus; none of your filled  
or fluted columns, which have cut such false swell.  
and support nothing but a gable end and their builder’s  
pretensions, — that is, with the multitude; and as for  
“ornamentation,” one of those words with a dead tail  
which architects very properly use to describe their flour-  
inhes, there were the lichens and mosses and fringes of  
bark, which nobody troubled himself about, We oer-  
tainly leave the handsomest paint and clapboards be-  
hind in the woods, when we strip off the bark and poison  
ourselves with whitelead in the towns. We get but  
half the spoils of the forest. For beauty, give me trees  
with the fur on. This house was designed and con-  
structed with the freedom of stroke of a forester’s axe,  
without other compass and square than Nature uses,  
‘Wherever the logs were cut off by a window or door,  
that is, were not kept in place by alternate overlapping,  
they were held one upon another by very large pins,  
driven in diagonally on each side, where branches might  
hhave been, and then ent off #0 close up and down as not  
to project beyond the bulge of the log, as if the logs  
lasped each other in their arms. These logs were posts,  
studs, boards, clapboards,laths, plaster, and nails, all in  
fone. Where the citizen uses a mere sliver or board, the  
pioneer uses the whole trunk of a tree. ‘The house had  
large stone chimneys, and was roofed with spruce-bark.  
‘The windows were imported, all but the casings. One  
end was a regular logger’s camp, for the boarders, with  
the usual fir floor and Jog benches. Thus this house was  
but a slight departure from the hollow tree, which the  
bear still inhabits,— being a hollow made with trees  
piled up, with a coating of bark like its original.  
  
‘The cellar was a separate building, like an ice-house,

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CHESUNCOOK. 129  
  
and it answered for a refrigerator at this season, our  
moose-meat being kept there. It was a potato-hole with  
‘a permanent roof. Each struetare and institution here  
‘was 90 primitive that you could at once refer it to its  
source; but our buildings commonly suggest neither theie  
origin nor their purpose. ‘There was a large, and what  
farmers would call handsome, bara, part of whose boards  
hhad been sawed by a whip-saw; and the saw-pit, with its  
great pile of dust, remained before the house. ‘The long  
split shingles on @ portion of the barn were laid a foot  
to the weather, suggesting what kind of weather they  
have there. Grant’s bara at Caribou Lake was said to  
be otill larger, the biggest ox-nest in the woods, fifty fect  
by a bundred. Think of a monster barn in that p  
  
tive forest lifting its gray back ‘above the tree-tops!  
‘Man makes very much such a nest for bis domestic ani-  
mals, of withered grass and fodder, as the squirrels and  
many other wild creatures do for themselves.  
  
‘There was also a blacksmith’s shop, where plainly a  
.g00d deal of work was done. ‘The oxen and horses used  
‘in lumbering operations were shod, and all the iron-work  
of sleds, ete, was repaired or made here. I saw them  
load a dateaw at the Mooschead carry, the next Tuesday,  
‘with about thirteen hundred weight of bar iron for this  
shop. This reminded me how primitive and honorable  
‘atrade was Vulean’s, I do not hear that there was any  
carpenter or tailor among the gods. ‘The smith seems to  
Ihave preceded these and every other mechanic at Che~  
ftuncook as well as on Olympus, and bis family is the  
most widely dispersed, whether he be christened John o  
Ansell  
  
‘Smith owned two miles down the lake by half a mile  
{a width, ‘There were about one hundred acres cleared  
  
o x

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130 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
here. He ent seventy tons of English hay this year on  
‘this ground, and twenty more on another clearing, and  
‘he uses it all himself in lumbering operations. ‘The barn  
‘was erowded with pressed hay and a machine to press it.  
‘Thero was a large garden full of roots, turnips beets, ear  
rots, potatoes, etc, all of great size. ‘They said that they  
‘were worth as much here as in New York. I suggested  
some currants for sauce, especially as they had no apple  
trees set out, and showed how easily they could be ob-  
tained.  
  
‘There was the usual long-handled axe of the primitive  
‘woods by the door, three and a half feet long, —for my  
new black-ash rule was in constant use,—and a large,  
shaggy dog, whose nose, report said, was full of poreu~  
pine quills. I can testify that he looked very sober.  
‘This is the usual fortune of pioneer dogs, for they have  
to face the brunt of the battle for their race, and act the  
part of Arnold Winkelried without intending it If he  
should invite one of his town friends up this way, eug-  
gesting moose-meat and unlimited freedom, the latter  
‘might pertinently inquire, \* What is that sticking in your  
nose?” When a generation or two-have used up all the  
‘enemies’ darts, their successors lead a comparatively easy  
life. We owe to our fathers analogous blessings. Many  
‘ld people receive pensions for no other reason, it seems  
to me, but as a compensation for having lived a long  
time ago. No doubt our town dogs still talk, in a snuf-  
‘fing way, about the days that tried dogs’ noses. How  
they got a cat up there I do not know, for they are as  
shy as my aunt about entering a canoe. I wondered  
that she did not run up a tree on the ways but perhaps  
the was bewildered by the very erowd of opportunities,  
  
‘Twenty or thirty lumberers, Yankee and Canadian,

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CHESUNCOOK. 13t  
  
   
  
were comiug and going, — Aleck among the rest, —and  
from time to time an Indian touched here. In the wine  
ter there are sometimes a hundred men lodged here at  
‘once. ‘The most interesting piece of news that circulated  
among them appeared to be, that four horses belonging  
to Smith, worth seven hundred dollars, had passed by  
farther into the woods a week before.  
  
The white-pine-tree was at the bottom or farther end  
of all this. tis a war against the pines, the only real  
Aroostook or Penobscot war. I have no doubt that they  
lived pretty much the same sort of life in the Homeric  
age, for men have always thought more of eating than  
of fighting; then, as now, their minds ran chiefly on the  
hot bread and sweet cakes”; and the fur and lumber  
trade is an old story to Asia and Europe. I doubt if  
men ever made a trade of heroism. In the days of  
Achilles, even, they delighted in big barns, and perchance  
in pressed hay, and he who possessed the most valuable  
team was the best fellow.  
  
‘We had designed to go on at evening up the Caucom-  
gomoe, whose mouth was a mile or two distant to the  
lake of the same name, about ten miles off; but some  
Indians of Joe’s acquaintance, who were making canoes  
on the Caucomgomoc, came over from that side, and gave  
0 poor an account of the moose-hunting, so many had  
been killed there lately, that my companions concluded  
not to go there. Joe spent this Sunday and the night  
with is acquaintances. ‘The lumberers told me that  
there were many moose hereabouts, but no caribou oF  
deer. A man from Oldtown had killed ten or twelve  
moose, within a year, so near the house that they haard  
all bis guns. His name may have been Hercules, for  
‘aught I know, though I should rather have expected to

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182 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
hear the rattling of his club; but, no doubt, he keeps  
ppace with the improvements of the age, and uses a  
Sharpe's rifle now; probably he gets all his armor made  
and repaired at Smith’s shop. One moose had been  
Killed and another shot at within sight of the house  
within two years. I do not know whether Smith has yet  
got a poet to look after the cattle, which, on account of  
the early breaking up of the ice, are compelied to sum-  
‘mer in the woods, but F would suggest this office to such  
‘of my acquaintances as love to write verses and go a-  
gunning.  
  
‘After a dinner, at whieh apple-eauee was the greatest  
luxury to me, but our moose-meat was oftenest called for  
by the lumberers, I walked across the clearing into the  
forest, southward, returning along the shore. For my  
dessert, I helped myself to a large slice of the Chesun~  
cook woods, and took a hearty draught ofits waters with  
all my senses. The woods were as fresh and full of  
‘vegetable life asa lichen in wet weather, and contained  
‘many interesting plants; but unless they are of white  
Pine, they are treated with as little respect here as @  
mildew, and in the other case they are only the more  
quickly cut down, ‘The shore was of coarse, flat, slate  
rocks, often in slabs, with the surf beating on it The  
rocks and bleached drif-logs, extending some way into  
the shaggy woods, showed a rise and fall of six or eight  
feet, eaused partly by the dam at the outlets ‘They said  
that in winter the snow was three feet deep on a level  
here, and sometimes four or five,—that the ice on the  
lake was two feet thick, clear, and four feet including  
the snow-ice. Ice had already formed in vessels.  
  
‘We lodged here this Sanday night in comfortable  
bedroom, apparently the best one; and all that I noticed

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(CHESUNCOOK. 138  
  
tunosual in the night —for I still kept taking notes, like  
‘a spy in the camp — was the creaking of the thin split  
‘boards, when any of our neighbors stirred.  
  
Such were the first rude beginnings of a town. They  
‘poke of the practicability of a winter-road to the Moose=  
head carry, which would not cost much, and would con  
nect them with steam and staging and all the busy world.  
Talmost doubted if the lake would be there,— the self  
‘same lake,— preserve its form and identity, when the  
shores should be cleared and settled; as if these lakes  
‘and streams which explorers report never awaited tho  
advent of the citizen,  
  
The sight of one of these frontier-houses, built of these  
great logs, whose inhabitants have unlinchingly maine  
tained their ground many summers and winters in the  
wilderness, reminds me of famous forts, like Ticonderoga,  
or Crown Point, which have sustained memorable  
‘They are especially winter-quarters, and at  
this one had a partially deserted look, as if the siege were  
raised a little, the snow-banks being melted from before  
it, and its gartison accordingly reduced. I think of their  
daily food as rations, called “ supplies”; Bible  
land a great-coat are munitions of war, and a single man  
seen about the premises is a sentinel on duty. You  
‘expect that he will require the countersign, and will per=  
change take you for Ethan Allen, come to demand the  
surrender of his fort in the name of the Continental Com  
gress. It is a sort of ranger service. Arnold's expedi-  
tion is a daily experience with these sotders. They can  
prove that they were out at almost any time; and I think,  
that all the first generation of them deserve & pension  
more than any that went to the Mexican war.  
  
Early the next morning we started on our return up

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134 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘the Penobscot, my companion wishing to go about twen=  
ty-five miles above the Moosehead carry to a camp near  
the junction of the, two forks, and look for moose there.  
Our host allowed us something for the quarter of the  
‘moose which we had brought, and which he was glad  
to get Two explorers from Chamberlain Eake started  
fat the same time that we did. Red-flannel shirts should  
be worn in the woods, if only for the fine contrast which  
this color makes with the evergreens and the water.  
‘Thus T thought when I saw the forms of the explorers  
in their birch, poling up the rapids before us, far off  
against the forest. It is the surveyor's eolor also, most  
distinctly seen under all cireumstances. We stopped  
to dine at Ragmuff, as before. My companion it was  
who wandered up the stream to look for moose this  
time, while Joe went to sleep on the bank, so that we  
felt sure of him and I improved the opportunity to  
otanize and bathe. Soon after starting again, while  
Joe was gone back in the canoe for the frying-pan,  
‘which had been left, we picked a couple of quarts of  
treo-cranberries for a sauce.  
  
I was surprised by Joe's asking me how far it was  
to the Moosehorn. He was pretty well acquainted with  
this stream, but he had noticed that I was curious about  
distances, and had several ‘maps. He, and Indians  
generally, with whom T have talked, are not able to  
‘describe dimensions or distances in our measures with  
‘any accuracy. He could tell perhaps, at what time wo  
should arrive, but not how far it was. We saw a fow  
‘wood-ducks, sheldrakes, and black ducks, but they were  
not so numerous there at that season as on our river  
fat home. We seared the same family of wood-ducks  
before us, going and returning. We also heard the

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CHESUNCOOK. 135  
  
note of one fish-hawk, somewhat like that of a pigeon-  
‘woodpecker, and soon after saw him perched near the  
top of a dead white-pine against the island where wo  
Ihad first camped, while a company of pectweets were  
‘twittering and tectering about over the carcass of  
‘moose on a low sandy spit just beneath. We drove the  
fisb-hawk from perch to perch, each time eliciting @  
scream ot whistle, for many miles before us. Our  
course being up-stream, we were obliged to work much  
harder than’ before, and had frequent use for a pole.  
Sometimes all three of us paddled together, standing  
vp, small and heavily laden as the cance was. About  
six miles from Mooschead, we began to sce the moun  
tains east of the north end of the lake, and at four  
clock we reached the carry.  
  
‘The Indians wore still encamped here. ‘There were  
three, including the St. Francis Indian who bad come  
in the steamer with us. One of the others was called  
Sabaitis. Joe and the St. Francis Indian were plainly  
clear Indian, the other two apparently mixed Indian and  
white; but the difference was confined to their features  
‘and complexions, for all that I could see. We here  
‘cooked the tongue of the moose for supper,— having  
left the nose, which is esteemed the choicest part, at  
Chesuncook, boiling, it being a good deal of trouble t0  
prepare it, We also stewed our tree-cranberries, (i=  
‘durnum opulus,) sweetening them with sugar. The  
lumberers sometimes cook them with molasses. They  
were used in Arnold’s expedition. ‘This sauce was very  
‘grateful to us who had been confined to hard bread,  
pork, and moose-meat, and, notwithstanding their reeds,  
wwe all three pronounced them equal to the common  
cranberry ; but perhaps some allowance is to be made

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136 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
for our forest appetites. It would be worth the while  
to cultivate them, both for beauty and for food. I  
afterward saw them ina garden in Bangor. Joe said  
‘that they were called ebeemenar.  
  
‘While we were getting supper, Joe commenced curing  
‘he moose-hide, on which I had sat a good part of the  
voyage, he having. already cut most of the hair off with  
hhis knife at the Caucomgomoc. He set up two stout  
forked poles on the bank, seven or eight feet high, and.  
‘as much asunder east and west, and having cut slits  
‘eight or ten inches long, and the same distance apart,  
clove to the edge, on the sides of the hide, he threaded.  
poles through them, and then, placing one of the poles  
on the forked stakes, tied the other down tightly at the  
bottom. ‘The two ends also were tied with cedar-barky  
their usual string, to the upright poles, through small  
holes at short intervals. ‘The hide, thus stretched, and.  
slanted a little to the north, to expose ita flesh side to  
the sun, measured, in the extreme, eight feet long by  
six high. Where any flesh still adhered, Joe boldly  
scored it with his knife to lay it open to the sun. Ik  
‘now appeared somewhat spotted and injured by the duck  
shot. You may see the old frames on which hides bave  
‘been stretched at many camping-places in these woods.  
  
For some reason or other, the going to the forks of  
the Penobscot was given up, and we decided to stop  
here, my companion intending to bunt down the stream  
fat night, ‘The Indians invited us to lodgo with them,  
bat my companion inclined to go to the log-camp on  
‘the carry. ‘This camp was close and dirty, and had an  
il smell, and I preferred to accept the Indians’ offer,  
if wo did not make a camp for ourselves; for, though  
they were dirty, too, they were more in the open air

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. CHESUNCOOK. 137  
  
and were much more agreeable, and even refined com-  
‘pany, than the lumberers. ‘The most interesting ques  
tion entertained at the Iamberers’ eamp was, which man  
could “handle” any other on the carry; and, for the  
most part, they postewed no qualities which you could  
not lay hands on. So we went to the Indians’ camp or  
wigwam.  
  
Tt was rather windy, and therefore Joe concluded to  
hunt after midnight, if the wind went down, which the  
‘other Indians thought it would not do, because it was  
from the south. The two mixed-bloods, however, went  
‘off up the river for moose at dark, before we arrived  
at their camp. ‘This Indian camp was a slight, patched-  
up affair, which had stood there several weeks, built  
shed-fashion, open to the fire on the west. If the wind  
changed, they could tarn it round. It was formed by  
two forked stakes and a crose-bar, with rafters slanted  
from this to the ground. The covering was partly an  
ld sail, partly birch-bark, quite imperfect, but securely  
tied on, and coming down to the ground on the sides.  
‘A large log was rolled up at the back side for a head-  
board, and two or three moose-hides were spread on  
the ground with the hair up. Various articles of their  
wardrobe were tucked around the sides and corers, or  
under the roof. ‘They were smoking moose-meat on just  
such a erate as is represented by With, in De Bry’s  
“Collectio Peregrioationum,” published in 1588, and  
which the natives of Brazil called Boucan, (whence buc-  
ceaneer,) on which were frequently shown pieces of  
hhoman flesh drying along with the rest. Tt was erected  
in front of the camp over the usual large fire, in the  
form of an oblong square. ‘Two stout forked stakes,  
four or five feet apart and five feet high, were driven

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138 ‘THE MAINE WooDs. :  
  
{nto the ground at etch end, and then two poles ten feet  
long were stretched across over the fire, and smaller  
‘ones Inid transversely on these a foot apart. On the  
last bung large, thin slices of moose-meat smoking and  
drying, a space being left open over the centre of the  
fire. There was the whole heart, black as a thirty-two  
pound ball, hanging at one comer. ‘They said, that it  
took three or four days to cure this meat, and it would  
keep a year or more. Refuse pieces lay about on the  
ground in different stages of decay, and some pieces  
‘also in the fire, half buried and sizzling in the ashes,  
as black and dirty as an old shoe. ‘These last I at first  
‘thought were thrown away, but afterwards found that  
they were being cooked. Also a tremendous rib-piece  
‘was roasting before the fire, being impaled on an upright  
stake forced in and out between the ribs. ‘There was a  
moose-hide stretched and curing on poles like ours, and  
quite a pile of cured skins close by. ‘They had killed  
twenty-two moose within two months, but, as they could  
tuse but very little of the meat, they left the carcasses  
fon the ground. Altogether it was about as savage a  
sight as was ever witnessed, and I was carried back at  
once three hundred years. ‘There were many torches  
of birch-bark, shaped like straight tin horns, lying ready  
for use on a stump outside.  
  
For fear of dirt, we spread our blankets over thcir  
hides, ¢0 as not to touch them anywhere. ‘The St. Fran-  
ia Indian and Joe alone were there at first, and we lay  
fon our backs talking with them till midnight They  
‘were very sociable, and, when they did not talk with us,  
Kept up a steady chatting in their own language. We  
heard a small bird just after dark, which, Joe said, sang  
at a certain hour in the night, —at ten o'clock, he

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believed. We also heard the hylodes and tree-tonds,  
‘and the lumberers singing in their camp a quarter of a  
mile off. I told them that I had seen pictured in old  
books pieves of human flesh drying on these crates;  
‘whereupon they repeated some tradition about the Mo-  
hhawks eating human flesh, what parts they preferred,  
te,, and also of a battle with the Mohawks near Moose-  
head, is which many of the latter were killed; but T  
found that they knew but little of the history of their  
race, and could be entertained by stories about their  
ancestors as readily as any way. At first I was nearly  
roasted out, for I lay against one side of the eamp, and  
felt the heat reflected not only from the birch-bark above,  
Dut from the side; and again I remembered the suffer  
ings of the Jesuit missionaries, and what extremes of  
heat and cold the Indians were said to endure. I strug-  
led long between my desire to remain and talk with  
them, and my impulse to rush out and stretch myself on,  
the cool grass; and when I was about to take the last  
step, Joe, hearing my murmurs, or else being uncomfort-  
able himself, got up and partially dispersed the fire. I  
‘suppose that that is Indian manners,— to defend your-  
elf,  
  
‘While lying there listening to the Indians, T amused  
myself with trying to guess at their subject by their  
gestures, or some proper name introduced. There can  
be no more startling evidence of their being distinct  
‘and comparatively aboriginal race, than to hear this unal-  
tered Indian language, which the white man cannot speak  
nor understand. We may suspect change and deteriora-  
‘tion in almost every other particular, but the language  
which is so wholly unintelligible to us. It took me by  
surprise, though I had found so many arrow-heads, and

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140 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
convinees, me that the Indian was not the invention of  
historians and poets. It was parely wikd and prizmitive,  
American sound, as much as the barking ofa chickaree,  
tnd I could not nderstand a syllable of it; but Paugus,  
hhad be been there, would have understood it, ‘These  
Abenakis gossiped, laughed, and jested, in the language  
in which Eliot's Indian Bible is written, the language  
which has been spoken in New England who sball sey  
hhow long? ‘These were the sounds that issued from. the  
wigwams of this country before Cokambua was born ;  
they have not yet died away; and, with remarkably Sow  
‘exceptions, the language of their forefathers is sill copi-  
‘ous enongh for them. I felt that I stood, or rather lay,  
‘9 near to the primitive man of Ameries, that night, as  
any of its discoverers ever did.  
  
In the midst of their conversation, Joo soidesly 9p-  
ppealed to me to know how long Mooschead Eake was.  
  
Meanwhilk, as we lay there, Joo was making and try-  
ing his horn, to be ready for hunting after midsight.  
‘The St. Francis Indian also amused himself with sound-  
ing it, or rather calling through it; for the sound is made,  
with the voice, and not by. blowing through the horn.  
‘The latter appeared to be a specrlator in moose-hides.  
He bought my companion’s for two dollars and a quarter,  
green, Joe said that it was worth two and a half at Old~  
town. Its chief use is for moceasins. One or two of  
these Indians wore them. I was told that, by a recent  
law of Maine, foreigners are not allowed to kill mode  
there at any season ; white Americans can kill them only:  
‘at a particular season, but the Indians of Maine at all  
seasons. The St. Francis Indian accordingly asked my  
‘companion for a wighiggin, or bill, to show, since he was  
‘foreigner. He lived near Sorel. I found that he could

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(CHESUXCOOK. 1a  
  
‘write his name very well, Tohmunt Swasen. One Elli,  
fan old white man of Guilford, a town through which we  
‘passed, not far from the south end of Moosehead, was the  
‘most celebrated moose-hunter of those parts. Indians  
and whites spoke with equal respect of him. Tabmunt  
said, that there were more moose here than in the Adi-  
rondack country in New York, where he had hunted;  
that three years before there were a great many about,  
and there were a great many now in the woods, but they  
id not come out to the water. It was of no use to hunt  
‘them at midnight, — they would not come out then. I  
asked Sabetts, ater he came home, if the moose never  
attacked him, He answered, that you must not fire many  
‘times so as to mad him. «I fire once and hit him in the  
right place, and in the morning I find him. He won't  
go far. But if you keep firing, you mad him. I fired  
‘once five bullets, every one through the heart, and he  
id not mind em at all; it only made him more mad.”  
T asked him if they did not hunt them with dogs. He  
  
that they did 6o in winter, but never in the summer,  
for then it was of no use; they would run right off  
straight and willy a hundred miles.  
  
“Another Indian said, that the moose, once seared, would  
ron all day. A dog will hang to their lips, and be car-  
ried along till he is swung against a tree and drops off  
‘They cannot run on a “glaze,” though they ean run in  
‘snow four feet deep; but the caribou can run on ice.  
‘They commonly find two or three moose together. ‘They  
‘over themselves with water, all but their noses, to escape  
flies. He had the horns of what he called “the black  
moose that goes in low lands.” These spread three or  
four feet. ‘The “red moose” was another kind, “rune  
xing on mountains,” and bad horos which spread six feet

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142 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘Such were his distinctions. Both ean move their horns.  
‘The broad flat blades are covered with hair, and are so  
soft, when the animal is alive, that you can run a knife  
through them. ‘They regard it as a good or bad sign, if|  
‘the horns turn this way or that. His caribou horns had  
een gnawed by mice in his wigwam, but he thought that  
‘the horns neither of the moose nor of the earibou were  
‘ever gnawed while the creature was alive, as some have  
asserted. An Indian, whom I met after this at Oldtown,  
‘who had carried about a bear and other animals of Maine  
to exhibit, told me that thirty years ago there were not  
‘80 many moose in Maine as now; also, that the moose  
‘were very easily tamed, and would come back when once  
fed, and s0 would deer, but not caribou. ‘The Indians of  
‘this neighborhood are about os familiar with the moose  
as we are with the ox, having associated with them for  
0 many generations. Father Rasles, in his Dictionary  
of the Abenaki Language, gives not only a word for the  
‘male moose, (aianbé,) and another forthe female, (hérar,)  
bbut for the bone which is in the middle of the heart of  
‘the moose (1), and for his left hindleg.  
  
‘There were none of the small deer up there; they are  
‘more common about the settlements. One ran into the  
city of Bangor two years before, and jumped through a  
‘window of costly plate glass, and then into a mirror,  
where it thought it recognized one of its kind, and out  
again, and so on, leaping over the heads of the crowd,  
until it was eaptared. This the inhabitants speak of as  
the deer that went a-shopping. ‘The last-mentioned In-  
dian spoke of the funzus or Indian devil, (whieh T take to  
be the eougar, and not the Gud luteus) as the only animal  
fe Which man need fear; it woald follow a man,  
and did not mind a fire. He also said, that beavers

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‘were getting to be pretty numerous again, where we went,  
Dat their skins brought so litle now that it was not prof-  
itable to hunt them.  
  
T had put the ears of our moose, which were ten inches  
long, to dry along with the moose-meat over the fire,  
wishing te preserve them; but Sabattis told me that I  
‘must skir and cure them, else the hair would all come  
‘off. He observed, that they made tobacco-pouches of the  
skins of their ears, putting the two together inside to ine  
side, I asked him how he got fire; and he produced a  
Tittle eylindrical box of friction-matches. He also had  
{ints and steel, and some punk, which was not dry; I  
  
was from the yellow birch. But suppose you  
upset, and all these and your powder get wet.” Then,”  
said he, “ we wait till we get to where there is some fire.”  
I produced from my pocket a little vial, containing  
matches, stoppled water-tight, and told him, that, though  
‘we were upset, we should still have some dry matches  
at which he stared without saying a word.  
  
We lay awake thus a long while talking, and they gave  
us the meaning of many Indian names of lakes and  
streams in the vicinity, — especially Tahmunt I asked  
the Indian name of Moosehead Lake. Joe answered,  
‘Sebamook ; Tabmunt pronounced it Sebemook. When  
‘asked what it meant, they answered, Moosehead Lake.  
At length, getting my meaning, they alternately repeated  
the word over to themselves, as a philologist might, —  
‘Sebamook, — Sebamook, — now and then comparing notes  
in Indian; for there was a slight difference in their di-  
‘and finally Tabmunt said, “Ugh! I know,” —  
rove up partly on the moose-hide, — “like as here  
is a place, and there is a place,” pointing to different  
parts of the hide, “and you take water from there and

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fill this, and it stays here ; that is Sebamook.” I under  
stood him to mean that it was a reservoir of water which  
id not run away, the river coming in on one side and  
‘passing out again near the same place, leaving a perma-  
nent bay. Another Indian said, that it meant Large-  
Bay Lake, and that Sebago and Sebec, tho names of  
‘other lakes, were kindred words, meaning large open  
water. Joe said that Seboots meant Little River. I  
observed their inability, often described, to convey an  
abstract idea. Having got the idea, though indistinctly,  
they groped about in vain for words with which to ex-  
press it, ‘Tahmunt thought that the whites called it  
‘Moosehead Lake, because Mount Kineo, which com-  
‘mands it, is shaped like a moose’s head, and that Moose  
River was so called “because the mountain points right  
facross the lake to its mouth.” John Josselyn, writing  
bout 1673, says, “Twelve miles from Casco Bay, and  
passable for men and horses, sa lake, called by the In-  
dians Sebug. On the brink thereof, at one end, is the  
famous rock, shaped like a moose deer or helk, diaph-  
nous, and called the Moose Rock.” He appears to have  
confounded Sebamook with Sebago, which is nearer, but  
thas no \* diaphanous” rock on its shore.  
  
T give more of their definitions, for what they are  
worth,— partly Because they differ sometimes from the  
commonly received ones. ‘They never analyzed these  
words before. After long deliberation and repeating of  
the word, for it gave much trouble, Tahmunt said that  
hesuncook meant a place where many streams emptied  
in (?), and he enumerated them,— Penobscot, Umba-  
zookskus, Cusabesex, Red Brook, ete. — Caucomgomoc,  
—what does that mean?” “What are those large white  
birds?” he asked. “Gully” said I. “Ugh! Gull

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Lake.” — Pammadumcook, Joe thought, meant the Lake  
‘with Gravelly Bottom or Bed. — Kenduskeag, Tahmunt  
concluded at last, after asking if birches went up it, for he  
said that he was not much acquainted with it, meant some-  
thing like this: \* You go up Penobscot till you come to  
Kenduskeag, and you go by, you don't turn up there,  
That is Kenduskeag” (?) Another Indian, however,  
who knew the river better, told us afterward that it  
meant Little Hel River.— Mattawamkeag was a place  
where two rivers mect. (?)— Penobscot was Rocky  
River. One writer says, that this was “originally the  
name of only a section of the main channel, from the  
head of the tide-water to a short distance above Old-  
town.”  
  
‘A very intelligent Indian, whom we afterward met,  
on-in-law of Neptune, gave us also these other defi-  
nitions: —Umbazookskus, Meadow Stream; Bfilinoket,  
Place of Islands; Aboljacarmegus, Smooth-Ledge Falls  
(and Dead-Water) ; Aboljacarmeguscook, the stream  
emptying in; (the last was the word he gave when I  
asked about Aboljacknagesic, which he did not recog-  
:) Mattahumkeag, Sand-Creck Pond; Piscataquis,  
Branch of a River.  
  
Tasked our hosts what Musketaguid, the Indian name  
of Concord, Massachusetts, meant; but they changed it  
to Musketicook, and repeated that, and ‘Tahmunt said that  
it meant Dead Stream, which is probably true. Chok  
appears to mean stream, and perhaps quid signifies the  
place or ground. When I asked the meaning of the  
names of two of our bills, they answered that they were  
‘another language. As Tahmunt said that he traded at  
Quebec, my companion inquired the meaning of the word  
  
Quebec, about, which there has been so much question.  
1 2

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14s ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘He di not know, but began to conjecture. He asked  
what those great ships were called that carried soldiers,  
“Menof-war,” we answered. Well,” be said, “ when  
‘the English ships came up the river, they could not go  
any farther, it was so narrow there ; they must go back,  
—go-back, — that ’s Que-beo.” I mention this to show  
‘the value of his authority in the other cases.  
  
Late at night the other two Indians came home from  
‘moose-hunting, not having been successful, aroused the  
fire again, lighted their pipes, emoked awhile, took some-  
thing strong to drink, and ate some moose-méat, and,  
finding what room they could, lay down on the moose-  
hhidea ; and thus we passed the night, two white men and  
four Indiang, side by side.  
  
‘When I awoke in the morning the weather was driz-  
ig. One of the Indians was lying outside, rolled in  
is blanket, on the opposite side of the fire, for want of  
room, Joe had neglected to awake my companion, and  
hhe had done no bunting that night. ‘Tahmunt was make  
ing a crossbar for his canoe with singularly shaped  
knife, such as I have since seen other Indians using.  
‘The blade was thin, about three quarters of an inch wide,  
and eight or nine inches long, but curved out ofits plane  
into a hook, which he said made it more convenient to  
shave with. As the Indians very far north and north-  
‘west use the same kind of knife, I suspect that it was  
made according to an aboriginal pattern, though some  
white artisans may use a similar one. ‘The Indians  
baked a loaf of flour bread in a spider on its edge before  
the fire for their breakfast; and while my eompanion was  
making tea, I caught a dozen sizable fishes in the Pe-  
nobseot, two kinds of sucker and one trout. After we  
hhad breakfasted by ourselves, one of our bedfellows, who

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hhad also breakfasted, came along, and, being invited,  
took @ cup of tea, and finally, taking up the common  
platter, licked it clean, But he was nothing to a white  
fellow, a lumberer, who was continually stuffing himself  
with the Indians’ moose-meat, and was the butt of his  
companions accordingly. He seems to have thought that  
it was a feast “to eat all” Tt is commonly said that the  
white man finally surpasses the Indian on bis own  
ground, and it was proved true in this ease. T cannot  
swear to his employment during the hours of darkness,  
Dut I eaw him at it again as soon as it was light, though  
he came a quarter of @ mile to his work.  
  
‘The rain prevented our continuing any longer in the  
woods 5 £0 giving some of our provisions and utensils to  
the Indians, we took leave of them. ‘This being the  
steamer’s day, I set out for the lake at once.  
  
T walked over the carry alone and waited at the head  
of the lake, An eagle, or some other large bird, flew  
sereaming away from its perch by the shore at my  
approach. For an hour after I reached the shore there  
‘was not a human being to be seen, and I had all that  
wide prospect to myself. I thought that I heard-the  
sound of the steamer before she came insight on the open  
lake. Innoticed at the landing, when the steamer came  
in, one of our bedfellows, who had been a-moose-hunting  
the night before, now very sprucely dressed in a clean  
white shirt and fine black pants, a true Indian dandy,  
who had evidently come over the earry to show himsolf  
to any arrivers on the north shore of Mooschead Lake,  
just as New York dandies take a turn up Broadway and  
stand on the steps of a hotel.  
  
‘Midway the lake we took on board two manly-looking  
‘aiddlo.aged men, with their dateaw, who had been explor-

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ing for six weeks as far as the Canada line, and had let  
their beards grow. ‘They had the skin of a beaver, which  
they had recently caught, stretched on an oval hoop,  
‘though the fur was not good at that season, I talked  
with one of them, telling him that I had come all this  
distance partly to see where the white-pine, the En:tern  
stuff of which our houses are built, grew, but that on this  
and a previous excursion into another part of Maine I  
‘had found it a searce tree; and I asked him where I  
‘must look for it. With a smile, he answered, that he  
could hardly tell me. However, he said that he had  
found enough to employ two teams the next winter in a  
place where there was thought to be none left. What  
‘was considered a “tip-top” tree now was not looked at  
twenty years ago, when he first went into the business:  
Dut they succeeded very well now with what was con-  
sidered quite inferior timber then. ‘The explorer used  
‘to cut into a tree higher and higher up, to see if it was  
false-hearted, and if there was a rotten heart as big as  
farm, be let it alone; but now they cut such a tree,  
fand sawed it all around the rot, and it made the very  
best of boards, for in such a ease they were never shaky.  
  
One connected with lumbering operations at Bangor  
told me that the largest pine belonging to his frm, cut  
the previous winter, “scaled” in the woods four thousar d  
five hundred feet, and was worth ninety dollars in ths  
Jog at the Bangor boom in Oldtown. ‘They cut a road  
three and a half miles long for this tree alone. He  
‘thought that the principal locality for the white-pine that  
came down the Penobscot now was at the head of the  
East Branch and the Allegash, about Webster Stream  
and Eagle and Chamberlain Lakes. Much timber has  
bboen stolen from the public lands. (Pray, what kind of

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forest-wanden is the Public itself?) T heard of one man  
who, having discovered some particularly fine trees just  
within the boundaries of the public lands, and not daring  
to employ an accomplice, eut them down, and by means  
of block and tackle, without cattle, tumbled them into a  
stream, and eo succeeded in getting off with them with-  
out the least assistance, Surely, stealing pine-rees in  
this way is not so mean as robbing hen-roosts.  
  
‘We reached Monson that night, and the next day rode  
to Bangor, all the way in the rain again, varying our  
route alittle. Some of the taverns on this road, which  
‘were particularly dirty, were plainly in a transition state  
from the camp to the house.  
  
   
  
‘The next forenoon we went to Oldtown. One slender  
‘old Indian on the Oldtown shore, who recognized my  
‘companion, was full of mirth and gestures, like a French-  
‘man. A Catholic priest crossed to the island in the same  
Bateau with us. ‘The Indian houses are framed, mostly  
of one story, and in rows one behind another, at the south  
end of the island, with a few scattered ones. I counted  
bout forty, not including the church and what my com=  
panion called the council-house, The last, which T sup-  
pose is their town-house, was regularly framed and shin-  
sled like the rest, ‘There were several of two stories,  
quite neat, with front-yands enclosed, and one at least had  
‘green blinds, Here and there were moose-hides stretched  
‘and drying about them. There were no cart-paths, nor  
tracks of horses, but foot-paths; very little land cultie  
‘vated, but an abundance of weeds, indigenous and natu-  
ralized; more introduced weeds than useful vegetables,  
1s the Indian is said to cultivate the vices rather than the  
virtues of the white man. Yet this village was cleaner

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150 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘than T expected, far cleaner than such Irish villages as T  
Ihave seen. The children were not particularly ragged  
nor dirty. ‘The litle boys met us with bow in hand and  
arrow on string, and cried, “Put up acent.” Verily, the  
Indian has but @ feeble hold on his bow now ; but the  
‘curiosity of the white man is insatiable, and from the first  
hie has been eager to witnese this forest accomplishment.  
‘That elastic piece of wood with its feathered dart, 20 sure  
to be unstrung by contact with civilization, will serve for  
the type, the coat-of-arms of the savage. Alas for the  
Honter Race! the white man has driven off their game,  
and substituted a cent in ite place. I saw an Indian  
‘woman washing at the water's edge. She stood on a  
rrock, and, after dipping the clothes in the stream, laid  
‘them on the rock, and beat them with a short club. In  
‘the graveyard, which was crowded with graves, and  
overrun with weeds, I noticed an inscription in Indian,  
Painted on a wooden grave-board. ‘There was large  
‘wooden eross on the island.  
  
Since my companion knew him, we called on Gov-  
‘ernor Neptune, who lived in a litte “ten-footer,” one of  
‘the humblest of them all. Personalities are allowable in  
speaking of public men, therefore I will give the particu  
lars of our visit. He was a-bed. When we entered tae  
room, which was one half of the house, he was sitting on  
the side of the bed. ‘There was a clock hanging in one  
comer. He had on a black frock-coat, and black pants,  
much worn, white cotton shirt, socks, a red silk handker~  
chief about his neck, and a straw hat. His black hair  
‘was only slightly grayed. He had very broad cheeks,  
and his features were decidedly and refreshingly different  
from those of any of the upstart Native American party  
whom I have seen. He was no darker than many old

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white men. He told me that be was eighty-nine; but  
hhe was going s-moose-hunting that fall, as he had been  
‘the previous one. Probably his companions did the  
hunting. We saw various squaws dodging about. One  
sat on the bed by his side and helped him out with his  
stories. ‘They were remarkably corpulent, with smooth,  
round faces, apparently fall of good-humor. Certainly  
our much-abused climate had not dried up their adipose  
substance. While we were there,—for we stayed a  
‘god whiley—one went over to Oldtown, returned and  
‘cut out a dress, which she had bought, on another bed in  
the room. The Governor said, that “he could remem-  
ber when the moose were much larger; that they did not  
use to be in the woods, but eame out of the water, as all,  
deer did. Moose was whale once. Away down Mer  
‘mack way, a whale came ashore in shallow bay. Sea  
‘went out and left him, and he came up on land » moose  
‘What made them know he was a whale was, that at fist,  
before he began to run in bushes, he had no bowels in-  
fide, but”—and then the squaw who sat on the bed  
by hia side, as the Governor’ aid, and had been putting  
in a word now and then and confirming the story, asked  
me what we called that soft thing we find along the sea-  
shore. ‘Jelly-fish,” I suggested. “Yes,” said he, “no  
bowels, but jelly-fish”  
  
‘There may be some truth in what he said about the  
moose growing larger formerly ; for the quaint John Jos-  
selyn, a physician who spent many years in this very dis  
triot of Maine in the seventeenth century, says, that the  
tips of their horns “are sometimes found to be two fath-  
foms asunder,” —and he is particular to tell us that a  
fathom ia six feet, —“and [they are] in height, from the  
toe of the fore foot to the pitch of the shoulder, twelve

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foot, both which hath been taken by some of my scep-  
tique readers to be monstrous lies”; and he adds,  
“There are certain transcendentia in every creature, which  
are the indelible character of God, and which discover  
God” This is greater dilemma to be caught in than  
is presented by the cranium of the young Bechuana ox,  
apparently another of the transcendentia, in the collec-  
tion of Thomas Steel, Upper Brook Street, London,  
whose “entire length of horn, from tip to tip, along the  
curve, is 18 ft. 5 in:s distance (straight) between the  
tips of the borns, 8 ft. 8} in.” However, the size both of  
the moose and the cougar, as I have found, is generally  
rather underrated than overrated, and I should be in-  
clined to ada to the popular estimate « part of what I  
subtracted from Josselyn'  
  
But we talked mostly with the Governor's on-indaw,  
fa very sensible Indian ; and the Governor, being 00 old  
and deaf, permitted himself to be ignored, while we  
asked questions about him. ‘The former said, that there  
‘were two political parties among them, —one in favor of  
schools, and the other opposed to them, or rather they  
did not wish to resist the priest, who was opposed to  
them, ‘The first had just prevailed at the election and  
sent their man to the legislature, Neptune and Aitteon  
‘and he himself were in favor of schools, He said, “If  
Tndians got learning, they would keep their money.”  
‘When we asked where Joe's father, Aitteon, was, he  
knew that he must be at Lincoln, though he was about  
going a-moose-hunting, for a messenger had just gone to  
him there to get his signature to some papers. T asked  
‘Neptune if they had any of the old breed of dogs yet.  
He answered, “Yes.” “But that,” said I, pointing to  
‘one that had just come in, “is a Yanken dog.” He as-

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rented. I suid that he did not look like a good one.  
“0 yes!” he said, and he told, with much gusto, how,  
the year before, he had caught and held by the throat,  
‘a wolf. A very small black puppy rushed into the room  
‘and made at the Governor's feet, as he sat in his stock-  
ings with his legs dangling from the bedside. ‘The Gov-  
‘ermor rubbed his hands and dared him to gome on, en-  
tering into the sport with spirit, Nothing more that was  
significant transpired, tomy knowledge, during this inter-  
view. ‘This was the first time that I ever called on a  
governor, but, as I did not ask for an office, I can speak  
of it with the more freedom.  
  
‘An Indian who was making canoes behind a house,  
looking up pleasantly from his work,—for he knew my  
companion,—said that his name was Old John Penny-  
weight, had heard of him long before, and I inquired  
after one of his contemporaries, Joe Four-penee-ha’pen-  
ny’ but, alas! he no longer circulates. I made a faith-  
fal study of eanoe-building, and I thought that I should  
like to serve an apprenticeship at that trade for one sea-  
‘00, going into the woods for bark with my “boss,” mak~  
ing the canoe there, and returning in it at last  
  
‘While the bateau was coming over to take us off; I  
picked up some fragments of arrow-heads on the shore,  
‘and one broken stone chisel, which were greater novel-  
ties to the Indians than to me. After this, on Old Fort,  
Hill, at the bend of the Penobsoot, three miles above  
Bangor, looking for the site of an Indian town which  
‘some think stood thereabouts, I found more arrow-heads,  
and two little dark and crumbling fragments of Indian  
earthenware, in the ashes of their fires. The Indians on  
the Island appeared to live quite happily and to be well  
  
treated by the inhabitants of Oldtown.  
1

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154 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
‘We visited Veazie's mills, just below the Island, where  
‘were sixteen sets of saws,—some gang saws, sixteen in  
‘8 gang, not to mention circular eaws. On one side, they  
‘were hauling the logs up an inclined plane by water-  
power; on the other, passing out the boards, planks, and  
eawod timber, and forming them into rafts. The trees  
‘were literally drawn and quartered there. In forming.  
the rafts they use the lower three fect of hard-wood  
saplings, which have a crooked and knobbed but-end, for  
bolts, passing them up through holes bored in the corners  
and sides of the rafts, and keying them. In another  
partment they were making fence-slats, such as stand  
all over New England, out of odds and ends,—and it,  
may be that I saw where the picket-fence behind which  
‘well at home came from. I was surprised to find a  
boy collecting the long edgings of boards as fast as cut  
off, and thrusting them down a hopper, where they were  
ground up beneath the mill, that they might be out of the  
‘way ; otherwise they accumulate in vast piles by the side  
of the building, increasing the danger from fire, or, loat-  
ing off, they obstruct the river. ‘This was not only a  
saw-mil, but a grist-mill, then. ‘The inhabitants of Old-  
town, Stillwater, and Bangor cannot sulfer for want of  
Kindling stuf, surely. Some get their  
by picking up the drift-wood and selling it by  
in the winter. In one place I saw where an  
‘who keeps a team and a man for the purpose, had cov-  
ered the shore for a long distance with regular piles, and  
‘was told that he had sold twelve hundred dollars’ worth,  
in a year. Another, who lived by the shore, told me  
that he got all the material of his out-buildings and fences  
from the rivers and in that, neighborhood I perceived  
that this refuse wood was frequently used instead of

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sand to fill hollows with, being apparently cheaper than  
dirt,  
  
I got my first clear view of Ktaadn, on this excursion,  
from s hill about two miles northwest of Bangor, whither  
I went for this purpose. After this I was ready to re-  
tum to Massachusetts,  
  
Humbolat has written an interesting chapter on the  
‘Primitive forest, but no one has yet described for me the  
difference between that wild forest which once occupied  
‘our oldest townships, and the tame one which I find there  
to-day. It is difference which would be worth attend-  
ing to. The civilized man not only clears the land per-  
ieasendly to 0’ grea exttods and cldivales open’ city  
‘but he tames and cultivates to a certain extent the forest  
itself. By his mere presence, almost, he changes the  
nature of the trees as no other ereature does. ‘The sun  
and air, and perhaps fire, have been introduced, and grain  
raised where it stands, Tt has lost its wild, damp, and  
shaggy look, the countless fallen and decaying trees are  
gone, and consequently that thick coat of moss which  
lived on them is gone too. ‘The earth is comparatively  
bare and smooth and dry. The most primitive places  
Jef with us are the swamps, where the spruce still grows  
shaggy with usnea. ‘The surface of the ground in the  
‘Maine woods is everywhere spongy and saturated with,  
moisture, I noticed that the plants which cover the for=  
fest floor there are such as are commonly confined to  
swamps with us,— the Clintonia Borealis, orchises, ereep-  
ing snowberry, and others; and the prevailing aster  
there is the Aster acuminatus, which with us grows in  
amp and shady woods. ‘The asters cordifolius and  
macrophyllus also are common, asters of little or no

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color, and sometimes without petals. I saw no soft,  
spreading, second-growth white-pines, with smooth bark,  
‘acknowledging the presence of the wood-chopper, but  
‘even the young white-pines were all tall and slender  
rough-barked trees.  
  
Those Maine woods differ essentially from ours. ‘There  
‘you are never reminded that the wilderness which you  
fare threading is, afterall, some villager’s familiar wood-  
Jot, some widow's thirds, from which her ancestors have  
sledded fuel for generations, minutely described in some  
old deed which is recorded, of ‘which the owner has got  
1 plan too, and old bound-marks may be found every  
forty rods, if you will search. "T is true, the map may  
inform you that you stand on land granted by the State  
to some academy, or on Bingham’s purchase; but these  
names do not impose on you, for you see nothing to  
remind you of the academy or of Bingham. What  
‘were the “forests” of England to these? One writer  
relates of the Isle of Wight, that in Charles the Seo-  
‘ond’ time “there were woods in the island 0 complete  
and extensive, that it is said a squirrel might have trav-  
celled in several parts many leagues together on the  
top of the trees.” If it were not for the rivers, (and  
‘he might go round their heads.) a squirrel could here  
‘avel thus the whole breadth of the country.  
  
Werhave as yet had no adequate account of a primi-  
tive pine-forest. T have noticed that in a physical atlas  
lately published in Massachusetts, and used in our schools,  
‘the “wood land” of North America is limited almost  
solely to the valleys of the Ohio and some of the Great  
Lakes, and the great pine-forests of the globe are not  
represented. In our vicinity, for instance, New Bruns-  
wick and Maine are exhibited as bare as Grenland,

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(CHESUNCOOK. 187  
  
Tk may be that the children of Greenville, at the foot  
of Moosehead Lake, who surely are not likely to be  
scared by an owl, are referred to the valley of the Ohio  
to get an idea of a forest; but they would not know  
‘what to do with their moose, bear, caribou, beaver, etc,  
there. Shall we leave it to an Englishman to inform  
tus, that “in North America, both in the United States  
‘and Canada, are the most extensive pineforests in the  
world”? The greater part of New Brunswick, the  
northern half of Maine, and adjacent parts of Canada,  
not to mention the northeastern part of New York and  
other tracts farther off, are still covered with an almost  
‘unbroken pine-forest.  
  
But Maine, perhaps, will soon be where Massachu-  
setts is, A good part of her territory is already as  
bare and commonplace as much of our neighborhood,  
‘and her villages generally are not so well shaded as  
ours. We seem to think that the earth must go through  
the ordeal of sheep-pasturage before it is habitable by  
‘man. Consider Nahant, the resort of all the fashion  
of Boston,—which peninsula I saw but indistinctly  
the twilight, when I steamed by it, and thought that it  
‘was unchanged since the discovery. John Smith de-  
scribed it in 1614 aa “the Mattahunts, two pleasant islos  
of groves, gardens, and comfields”; and others tell us  
that it was once well wooded, and eyen furnished tim-  
ber to build the wharves of Boston, Now it is dificult  
to make a tree grow there, and the visitor comes away  
with a vision of Mr. Tudor’s ugly fences, a rod high,  
designed to protect a few pearshrubs. And what aro  
‘we coming to in our Middlesex towns? —a bald, staring,  
town-house, or meeting-house, and a bare liberty-pole,  
ss leaflss as it is fruitless, for all Tcan see. We shall

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158 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
be obliged to import the timber for the last, hereafter,  
or eplice such sticks as we have;—and our ideas of  
liberty are equally mean with these. ‘The very willow-  
rows lopped every three years for fuel or powder, —  
and every sizable pine and oak, or other forest. tree,  
ccut down within the memory of man! As if individual  
speculators were to be allowed to export the clouds out  
of the sky, or the stars out of the firmament, one by:  
fone. We shall be reduced to gnaw the very crust of  
the earth for nutriment.  
  
‘They have even descended to smaller game. ‘They  
have lately, as I hear, invented @ machine for chopping  
up buckleberry-bushes fine, and so converting them into  
fuel! — bushes which, for fruit alone, are worth all the  
pear-trees in the country many times over. (I can give  
you a list of the three best kinds, if you want it.) At  
this rate, we shall all be obliged to let our beards grow  
at least, if only to hide the nakedness of the land and  
make a sylvan appearance. The farmer sometimes talks  
of “brushing up,” simply as if bare ground looked  
Detter than clothed ground, than that which wears its  
natural vesture,—as if the wild hedges, which, perhaps,  
fare more to his children than his whole farm beside,  
were dirt. I know of one who deserves to be called  
the Tree-hater, and, perhaps, to leave this for a new  
patronymic to his children. You would think that he  
hhad been wamed by an oracle that he would be killed  
by the fall of a tree, and so was resolved to anticipate  
them, ‘The journalists think that they cannot say too  
much in favor of such “improvements” in husbandry,  
itis safe theme, like piety; but as for the beauty of  
fone of theso “model farms,” I would as lief see a  
patent chum ands man turning it, They are, com-°

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‘CHESUNCOOK. 159  
  
monly, places merely where somebody is making money,  
it may be counterfeiting. ‘The virtue of making two  
Dlades of grass grow where only one grew before does  
‘not begin to be superbuman.  
  
Nevertheless it was a relief to get back to our smooth,  
‘but atill varied landscape. For a permanent residence,  
it seemed to me that there could be no comparison  
Detween this and the wilderness, necessary as the latter  
4s for a resource and a background, the raw material  
‘of all our civilization. ‘The wilderness is simple, almost  
to barrenness. ‘The partially cultivated country it is  
which chiefly has inspired, and will continue to inspire,  
the strains of poets, such as compose the mass of any  
literature. Our woods are sylvan, and their inhabitant  
‘woodmen and rustics,— that is, seloaggia, and the it  
hhabitants are saloages, A civilized man, using the word  
fn the ordinary sense, with his ideas and associations,  
rust at length pine there, like a cultivated plant, which  
clasps its flbres about a crude and undissolved mass of  
peat. At the extreme North, the voyagers are obliged  
to dance and act plays for employment. Perhaps our  
own woods and fields, —in the best wooded towns  
where we need not quarrel about the huckleberries,  
‘with the primitive swamps scattered here and there in  
their midst, but not prevailing over them, are the per  
fection of parks and groves, gardens, arbors, paths, vista,  
‘and landscapes. ‘They are the natural consequence of  
what art and refinement we as a people have,— the  
common which each village possesses, its true paradise,  
in comparison with which all elaborately and wilfully  
‘wealth-constructed parks and gardens are paltry imita-  
tions. Or, I would rather say, euch were our groves  
twenty years ago ‘The poet's commonly, is not a log-

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160 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘ger’s path, but a woodman’s, ‘The logger and pioneer  
have preceded him, like John the Baptist; eaten the  
wild honey, it may be, but the locusts also; banished  
decaying wood and the spongy mosses which feed on  
it, and built Kearths and humanized Nature for him.  
  
But there are spirits of a yet more liberal culture,  
to whom no simplicity is barren, ‘There are not only  
stately pines, but fragile flowers, like the orchises, com-  
moaly described as too delicate for cultivation, which  
derive their nutriment from the crudest mass of peat.  
These remind us, that, not only for strength, but for  
beauty, the poet must, from time to time, travel the  
logger’s path and the Indian's trail, to drink at some  
new and more bracing fountain of the Muses, far in the  
recesses of the wilderness.  
  
‘The kings of England formerly had their forests “to  
hold the king’s game,” for sport or food, sometimes de-  
stroying villages to create or extend them; and I think  
that they were impelled by a true instinct. Why should  
not we, who have renounced the king’s authority, have  
‘our national preserves, where no villages need be de-  
satroyed, in which the bear and panther, and some even  
of the hunter race, may still exist, and not be “ civilized  
‘off the fuce of the earth;”—our forests, not to hold  
the king’s game merely, but to hold and preserve the  
‘king himself also, the lord of ereation,—not for idle  
sport or food, but for inspiration and our own true re-  
creation? or shall we, like villains, grub them all up,  
poaching on our own national domAins ?

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THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH.  
  
Tetanrep on my thinl excursion to the Maino woods  
‘Monday, July 20th, 1857, with one companion, arriving  
sat Bangor the next day at noon. We had hardly left  
the steamer, when we passed Molly Molasses in the  
street. As long as she lives the Penobscots may be con-  
sidered extant a3 a tribe. ‘The succeeding morning, a  
relative of mine, who is well acquainted with the Penob-  
scot Indians, and who bad been my companion in my  
two previous excursions into the Maine woods, took me  
in his wagon to Oldtown, to assist me in obtaining an  
Indian for this expedition. We were ferried across to  
the Indian Island in batteau. ‘The ferryman's boy had  
got the key to it, but the father who was blacksmith,  
after a little hesitation, cut the chain with a cold-chisel  
fon the rock. He told me that tho Indians were nearly  
all gone to the seaboard and to Massachusetts, partly on  
account of the small-pox, of which they are very much  
afraid, having broken out\_in Oldtown, and it was doubt-  
fal whether we should find a suitable one at home. The  
old chief Neptune, however, was there still. The first  
‘man we saw on the island was an Indian named Joseph  
Polis, whom my relative had known from a boy, and now  
addressed familiarly as “Joe.” He was dressing a deer-  
skin in hie yard, ‘The skin was epread over a slanting

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162 ‘THE MAINE Woons.  
  
log, and he was scraping it with a atick, held by both  
hands, He was stoutly built, perhaps a litle above the  
middle height, with a broad face, and, as others said, per-  
feet Indian features and complexion. His house was a  
two-story white one with blinds, the best looking that I  
noticed there, and as good as an average one on a New  
England village street. It was surrounded by a garden  
‘and fruit-trees, single comnstalks standing thinly amid  
the beans. We asked him if he knew any good Indian  
who would like to go into the woods with us, that is, to  
the Allegash Lakes, by way of Moosehead, and return by  
the East Branch of the Penobscot, or vary from this 28  
wwe pleased. To which he answered, out of that strange  
remoteness in which the Indian ever dwells to the white  
man, “Me like to go myself; me want to get some  
moose”; and kept on scraping the skin. His brother  
hhad been into the woods with my relative only a year or  
‘two before, and the Indian now inquired what the latter  
hhad done to him, that he did not come back, for he had  
not seen nor heard from him since.  
  
‘At length we got round to the more interesting. topis  
again. The ferryman had told us that all the best  
Indians were gone except Polis, who was one of the aris-  
tocracy. He to be sure would be the best man we could  
have, but if he went at all would want a great price ; e0  
wwe did not expect to get him. Polis asked at first two  
dollars a day, but agreed to go for a dollar and a half,  
‘and fifty cents a week for his canoe. He would come to  
Bangor with his canoe by the seven o'clock train that  
evening, —we might depend on him. We thought our  
selves lucky to secure the services of this man, who was  
known to be particularly steady and trustworthy.  
  
I spent the afternoon with my companion, who had

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 163,  
  
remained in Bangor, in preparing for our expedition,  
1 hard bread, pork, coffee, sugar,  
srubber clothing.  
  
‘We had at first thought of exploring the St. John from  
its source to its mouth, or else to go up the Penobscot by  
its East Branch to the lakes of the St, Jobn, and return  
bby way of Chesuncook and Moosehead. We had finally  
inclined to the lest route, only reversing the order of it,  
going by way of Moosehead, and returning by the Penob-  
eof, otherwise it would have been all the way up stream  
‘and taken twice as long.  
  
‘At evening tho Indian arrived in the cars, and I led  
the way while he followed me three quarters of a mile to  
sy friend’s house, with the canoe on his head. I did not  
know the exact route myself, but steered by the lay of  
the land, as T do in Boston, and I tried to enter into con-  
him, but as he was puffing under the  
weight of his canoe, not having the usual apparatus for  
carrying it, but, above all, was an Indian, T might as well  
Ihave been thumping on the bottom of his birch the while.  
In answer to the various observations which I made by  
way of breaking the ice, he only grunted vaguely from  
beneath his canoe once or twice, s0 that I knew he was  
there,  
  
Early the next morning (July 28d) the stage called  
for us, the Indian having breakfasted with us, and already  
placed the baggage in the canoe to see how it would go.  
‘My companion and I had each a large knapsack as full  
as it would hold, and we had two large India-rubber bags  
which held our provision and utensils. As for the In-  
ian all the baggage he had, beside his axe and gun, was  
a blanket, which he brought loose in his hand. However,  
hie had laid in a store of tobacco and a new pipe for the

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164, THE MAINE WooDs,  
  
excursion, The cance was securely Inshed diagonally  
across the top of the stage, with bits of carpet tucked un~  
der the edge to prevent ita chafing. The very accommo-  
dating driver appeared as much accustomed to carrying  
ceanoes in this way as bandboxes.  
  
‘At the Bangor House we took in foar men bound on  
‘8 hunting excursion, one of the men going as cook.  
‘They bad a dog, a middling-sized brindled eur, which  
rran by the aide of the stage, his master showing his head  
‘and whistling from time to time; but after we had gone  
about three miles the dog was suddenly missing, and two  
of the party went back for him, while the stage, which  
‘was full of passengers, waited. I suggested that he had  
taken the back track for the Bangor House, At length  
fone man came back, while the other kept on. This  
whole party of hunters declared their intention to stop  
fill the dog was found ; but the very obliging driver was,  
ready to wait a epell longer. He was evidently unwill-  
ing to lose #0 many passengers, who would have taken  
«private conveyance, or perhaps the other line of stages,  
the next day. Such progress did we make with a jour-  
ney of over sixty miles, to be accomplished that day, and  
arain-storm just setting in. We discussed the subject of  
dogs and their instincts till it was threadbare, while we  
‘waited there, and the scenery of the suburbs of Bangor  
ig still distinctly impressed on my memory. After fall  
hhalf an hour the man returned, leading the dog by a  
rope He had overtaken him just as he was entering  
‘the Bangor House. He was then tied on the top of the  
stage, but being wet and cold, several times in the course  
of the journey he jumped off, and I saw him dangling  
by his neck. ‘This dog was depended on to stop bears  
with Ho had already stopped one eomewhere in New

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 165,  
  
‘Hampshire, and I can testify that he stopped a stage in  
Maine. This party of four probably paid nothing for  
the dog's ride, nor for his run, while our party of three  
paid two dollars, and were charged four for the light  
canoe which lay still on the top. 3  
  
Tt coon began to rain, and grew more and more stormy  
ts the day advanced. ‘This was the third time that I bad  
passed over this route, and it rained steadily each time  
all day. We accordingly saw but little of the country.  
‘The stage was crowded all tho way, and I attended the  
‘more to my fellow-travellers. If you had looked inside  
this coach you would have thought that we were prepared  
to run the gauntlet of a band of robbers, for there were  
four or five guns on the front seat, the Indian's included,  
tnd one or two on the back one, each man holding bis  
darling in his arms. One had a gun which carried twelve  
to pound. It appeared that this party of hunters was  
going our way, but much farther down the Allegash and  
St.John, and thence up some other stream, and across  
to the Pistigouche and the Bay of Chaleur, to be gone  
six weeks. ‘They bad canoes, axes, and supplies depos-  
fted some distance along the route. ‘They carried flour,  
and were to have new bread made every day. ‘Their  
Teader was a handsome man about thirty years old, of  
good height, but not apparently robust, of gentlemanly  
address and fauless toilet; such a one as you might  
expect to meet on Broadway. In fact, in the popular  
senso of the word, he was the most “gentlemanly” ap-  
pearing man in the stage, or that we saw on the road.  
He had a fair white complexion, as if he had always  
lived in the shade, and an intellectual face, and with his  
quiet, manners might have passed for a divinity student  
ho had seen something of the world. I was surprised

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166 ‘THE MAINE Woops,  
  
   
  
‘to find, on talking with him in the course of the day's  
Journey, that he was a hunter at all, —for his gun was  
not much exposed,—and yet more to find that he was  
probably tho chief white hunter of Maine, and ‘was  
‘known all along the road. He had also hunted in some  
of the States farther south and west. I afterwards  
heard him spoken of as one who could endure a great  
deal of exposure and fatigue without showing the effect  
of it; and he could not only use guns, but make them,  
being himself a gunsmith. In the spring, he had saved  
a stage-driver and two passengers from drowning in the  
backwater of the Piscataquis in Foxeroft on this road,  
having swum ashore in the freezing water and made a  
raft and got them off, — though the horses were drowned,  
—at great risk to himself, while the only other man who  
could swim withdrew to the nearest house to prevent  
freezing. He could now ride over this road for nothing.  
He knew our man, and remarked that we had a good In-  
dian there, a good hunter; adding that he was said to be  
worth $6,000. The Indian also knew him, and said to  
‘me, “ the great hunter.”  
  
‘The former told me that he practised a kid of still  
hunting, new or uncommon in those parts, that the cari=  
bow, for instance, fed round and round the same meadow,  
returning on the same path, and he lay in wait for them.  
  
‘The Indian sat on the front seat, saying nothing to  
anybody, with a stolid expression of face, as if barely  
awake to what was going on. Again I was struck by  
the peculiar vagueress of his replies when addressed in  
the stage, or at the taverns. He really never said any-  
thing on such occasions, He was merely stirred up,  
wild beast, and passively muttered some insignificant  
response, His answer, in such cases, was never the con-

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‘THE ALLUGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 167  
  
sequence of @ positive mental energy,  
puff of smoke, suggesting no’ responsi  
considered it, you would find that you had got nothing  
outof him. ‘This was instead of the conventional palaver  
‘and smartness of the white man, and equally profitable.  
‘Most get no more than this out of thé Indian, and pro  
ounce him stolid accordingly. I was surprised to see  
what @ foolish and impertinent style a Maine man, a  
passenger, used in addressing him, as if he were @  
child, which only made his eyes glisten a litle. A tipay  
Canadian asked him at a tavern, in a drawling tone, if  
hhe smoked, to which he answered with an indefnite  
yes” “Won't you lend me your pipe a little while ?”  
asked the other. He replied, looking straight by the  
man’s head, with a face singularly vacant to all neighbor-  
ing interests, “Me got no pipe”; yet I had seen him put  
‘anew one, with a supply of tobacco, into his pocket that  
morning.  
  
Our little canoe, so neat and strong, drew a favora-  
Dle criticism from all the wiseacres aiaong the tavern  
loungers along the road. By the roadside, elose to the  
wheels, I noticed a splendid great purple-fringed orchis,  
with a spike as big as an epilobium, which I would fain  
have stopped the stage to pluck, but as this had never  
‘been known to stop a bear, like the eur on the stage, the  
driver would probably have thought it a waste of time.  
  
‘When we reached the lake, about balf past eight in  
the evening, it was still steadily raining, and harder than  
before ; and, in that fresh, cool atmosphere, the hylode  
‘were peeping and the toads singing about the lake uni-  
versally, as in the spring with us. It was as if the sea  
ton had revolved backward two or three months, or  
hhad arrived at the abode of perpetual spring.

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168 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘We had expected to go upon the lake at once, and  
‘after paddling up two or three miles, to camp on one of  
its islands ; but on account of the steady and increasing  
rain, we decided to go to one of the taverns for the night,  
though, for my own part, I should have preferred to  
camp out.  
  
About four o'clock the next moming, (July 24th,)  
though it was quite cloudy, accompanied by the landlord  
‘o the water’s edge, in the twilight, we launched our canoe  
from a rock on the Moosehead Lake. When I was  
‘there four years before we had a rather small canoe for  
three persons, and I had thought that this time T would  
  
+ get a larger one, but the present one was even smaller  
than that, It was 18} feet long by 2 feet 64 inches  
‘wide in the middle, and one foot deep within, as I found  
by measurement, and I judged that it would weigh not  
for from eighty pounds. ‘The Indian had recently made  
it himself, and its smallness was partly compensated for  
by its newness, as well as stanchness and solidity, it  
being made of very thick bark and ribs. Our baggage  
‘weighed about 166 pounds, so that the canoe carried  
‘about 600 pounds in all, or the weight of four men. ‘The  
principal part of the baggage was, as usual, placed in the  
  
lle of the broadest part, while we stowed ourselves  
the chinks and crannies that were left before and  
  
Dehind it, where there was no room to extend our legs,  
  
the loose articles being tucked into the ends. ‘The canoe  
  
‘was thus as closely packed as a market-basket, and might  
  
possibly have been upset without spilling any of its con-  
tents. The Indian sat on a cross-bar in the stern, but we  
fiaton the bottom, with a splint or chip behind our backs,  
to protect them from the eross-bar, and one of us commonly  
paddled with the Indian. He foresaw that we should

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 169  
  
not want a pole till we reached the Umbazookskus River,  
it being either dead water or down stream ¢o far, and he  
‘was prepared to make a sail of his blanket in the bows,  
sf the wind should be fair; but we never used it.  
  
Tt had rained more or less the four previous days, so  
that we thought we might count on some fair weather.  
‘The wind was at first southwesterly.  
  
‘Paddling along the eastern side of the lake in the sti  
‘of the morning, we soon saw a few sheldrakes, which  
the Indian called Shecorways, and some peetweets Nar-  
amekechus, on the rocky shore; we also saw and heard  
loons, medawisla, which he said was a sign of wind. It  
‘was inspiviting to hear the regular dip of the paddles,  
as if they were our fins or flippers, and to realize that  
‘we were at length fairly embarked. We who had felt  
strangely ns stage-passengers and tavern-lodgers werv  
suddenly naturalized there and presented with the freo-  
dom of the lakes and the woods. Having passed the  
small rocky isles within two or three miles of the foot  
of the lake, we had a short consultation respecting our  
course, and inclined to the western shore for the sake of  
its lee for otherwise, if the wind should rise, it would be  
impossible for us to reach Mount Kineo, which is about  
‘midway up the lake’on the east side, but at its narrowest  
part, where probably we could recross if we took the  
‘western side. ‘The wind is the chief obstacle to crossing  
the Inkes, eepecially in so small a canoe. The Indian  
remarked several times that. he id not like to cross the  
lakes ‘in littam canoe,” but nevertheless, “just as we  
say, it made no odds to him.” He sometimes took a  
straight course up the middle of the lake between Sugar  
and Deer Islands, when there was no wind.  
  
‘Measured on the map, Mooschead Lake is twelve  
  
‘

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170 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
miles wide at the widest place, and thirty miles long in  
‘a direct line, but longer as it lies. ‘The captain of the  
steamer called it thirty-eight miles as he steered. We  
should probably go about forty. ‘The Indian said that  
it was called “Mspame, because large water.” Squaw  
‘Mountain rose darkly on our lef, near the outlet of the  
Kennebec, and what the Indian called Spencer Bay Moun~  
‘ain, on the east, and already we saw Mount Kineo before  
us in the north.  
  
Paddling near the shore, we frequently heard the  
‘pepe ofthe olive-sided fiy-catcher, also the wood-pewee,  
and the kingfisher, thus early in the morning. The  
Indian reminding us that he could not work without  
‘eating, we stopped to breakfast on the main shore, southe  
west of Deer Island, at a spot where the Mimulus  
rringens grew abundantly. We took out our bags, and  
the Indian made a fire under a very large bleached log,  
using white-pine bark from a stump, though he said that  
Iiemlock was better, and kindling with canoe-birch bark.  
Our table was a large piece of freshly peeled birch-bark,  
laid wrong-side-up, and our breakfast consisted of hard  
bread, fried pork, and strong coffee, well sweetened, in  
which we did not miss the milk.  
  
‘While we were getting breakfast: a brood of twelve  
Diack dippers, half grown, came paddling by within three  
‘or four rods, not at all alarmed and they loitered about  
1s long as we stayed, now huddled close together, within  
a circle of eighteen inches in diameter, now moving off  
in a long line, very cunningly. Yet they bore a certain  
proportion to the great Bfoosehead Lake on whose bosom  
Shey floated, and I felt asif they were under its protection.  
  
Looking northward from this place it appeared as if  
we were entering a large bay, and we did not know

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‘THE ALLUGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 171  
  
‘whether we should be obliged to diverge from our course  
and keep outside a point which we saw, or should find a  
passage between this and the mainland. I consulted my  
map and used my glass, and the Indian did the same,  
Tut we could not find our place exactly on the map, nor  
could we detect any break in the shore. When I asked  
the Indian the way, he answered “I don't know,” which  
I thought remarkable, since he had said that he was fa-  
  
with the Ike; but it appeared that he bad never  
deen up this side. It was misty dog-day weather, and we  
hhad already penetrated a smaller bay of the same kind,  
‘and knocked the bottom out of it, though we had been  
obliged to pass over a emall bar, between an island and  
the shore, where there was but just breadth and depth  
‘enough to float the canoe, and the Indian had observed,  
“Very easy makum bridge here,” but now it seemed  
‘hat, if we held on, we should be fairly embayed. Prese  
ently, however, though we had not stirred, the mist lifted  
somewhat, and revealed a break in the shore northward,  
showing that the point was a portion of Deer Island,  
and that our course lay westward of it, Where it had  
seemed a continuous shore even through a glass, one  
portion was now seen by the naked eys to be much more  
distant than the other which overlapped it, merely by  
the greater thickness of the mist which still rested on it,  
while the nearer or island portion was comparatively  
bare and green. The line of separation was very dis-  
tinct, and the Indian immediately remarked, “I guess  
sgou and I go there,—I guess there's room for my canoe  
there.” This was his common expression instead of say-  
ing we. He never addressed us by our names, though  
curious to know how they were spelled and what they  
meant, while we called him Polis, He had already

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72 ‘THE MAINE WLODS.  
  
guessed very sccurately at our ages, and said that he  
‘was forty-eight.  
  
‘After breakfast I emptied the melted pork that was  
left into the lake, making what sailors call “slick,” and  
‘watching to see how much it spread over and smoothed  
the agitated surface. ‘The Indian looked gt it a moment  
and sai, “That make hard paddlum thro’; hold "em cae  
noe. So say old times.”  
  
‘We hastily reloaded, putting the dishes loose in the  
bows, that they might be at hand when wanted, and set  
out again. ‘The western shore, near which we paddled  
slong, rose gently to considerable height, and was ev-  
erywhere densely covered with the forest, in which was  
fa large proportion of hard wood to enliven and relieve  
the fir and spruce.  
  
‘The Indian said that the usnea lichen which we saw  
hanging from the trees was called chorchorgue. We  
asked him the names of several small birds which we  
heard this morning, The wood-thrusb, which was quite  
common, and whose note he imitated, he said was called  
Adelungquamooktum ; but sometimes he could not tell  
‘the mame of some small bird which I heard and knew,  
but he said, I tell all the birds about here, — this coun-  
‘ry s can’t tell lttlam noise, but I see “em, then I can tell.”  
  
Tobserved that I should like to go to school to him to  
learn his language, living on the Indian island the  
while; could not that be done? “0, yer,” he replied,  
good many do so.” T asked how long he thought it  
‘would take He said one week. I told him that in this  
‘voyage I would tell him all I knew, and he should tell  
ime all he knew, to which he readily agreed.  
  
‘The birds sang quite as in our woods,—the red-eye,  
red-start, veery, wood-pewee, ete, but we saw no blue

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 173  
  
birds in all our journey, and several told me in Bangor  
that they had not the bluebird there. Mt Kineo, which  
was generally visible, though occasionally concealed by  
islands or the mainland in front, had a level bar of cloud  
concealing its summit, and all the mountain-tops about.  
the Inke were cut off at the same height. Ducks of va-  
rious kinds — sheldrake, summer ducks, ete.— were quite  
common, and ran over the water before us as fast as a  
horse trots. Thus they were soon out of sight.  
  
‘The Indian asked the meaning of reality, as near  
as Icould make out the word, which he said one of us  
had used; also of “interrent,” that is intelligent. I ob-  
served that he could rarely sound the letter r, but used  
Jas also r for 1 sometimes; as load for road, pickelel  
for pickerel, Soogle Island for Sugar Island, lock for  
rock, ete. Yet he trilled the r pretty well after me.  
  
‘He generally added the syllable um to his words when  
‘he could,—as padium, etc. I have once heard a Chippe-  
‘wa lecture, who made his audience laugh unintentionally  
by putting ne after the word foo, which word he brought.  
in continually and unnecessarily, accenting and prolong-  
ing this sound into m ar sonorously as if it were neces-  
sary to bring in so much of his vernacular as a relief to  
  
   
  
   
  
and putting his tongue into every corner of his mouth,  
‘a5 he complained that he was obliged to do when he  
spoke English. ‘There was so much of the Indian ‘ac-  
cent resounding through hie English, so much of the  
“bow-arrow tang” as my neighbor calls it, and T have  
no doubt that word seemed to him the best pronounced.  
Tt was a wild and refreshing sound, like that of the  
‘wind among the pines, or the booming of the aurf on the  
shore.

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a ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
Z asked him the meaning of the word Musketcook, the  
Indian name of Concord River. He pronounced it Mus-  
Héeticook, emphasizing the second syllable with a peculiar  
guttural sound, and said that it meant “Dend-water,”  
which it is, and in this definition he agreed exactly with  
the St, Francis Indian with whom I talked in 1858.  
  
On a point on the mainland some miles southwest of  
‘Sand-bar Island, where we landed to stretch our legs and  
look at the vegetation, going inland a few steps, I discov=  
ered a fire still glowing beneath its ashes, where some-  
ody had breakfasted, and a bed of twigs prepared for  
the following night. So I knew not only that they had  
just left, but that they designed to return, and by the  
breadth of the bed that there was more than one in the  
party. You might have gone within six feet of these  
signs without seeing them, ‘There grew the beaked ha-  
tel, the only hazel which I saw on this journey, the Di-  
ervilla, rue seven feet high, which was very abundant on  
all the lake and river shores, and Cornus stolonifera, or  
red osier, whose bark, the Indian said, was good to smoke,  
‘and was called maguezigill, “tobacco before white people  
‘came to this country, Indian tobacco.”  
  
‘The Indian was always very careful in approaching  
the shore, lest he should injure his canoe on the rocks,  
letting it swing round slowly sidewise, and was still  
‘more particular that we should not step into it on shore,  
nor till it floated free, and then should step gently lest  
wwe should open its seams, or make a hole in the bottom,  
‘He said that he would tell us when to jump.  
  
Soon after leaving this point we passed the mouth  
of the Kennebec, and heard and saw the falls at the  
dam there, for even Moosehead Lake is dammed. Af  
ter passing Deer Island, we saw the little steamer from

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‘TRE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 175  
  
Greenville, far east in the middle of the lake, she ap-  
peared nearly stationary. Sometimes we could hardly  
tell her from an island which had a few trees on it  
Here we were exposed to the wind from over the  
‘whole, breadth of the lake, and ran a lite risk of being  
swamped. While I had my eye fixed on the spot where  
1 large fish had leaped, we took in a gallon or two of  
‘water, which filled my lap; but we soon reached the  
shore and took the canoe over the bar, at Sand-bar  
Island, a few feet wide only, and so saved a considerable  
distance. One landed first at a more sheltered place,  
‘and walking round caught the canoe by the prow, to  
prevent it being injured against the shore.  
  
Again we crossed a broad bay opposite the mouth  
of Moose River, before reaching the narrow strait at  
‘Mount Kineo, made what the voyageurs call a traverse,  
‘and found the water quite rough. A very litle wind  
on these broad Inkes raises a sea which will ewamp a  
canoe. Looking off from a lee ‘shore, the surface may  
appear to be very little agitated, almost smooth, a mile  
  
tant, or if you see a few white crests they appear  
nearly level with the rest of the lake; but when you  
get out so far, you may find quite a sea running, and  
ferelong, before you think of it; a wave will gently  
creep up the side of the canoe and fill your lap, like a  
‘monster deliberately covering you with its slime before  
it swallows you, or xt will strike the canoe violently and  
bbreak into it, ‘The same thing may happen when the  
wind rises suddenly, though it were perfectly calm and  
smooth there a few minutes before; so that nothing  
can save you, unless you can swim ashore, for it is  
impossible to get into a canoe again when it is upset  
Since yon sit flat on the bottom, though the danger

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176 THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
should not be imminent, a litle water is a great incone  
venience, not to mention the wetting of your provisions.  
‘We rarely crossed even a bay directly, from point to  
point, when there was wind, but made a slight curve  
corresponding somewhat to the shore, that we might  
the sooner reach it if the wind increased.  
  
‘When the wind is aft, and not too strong, the Indian  
makes a spriteail of his blanket. He thus easily skims  
‘over the whole length of this lake in a day.  
  
‘The Indian paddled on one side, and one of us on  
the other, to keep the eanoe steady, and when he wanted  
to change hands he would say “t' other side.” He as-  
serted, in answer to our questions, that he had never  
upset @ canoe himself, though he may have bee upset  
by others.  
  
‘Think of our litle egg-shell of cance tossing across  
that great lake, a mere black speck to the eagle soaring  
above it,  
  
‘My companion trailed for trout as we paddled along,  
but the Indian warning him that a big fish might upset  
us, for there are some very large ones there, he agreed  
to pass the line quickly to him in the stem if he had  
‘a bite, Beside trout, I heard of cusk, white-fsh, &.,  
fas found in this lake.  
  
‘While we were erossing this bay, where Mount Kineo  
rose dark before us, within two or three miles, the Indian  
repeated the tradition respecting this mountain’s having  
anciently been a cow moose,—how a mighty Indian  
Ihunter, whose name I forget, succeeding in killing this  
queen of the moose tribe with great difficulty, while  
her calf was killed somewhere among the islands in  
Penobscot Bay, and, to his eyes, this mountain hed  
sill the form of the moose in a reclining posture, its

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 177  
  
precipitous side presenting the outline of her head.  
‘He told this at some length, though it did not amount  
to much, and with apparent good faith, and asked us  
hhow we supposed the hunter could have killed such a  
righty moose as that,—how we could do it. Where-  
‘upon a manof-war to fire broadsides into her was  
suggested, etc. An Indian tells such a story as if he  
‘thought it deserved to have a good deal said about it,  
conly he has not got it to say, and eo be makes up for  
the deficiency by a drawling tone, long-windedness, and  
‘a dumb wonder which fre hopes will be contagious.  
  
We approached the land again through pretty rough  
‘water, and then steered directly across the lake, at its  
narrowest part, to the eastern side, and were soon partly  
under the lee of the mountain, about a mile north of  
the Kineo House, having paddled about twenty miles.  
Tt was now about noon.  
  
We designed to stop there that afternoon and night,  
‘and spent half an hour looking along the shore north-  
‘ward for a suitable place to camp. We took out all our  
baggage at one place in vain, it being too rocky and  
uneven, and while engaged in this search we made our  
first acquaintance with the moose-Aly. At length, half a  
nile farther north, by going half a dozen rods into the  
dense spruce and fir wood on the side of the mountain,  
almost as dark as a cellar, we found a place sufficiently  
‘lear and level to lie down on, after cutting away a few  
bushes. We required a space only seven feet by six for  
our bed, the fire being four or five feet in front, though  
it made no odds how rough the hearth was; but it was  
Lot always easy to find this in those woods. ‘The Indian  
firet cleared a path to it from the shore with his axe, and  
‘we then earried up all our bagyage, pitched our tent, and  
  
se %

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178 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
made our bed, in onder to be ready for foul weather,  
which then threatened us, and for the night. He gath-  
cred a large armful of fir twige, breaking them off, which  
he said were the best for our bed, partly, I thought,  
because they were the largest and could be most rapidly  
collected. It bad been raining more or less for four oF  
five days, and the wood was even damper than usual, bat  
he got dry bark for the fire from the under-side of a dead  
leaning hemlock, which, he said, he could always do.  
  
‘This noon his mind was occupied with a law question,  
and I referred him to my companion, who was a lawyer.  
It appeared that he had been buying land lately, (I think  
it was a bundred acres,) but there was probably an  
incambrance to it, somebody else claiming to have bought  
some grass on it for this year. He wished to know to  
‘whom the grass belonged, and was told that if the other  
‘man could prove that he bought the grass before he,  
Polis, bought the land, the former could take it, whether  
‘the latter knew it or not. ‘To which he only answered,  
“Strange!” He went over this several times, fairly sat  
down to it, with his back to a tree, as if he meant to con-  
fine us to this topic henceforth ; but as he made no head~  
‘way, only reached the jumping-off place of his wonder  
at white men's institutions after each explanation, we let  
the subject die.  
  
He said that he had fifty acres of grass, potatoes, &c  
somewhere above Oldtown, beside some about his house;  
‘Wat he hired a good deal of his work, hoeing, &c, and  
preferred white men to Indians, because “they keep  
steady, and know how.”  
  
‘Afier dinner we returned southward along the shore,  
{in the canoe, on account of the difficulty of climbing over  
the rocks and fallen trees, and began to ascend the moun

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 179  
  
tain along the edge of the precipice. But a smart shower  
‘coming up just then, the Indian crept under his eanoe,  
while we, being protected by our rubber coats, proceeded  
to botanize. So we sent him back to the camp for shelter,  
agreeing that he should come there for us with his eanoe  
toward night. It had rained a little in the forenoon, and  
wwe trusted that this would be the clearing-up shower,  
which it proved; but our feet and legs were thoroughly  
wet by the bushes. ‘The clouds breaking away a little,  
wwe had a glorious wild view, as we ascended, of the  
broad lake with its fluctuating surface and numerous  
forest-lad islands, extending beyond our sight both north,  
and south, and the boundless forest undulating away from  
its shores on every side, as densely packed as a rye-field,  
and enveloping nameless mountains in succession; but  
above all, looking westward over large island was  
visible a very distant part of the lake, though we did not  
then suspect it to be Moosehead, — at first a mere broken  
‘white line seen through the tops of the island trees, like  
hhay-caps, but spreading to a lake when we got higher.  
Beyond this we saw what appears to be called Bald  
‘Mountain on the map, some twenty-five miles distant,  
near the sources of the Penobscot. It was a perfect lake  
of the woods. But this was only a transient gleam, for  
the rain was not quite over.  
  
‘Looking southward, the heavens were completely over-  
cast, the mountains capped with clouds, and the lake  
generally wore a dark and stormy appearance, but from,  
ita surface just north of Sugar Island, six or eight miles  
distant, there was reflected upward to us through the  
misty air a bright blue tinge from the distant unseen sky  
of another latitude beyond. ‘They probably had a clear  
‘ky then at Greenville the south end of the lake. Stand

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180 ‘ME MAINE WooDs.  
  
{ing on @ mountain in the midst of a lake, where would  
‘you look for the frst sign of approaching fair weather?  
‘Not into the heavens, it seems, but into the lake.  
  
‘Again we mistook f little rocky islet seen through the  
“risk,” with some taller bare trunks or stumps on it,  
for the steamer with its smoke-pipes, but as it bad not  
cchangod its position after half an hour, we were unde  
‘ceived. So much do the works of man resemble the  
works of nature. A moose might mistake a steamer for  
‘floating isle, and not be seared tll he heard its puffing  
or its whistle  
  
If T wished to see a mountain or other scenery under  
‘the most favorable auspices, I would go to it in foul  
‘weather, 90 as to be there when it cleared up; we aro  
‘then in the most suitable mood, and nature is most fresh  
‘and inspiring. ‘There is no serenity so fair as that which  
fs just established in a tearful eye.  
  
Jackson, in his Report on the Geology of Maine,  
in 1838, says of this mountain: “Hlornstone, which will  
‘answer for fints, occurs in various parts of the State,  
‘where trap-rocks have acted upon silicious slate. ‘The  
largest mass of this stone knows’ in the world is Mount  
Kineo, upon Moosehead Lake, which appears to be en-  
tirely composed of it, and rises seven hundred feet above  
the lake level. This variety of hornstone I have seen  
in every part of New England in the form of Indian ar-  
row-heads, batchets, chisels, ete, which were probably.  
obtained from this mountain by the aboriginal inhabitants  
of the country.” -I have myself found hundreds of ar  
row-heads made of the same material. It is genorally  
slate-colored, with white specks, becoming a uniform  
white where exposed to the light and air, and it breaks  
‘with « conchoidal fracture, producing a ragged cutting

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 181  
  
exige. I noticed some conchoidal hollows more than a  
foot in diameter. I picked up a small thin piece which  
Ihad so sharp an edge that I used it as a dull knife, and  
‘to see what I could do, fairly cut off an aspen one inch  
thick with it, by bending it and making many cuts;  
though I cut my fingers badly with the back of it in the  
meanwhile.  
  
‘From the summit of the precipice which forms the  
southern and eastern sides of this mountain peninsula,  
and is ita most remarkable feature, being described as five  
or six hundred feet high, we looked, and probably might  
have jumped down to the water, or to the seemingly  
<warfish trees on the narrow neck of land which connects  
it with the main, It is a dangerous place to try the  
steadiness of your nerves. Hodge says that these cliffs  
descend “ perpendicularly ninety feet” below the surface  
of the water.  
  
‘The plants which chiefly attracted our attention on this  
mountain were the mountain cinquefoil (Potentilla tri-  
dentata), abundant and in bloom still at the very base, by  
the waterside, though it is usually confined to the sum-  
mits of mountains in our latitudes very beautiful hare-  
Dells overhanging the precipice; bear-berry; the Can-  
‘ada blueberry (Vaccinium Canadense), similar to (the V:  
Pennayloanicum) our earliest one, but entire leaved and  
with a downy stem and leaf; Ihave not seen it in Mas-  
sachusetis; Diervilla trifida; Microstylis ophioglossoides,  
‘an orchidaceous plant new to us; wild bolly (Nemopan-  
thes Canadensis) ; the great round-leaved orchis (Platan-  
thera orbiculata), not long in bloom; Spiranthes cernua,  
fat the top; bunch-berry, reddening as we ascended,  
‘green at the base of the mountain, red at the top; and  
the amall fern, Woodsia ilvensis, growing in tufts, now in

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182 ‘THE MAINE Wooos.  
  
fruit, I have also received Liparis iliifolia, or tway-  
blade, from this spot. Having explored the wonders of  
‘the mountain, and the weather being now entirely cleared  
‘up, we commenced the descent. We met the Indian,  
puffing and panting, about one third of the way up, bit  
thinking that he must be near the top, and saying that it  
took his breath away. I thought that superstition had  
something to do with his fatigue, Perhaps he believed  
that he was climbing over the back of a tremendous  
moote. He said that he had never ascended Kineo.  
(On reaching the canoe we found that he had caught a  
lake trout weighing about three pounds, at the depth of  
‘twenty-five or thirty feet, while we were on the moun  
tin.  
  
‘When wo got to the camp, the canoe was taken out  
and turned over, and a log laid across it to prevent its  
being blown away. ‘The Indian cut some large logs of  
damp and rotten hard wood to smoulder and keep fire  
through the night. ‘The trout was fried for supper. Our  
tent was of thin cotton cloth and quite small, forming  
with the ground a triangular prism closed at the rear end,  
six feet long, seven wide, and four high, so that we could  
barely sit up in the middle. Tt required two forked  
  
takes, a smooth ridge-pole, and a dozen oF more pins to  
  
pitch it It kept off dew and wind, and an ordinary  
rain, and answered our purpose well enough. We re-  
clined within it til bedtime, each with his baggage at  
his head, or else sat about the fire, having hung our wet  
clothes on a pole before the fire for the night  
  
‘As we sat there, just before night, looking out through  
the dusky wood, the Indian heard a noise which he said  
was made bya snake. He imitated it at my request,  
‘waking a low whistling note, — pheet—pheet,—two or

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 183.  
  
three times repeated, somewhat like the peep of the hy-  
odes, but not s0 loud. In answer to my inquiries, he said  
that he had never seen them while making it, but go-  
ing to the spot he finds the snake, This, he said on  
‘another oceasion, was a sign of rain. When I had se-  
lected this place for our camp, he had remarked that  
‘there wore snakes there, —he saw them. But they wou't  
Ao any bur, Tsid. “0 no,” he answered, «just as you  
‘ay, it makes no difference to me.”  
  
He Iny on the right side of the tent, because, as he  
‘id, he was partly deaf in one ear, and he wanted to  
lie with his good ear up. As we lay there, he inquired  
if Lever heard “Indian sing.” I replied that I had not  
often, and asked him if he would not favor us with a  
song. He readily assented, and lying on his back, with  
hhis blanket wrapped around him, he commenced a slow,  
somewhat nasal, yet musical chant, in his own language,  
which probably was taught his tribe long ago by the  
Catholic missionaries. He translated it tous, sentence by  
sentence, afterward, wishing to see if we could remember  
it, It proved to be a very simple religious exercise or  
hymn, the burden of which was, that there was only  
fone God who ruled all the world. ‘This was hammered  
(or sung) out very thin, #0 that some stanzas wellnigh  
‘meant nothing at all, merely keeping up the idea. He  
then said that he would sing us a Latin song; but we did  
not detect any Latin, only one or two Greek words in it  
rest may have been Latin with the Indian prooun-  
ition.  
  
His singing carried me back to the period of the dis-  
covery of America, to San Salvador and the Incas, when  
Europeans first encountered the simple faith of the In-  
dian. There was, indeed, a beautifal simplicity about it;

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184 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
nothing of the dark and savage, only the mild and im  
fantile. ‘The sentiments of humility and reverencs  
chiefly were expressed.  
  
Tt was a dense and damp spruce and fir wood in which  
we lay, and, except for our fire, perfeetly dark; and when  
Tawoke in the night, I cither heard an owl from deeper  
in the forest behind us, or loon from a distance over  
the lake. Getting up some time after midnight to col-  
lect the scattered brands together, while my companions  
‘were sound asleep, observed, partly in the fre, which had  
ceased to blaze, a perfectly regular elliptical ring of light,  
bout five inches in its shortest diameter, six or seven in  
its longer, and from one eighth to one quarter of an inch  
wide. It was flly as bright as the fire, but not reddish  
or scarlet like a coal, but @ white and slambering light,  
Tike the glowworm’s. I could tell it from the fre only  
by ita whiteness, I saw at once that it must be phospho  
escent wood, which I had so often heard of, but never  
chanced to see. Putting my finger on it, with a litle hes-  
itation, I found that it was a pieoe of dead moose-wood  
(Acer striatum) which the Indian had cut off in a slanting  
direction the evening before. Using my knife, I discov-  
ered that the light proceeded from that portion of the  
sap-wood immediately under the bark, and thus presented  
‘a regular ring at the end, which, indeed, appeared raised  
above the level of the wood, and when I pared off the  
‘bark and cut into the sap, it was all aglow along the log.  
Twas surprised to find the wood quite hard and appar-  
‘ently sound, though probably decay had commenced in  
‘the eap, and I ent out some little triangular chips, and  
placing them in the hollow of my hand, carried them  
{nto the camp, waked my companion, and showed them  
to him. They lit up the inside of my hand, revealing

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‘HE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. "185  
  
‘the lines and wrinkles, and appearing exactly like coals  
of fire raised to a white heat, and I saw at once how,  
probably, the Indian jugglers had impesed on their peo-  
pple and on travellers, pretending to hold coals of fire in  
‘their mouths.  
  
also noticed that part of a decayed stump within four  
or five feet of the fire, an inch wide and six inches long,  
soft and shaking wood, shone with equal brightness.  
  
T neglected to ascertain whether our fire had anything  
to do with this, but the previous day’s rain and long-con-  
tinued wet weather undoubtodly had.  
  
was exceedingly interested by this phenomenon, and  
already felt paid for my journey. It could hardly have  
thrilled me more if it had taken the form of letters, oF  
of the human face. If I had met with this ring of light  
while groping in this forest alone, away from any fie, I  
should have been still more surprised. I little thought  
that there was such a light shining in the darkness of the  
wilderness for me.  
  
‘The next day the Indian told me their name for  
this light, —Arioosogu’,—and on my inquiring concera-  
ing the willo'the-wisp, and the like phenomen, he said  
that his “folks” sometimes saw fires passing along at va-  
rious heights, even 98 high as the trees, and maki  
noise. I was prepared after this to hear of the most  
startling and unimagined phenomena witnessed by “ his  
folks,” they are abroad at all hours and seasons in scenes  
0 unfrequented by white men. ‘Nature must have made  
‘8 thousand revelations to them which are still secrets  
to us.  
  
I did not regret my not having seen this before, since  
now saw itunder circumstances go favorable. I was in  
just the frame of mind to see something wonderful, and

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186 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘this was a phenomenon adequate to my circumstances  
‘and expectation, and it put me on the alert to eee more  
like it. T exulted like “a pagan suckled in a creed” that  
hhad never been worn at all, but was bran new, and ade-  
quate to the oocasion. I let science slide, and rejoiced  
in that light as if it had been a fellow-creature. I saw  
that it was excellent, and was very glad to know that it  
was 60 cheap. A scientific explanation, as it is called,  
‘would have been altogether out of place there. That is  
for pale daylight. Science with its retorts would have  
put me to sleep; it was the opportunity to be ignorant  
that I improved. It suggested to me that there was  
something to be seen if one had eyes. It made a be-  
liever of me more than before. I believed that the  
‘woods were not tenantless, but choke-full of honest spir-  
its as good as myself any day,—not an empty chamber,  
fn which chemistry was let to work alone, but an inbab-  
ited house, — and for a few moments I enjoyed fellowship  
with them. Your so-called wise man goes trying to per  
suade himself that there is no entity there but himselt  
and his traps, but it is a great deal easier to believe the  
truth. It suggested, too, that the same experience al-  
ways gives birth to the same sort of belief or religion.  
One revelation has been made to the Indian, another to  
‘the white man. I have much to learn of the Indian,  
nothing of the missionary. Iam not sure but all that  
would tempt me to teach the Indian my religion would  
bbe his promise to teach me his. Long enough T had  
heard of irrelevant things; now at length I was glad to  
‘make acquaintance with the light that dwells in rotten  
‘wood. Whereis all your knowledge gone to? Tt evap.  
crates completely, for it has no depth.  
  
T kept thove little chips and wet them again the next  
‘ight, but they emitted no light.

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 187  
  
Saronoar, Joly 2.  
  
‘At breakfast this Saturday moming, the Indian, e  
dently carious to know what would be expected of him  
‘the next day, whether we should go along or not, asked  
ime how I spent the Sunday when at home. I told him  
that I commonly eat in my chamber reading, etc, in the  
forenoon, and went to walk in the afternoon. At which  
the shook his head and said, “ Er, that is ver bad.” “ How  
o you spend it?” I asked, He said that he did no  
work, that he went to chureh at Oldtown when he was at  
ome; in short, he did as he had been taught by the  
whites. This led to a discussion in which I found my-  
‘self in the minority. He stated that he was a Protestant,  
‘and asked me if T was. I did not at firt know what to  
‘ay, but I thought that I could answer with truth that I  
was.  
  
‘When we were washing the dishes in the lake, many  
fishes, apparently chivin, came close up to us to get the  
particles of grease.  
  
‘The weather seemed to be more settled this morning,  
‘and we set out early in order to finish our voyage up the  
lake before the wind arose. Soon after starting the In-  
dian directed our attention to the Northeast Carry, which  
‘we could plainly see, about thirteen miles distant in that  
irection as measured on the map, though it is called  
much farther. ‘This earry is a rude wooden railroad,  
running north and south about two miles, perfectly  
straight, from the lake to the Penobscot, through low  
tract, with a clearing three or four rods wide but low as,  
it ig, it passes over the height of land there. This open-  
ing appeared as a clear bright, or light point in the hori  
son, resting on the edge of the lake, whose breadth a hair  
could have covered at a considerable distance from the

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188 THE MANE WooDs,  
  
eye, and of no appreciable height. We should not have  
suspected it to be visible if the Indian had not drawn our  
attention to it It was @ remarkable kind of light to  
steer for,—daylight seen through a vista in the forest,  
—but visible as far as an ordinary beacon by night  
  
‘We crossed a deep and wide bay which makes cast  
‘ward north of Kineo leaving an island on our Jef, and  
Keeping up the eastern sido of the lake. This way or  
‘that led to some Tombegan or Soeatarian stream, up  
which the Indian had hunted, and whither T longed to  
go. The Inst name, however, had a bogus sound, too  
uch like sectarian for me, as if a missionary had tam-  
pered with it; but I know that the Indians were very  
liberal. I think I should have inclined to the Tomhegan  
first.  
  
‘We then crossed another broad bay, which, as we  
could no longer observe the shore particularly, afforded  
‘ample time for conversation. The Indian said that ho  
hhad got his money by hunting, mostly high up the west  
branch of the Penobscot, and toward the head of the St.  
John; he had hunted there from a boy, and knew all  
about that region. His game bad been, beaver, otter,  
black cat (or fisher), sable, moose, ée. Loup cervier  
(or Canada lynx) were plenty yet in burnt grounds.  
For food in the woods, he uses partridges, ducks, dried  
rmoose-meat, hedge-hog, &e. Loons, too, were good, only  
  
ile 'em good.” He told us at some length how he had  
suffered from starvation when @ mere lad, being over  
taken by winter when hunting with two grown Indians  
in the northern part of Maine, and obliged to leave their  
‘canoe on account of ice.  
  
Pointing into the bay, he said that it was the way to  
‘various lakes which he knew. Only solemn bear-haunted

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 189  
  
‘mountains, with their great wooded slopes, were visible;  
where, as man is not, we suppose some other power to  
be. My imagination personified the slopes themselves,  
1s if by their very length they would waylay you, and  
compel you to camp again on them before night. Some  
invisible glutton would seem to drop from the trees and  
gnaw at the heart of the solitary hunter who threaded  
‘those woods; and yet I was tempted to walk there.  
‘The Indian said that he had been along there several  
times.  
  
T asked him how he guided himself in the woods.  
“Oy” said he, “I can tell good many ways.” When I  
pressed him further, he answered, “ Sometimes I Jookum  
side-bill” and he glaneed toward a high bill or mountain  
on the eastern shore, “ great difference between the north  
‘and south, see where the sun has shone most. So trees, —  
the large limbs bend toward south. Sometimes I lookum  
locks” (rocks). I asked what he saw on the rocks, but  
he did not describe anything in particular, answering  
vaguely, in a mysterious or drawling tone, “ Bare locks  
‘on lake shore, — great difference between N. S. E, W.  
side,—an tell what the sun has shone on.” Suppose;  
‘said T, “that I should take you in a dark night, right up  
here into the midille of the woods a hundred miles, set you  
down, and turn you round quickly twenty times, could  
you steer straight to Oldtown?” “O yer,” said he,  
have done pretty much same thing. I will tell you.  
Some years ago I met an old white hunter at Millinocket  
very good hunter. He said he could go anywhere in  
the woods. He wanted to hunt with me that day, so  
‘we stark We chase a moose all the forenoon, round  
‘and round, till middle of afternoon, when we kill him.  
Then I said to him,now you go straight to camp. Don't

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190 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
igo round and round where we've been, but go straight  
He said, T can't do that, I don’t know where I am  
‘Where you think camp? I asked. He pointed so  
‘Then I iaugh at him. I take the lead and go right off  
the other way, cross our tracks many times, straight  
camp.” “How do you do that?” asked I. 0, T can't  
tell you," he replied. Great difference between me  
‘and white man.”  
  
It appeared as if the sources of information were so  
‘various that he did not give a distinct, conscious attention  
to any one, and so could not readily refer to any when  
questioned about it, but he found his way very much  
‘as ari animal does. Perhaps what is commonly called  
inet in the animal, in this case is merely a sharpened  
‘and educated sense. Often, when an Indian says, “I  
don't know,” in regard to the route he is to take, he does  
not mean what a white man would by those words, for  
hhis Indian instinct may tell him still as much as the  
‘most, confident white man knows. He does not carry  
things in his head, nor remember the route exactly like  
‘a white man, but relies on himself at the moment. Not  
hhaving experienced the need of the other sort of knovl-  
‘edze, all Inbelled and arranged, he has not acquired it.  
  
The white hunter with whom I talked in the stage  
kknew some of the resources of the Indian, He said that  
hie steered by the wind, or by the limbs of the hemlocks,  
which were largest on the south side; also sometimes,  
when he knew that there was a lake near, by firing his  
gun and listening to hear the direction and distance of  
the echo from over it.  
  
‘The course we took over this lake, and others after  
‘ward, was rarely direct, but a succession of curves from  
point to point, digressing considerably into each of the

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THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 191  
  
Bays; and this was not merely on account of the wind,  
for the Indian, looking toward the middle of the lake,  
said it was hard to go there, easier to keep near the  
shore, because he thus got over it by successive reach  
‘and saw by the shore how he got along.  
  
The following will suflice for a common experience in  
crossing lakes in a cance. As the forenoon advanced  
‘the wind increased. ‘The last bay which we crossed  
before reaching the desolate pier at the northeast carry,  
‘was two or three miles over, and the wind was south  
westerly. After going a third of the way, the waves had  
{increased s0 as occasionally to wash into the canoe, and  
‘we saw that it was worse and worse ahead. At first we  
right have turned about, but were not willing to. It  
‘would have been of no use to follow the course of the  
shore, for not only the distance would have been much  
greater, but the waves ran still higher there on account  
of the greater sweep the wind had. At any rate it would  
have been dangerous now to alter our course, because  
the waves would have struck us at an advantage. It  
‘will not do to meet them at right angles, for then they  
will wash in both sides, but you must take them quarter-  
ing. So the Indian stood up in the canoe, and exerted  
all his skill and strength for a mile or two, while I pad~  
‘led right along in order to give him more steerage-way.  
For more than a mile he did not allow a single wave to  
strike the eanoe as it would, but turned it quickly from  
‘this side to that, so that it would always be on or near  
the crest of a wave when it broke, where all its force  
was spent, and we merely settled down with it At  
length I jumped out on to the end of the pier, against  
which the waves were dashing violently, in onder to  
lighten the cance, and catch it at the landing, which was

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192 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
not much sheltered; but just as I jumped we took in  
two or three gallons of water. I remarked to the Indian,  
“You managed that wel;” to which he replied: «Ver  
few men do that. Great many waves; when I look out,  
for one, another come quick.”  
  
‘While the Indian went to get cedar-bark, &c., to carry  
is canoe with, we cooked the dinner on the shore, at  
this end of the carry, in the midst of a sprinkling rain.  
  
‘He prepared his canoe for carrying in this wise. He  
took cedar shingle or splint eighteen inches long and  
four or five wide, rounded at one end, that the comers  
‘might not be in the way, and tied it with cedar-bark by  
two holes made midway, near the edge on each side, to  
‘the middle crossbar of the canoe. When the canoe wis  
Tifted upon his head bottom up, this shingle, with ite  
rounded end uppermost, distributed the weight over his  
shoulders and head, while a band of cedar-bark, tied to  
‘the eross-bar on each side of the shingle, passed round  
hhis breast, and another longer one, outside of the last,  
round his forehead; also a hand on each side rail served.  
to steer the canoe and keep it from rocking, He thus  
carried it with his shoulders, head, breast, forehead, and  
both bands, as if the upper part of his body were all one  
hand to clasp and hold it. If you know of a better way,  
Tehould like to hear of it. A cedar-tree furnished all  
the gear in this case, as it had the woodwork of the  
ceanoe. One of the paddles rested on the crossbars in  
the bows. T took the canoe upon my head and foand  
‘that I could carry it with ease, though the straps were  
not fitted to my shoulders; but I let him earry it, not  
caring to establish a different precedent, though he said  
that if I would carry the canoe, he would take all the  
rest of the baggage, except my companion's, ‘This ehin-

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. © 193  
  
gle remained tied to the crossbar throughout the voyage,  
was always ready for the carries, and also served to pro-  
tect the back of one passenger.  
  
‘We were obliged to go over this carry twice, our load  
‘was so great. But the carries were an agroeable variety,  
‘and we improved the opportunity to gather the rare  
plants which we bad seen, when we retumed empty  
handed.  
  
‘We reached the Penobscot about four o'clock, and  
found there some St Francis Indians encamped on the  
Dank, in the same place where I camped with four  
Indians four years before. ‘They were making a canoe,  
nd, as then, drying moose-meat. ‘The meat looked very  
table to make a Black broth at least. Our Indian said  
it was not good. ‘Their camp was covered with spruce-  
bark. They had got a young moose, taken in the river  
1 fortnight before, confined in a sort of cage of logs piled  
‘up cob-fashion, seven or eight fect high. It was quite  
tame, about four feet high, and covered with moose-fies.  
‘There was a large quantity of comel (0. stolonifera),  
red maple, and also willow and aspen boughs, stuck  
‘through between the logs on all sides, but-ends out, and  
con their leaves it was browsing. Tt looked at first as if  
it were in a bower rather than a pen.  
  
Our Indian said that he used Wack sprace-roots to sew  
‘canoes with, obtaining it from high lands or mountains.  
The St. Francis Indian thought that white spruce-roots  
might be best. But the former said, “ No good, break,  
can't split em”; also that they were hard to get, deep  
in ground, but the black were near the surface, on higher  
land, as well as tougher. He said that the white spruce  
was subekoondark, black, skusk. I told im I thought  
that I could make a canoe, but he expressed great doubt  
  
° x

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194 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
of its at any rate, he thought that my work would not be  
“neat” the first time, An Indian at Greenville had  
told me that the winter bark, that is, bark taken off  
before the sap flows in May, was harder and much better  
than summer bark.  
  
Having reloaded, he paddled down the Penobscot,  
which, as the Indian remarked, and even I detected,  
remembering how it looked before, was uncotmonly full.  
‘We soon after saw a splendid yellow lily (Litium Cana-  
dense) by the shore, which I plucked. Tt was six feet  
high, and had twelve flowers, in two whorls, forming a  
pyramid, such as I.have seen in Concord, We after-  
ward saw many more thus tall slong this stream, and  
‘zo still more numerous on the East Branch, and, on  
the latter, one which I thought approached yet nearer to  
the Zilium superbum. ‘The Indian asked what we called  
it, and said that the “loots” (roots) were good for soup,  
that is, to cook with meat, to thicken it, taking the place  
of flour. They get them in the fall. I dug some, and  
found @ mass of bulbs pretty deep in the earth, two  
inches in diameter, looking, and even tasting, somewhat  
like raw green com on the ear.  
  
‘When we had gone aboat three miles down the Penob-  
scot, we saw through the tree-tops a thundershower  
coming up in the west, and we looked out « camping-  
place in good season, about five o'clock, on the westside,  
not far below the mouth of what Joe Aitteon, in '58,  
called Lobster Stream, coming from Lobster Pond. Our  
present Indian, however, did not admit this name, nor  
even that of Matahumkeag, which is on the map, but  
called the lake Beskabekuk.  
  
I will describe, once for all, the routine of ‘amy  
‘this season, We generally told the Indian that we would

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH = 195,  
  
stop at the first suitable place, so that he might be on the  
  
Jookout for it. Having observed a clear, hard, and flat  
  
‘beach to land on, free from mud, and from stones which  
  
would injure the canoe, one would run up the bank to  
  
see if there were open and level space enough for the  
camp between the trees, or if it could be easily cleared,  
\* preferring at the same time a cool place, on account of  
insects, Sometimes we paddled a mile or more before  
finding one to our minds, for where the shore was suitse  
ble, the bank would often be too steep, or else too low  
  
‘and grassy, and therefore mosquitoey. We then took  
  
‘out the baggage and drew up the cance, sometimes turn-  
  
ing it over on shore for safety. ‘The Indian ct @ path  
  
to the spot we had selected, which was usually within  
  
‘two or three rods of the water, and we carried up our  
  
baggage. One, perhaps, takes canoe-birch bark, always  
  
at hand, and dead dry wood or bark, and kindles a fire  
  
five or six feet in front of where we intend to lie. It  
  
matters not, commonly, on which side this is, because  
  
there is litle or no wind in so dense a wood at that sea-  
nd then he gets kettle of water from the river,  
‘and takes out the pork, bread, coffee, &c, from their  
several packages.  
  
Another, meanwhile, having the axe, cuts down the  
nearest dead rock-maple or other dry hard wood, col-  
lecting several large logs to last through the night, lso  
‘a green stake, with a notch or fork to it, which is slanted  
‘over the fire, perhaps resting on a rock or forked stake,  
to hang the Kettle on, and two forked stakes and a pole  
for the tent.  
  
‘The third man pitches the tent, cuts a dozen or more  
pins with his knife, usually of moose-wood, the common  
underwood, to fasten it down with, and then collects an

Page-9011

196 TUE MAINE Woops.  
  
‘armful or two of fir-twigs,\* arbor-vitw, eproce, or hem  
Jock, whichever ia at hand, and makes the bed, beginning  
at either end, and laying the twigs wrong-side up, in reg-  
‘ular rows, covering the stub-ends of the last row ; first,  
however, filing the hollows, if there are any, with coarser  
‘material. Wrangel says that his guides in Siberia first  
strewed a quantity of dry brushwood on the ground, and  
‘then cedar twigs on that.  
  
Commonly, by the time the bed is made, or within fit-  
teen or twenty minutes, the water boils the pork is fried,  
and supper is ready. We eat this sitting on the ground,  
or a stump, if there is any, around a large piece of bizch-  
bark for a table, each holding a dipper in one hand and  
1 pices of ship-bread or fried pork in the other, frequently  
‘making a pass with his hand, or thrusting his head into  
the smoke, to avoid the mosquitoes.  
  
‘Next, pipes are lit by those who smoke, and veils are  
donned by those who have them, and we hastily examine  
and dry our plants, anoint our faces and hands, and go  
to bed, —and— the mosquitoes.  
  
‘Though you have nothing to do bat sce the country,  
there’s rarely any time to spare, hardly enough to exam-  
ine a plant, before the night or drowsiness is upon you.  
  
Such was the ordinary experience, but this evening  
‘wehad camped earlier on account of the rain, and had  
‘more time.  
  
‘We found that our camp to-night was on an old, and  
‘now more than usually indistinct, supply-road, running  
‘long the river. What is called a road there shows no  
rruts or trace of wheels, for they are not used; nor, in-  
deed, of runners, since they are used only in the winter,  
when the snow is several feet deep. It is only an indis-  
  
1 That twig are called in Rasle's Dictionary, Sadak

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 197  
  
tinct vista through the wood, which it takes an experi«  
enced eye to detect  
  
‘We had no sooner pitched our tent than the thunder=  
shower burst on ts, and we hastily crept under it, draw-  
ing our bags after us, curious to see how much of a shel-  
ter our thin cotton roof was going to be in this excursion.  
‘Though the violence of the rain forced a fine shower  
through the cloth before it was fairly wetted and shrunk,  
‘with which we were well bedewed, we managed to keep  
pretty dry, only @ box of matches having been left out  
and spoiled, and before we were aware of it the shower  
‘was over, and only the dripping trees imprisoned us.  
  
‘Wishing to see what fishes there were in the river  
there, we east our lines over the wet bushes on the shore,  
bat they were repeatedly swept down the swift stream in  
vain. So, leaving the Indian, wo took the canoe just before  
dark, and dropped down the river a few rods to fish at  
the mouth of a sluggish brook on the opposite side. Wo  
pushed up this a rod or two, where, perhaps, only a canoe  
had been before. But though there were a few small  
fishes, mostly chivin, there, we were soon driven off by  
the mosquitoes. While there we heard the Indian fire  
his gun twice in such rapid succession that we thought it  
rust be double-barreled, though wo observed afterward  
that it was single. His object was to clean out and dry  
it after the rain, and he then loaded it with ball, being,  
now on ground where he expected to meet with large  
game. This sudden, loud, crashing noise in the stil aisles  
of the forest, affected me like an insult to nature, or ill  
manners at any rate, as if you were to fre a gun in a  
hall or temple. It was not heard far, however, except  
along the river, the sound being rapidly hushed up oF  
‘absorbed by the damp trees and mossy ground.

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198, ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘The Indian made a little smothered fire of damp  
leaves close to the back of the camp, that the smoke  
ight drive through and keep out the mosquitoes ; but  
{just before we fell asleep this suddenly blazed up, and  
‘came near setting fre tothe tent. We were considerably  
‘molested by mosquitoes at this camp.  
  
Soxpax, July 26  
  
The note of the white-throated sparrow, a very in~  
spiriting but almost wiry sound, was the first heard in  
the morning, and with this all the woods rang. This  
‘was the prevailing bird in the northern part of Maine.  
‘The forest generally was all alive with them at this sea-  
son, and they were proportionally numerous and masical  
about Bangor. They evidently breed in that State,  
‘Wilson did not know where they bred, and says, Their  
‘only note is @ kind of chip.” Though commonly un-  
seen, their simple ah, tevete, eter, texese, so sharp and  
piercing, was as distinct to the ear as the passage of  
spark of fire shot into the darkest of the forest would be  
to the eye. I thought that they commonly uttered it as  
they flew. I hear this note for a few days only in the  
spring, as they go through Concord, and in the fall eee  
them again going southward, but then they are mute.  
‘We were commonly aroused by their lively strain very  
early. What a glorious time they must have in that  
wildemess, far from mankind and election day!  
  
T told the Indian that we would go to church to Che-  
‘suncook this (Sunday) morning, come fifteen miles. Tt  
‘was settled weather at last. A fow swallows fltted over  
the water, we heard the white throats along the shore,  
the phebe notes of the chicadee, and, I believe, red-starts,  
tand moore-fies of large size pursued us in midstream.  
  
‘The Indian thought that we should lie by on Sunday.

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 199  
  
Said he, “ We come here lookum things, look all rounds  
Dat come Sunday, lock up all that, and then Monday look  
again.” He spoke of an Indian of hia acquaintance who  
hhad been with some ministers to Ktaadn, and had told  
him how they conducted. ‘This he described in a low and  
solemn voice. They make a long prayer every morn-  
ing and night, and at every meal. Come Sunday,” said  
he, “they stop’em, no go at all that day, — keep still, —  
preach all day, —firstone then another, jut like church.  
(0, ver good men.” “One day,” said he, “ going along a  
river, they came to the body of a man in the water,  
Arowned good while, all ready fall to pieces. They go  
right ashore, —stop there, go no farther that day, — they  
hhave meeting there, preach and ‘pray just like Sunday.  
‘Then they get poles and lift up the body, and they go back  
‘and carry the body-with them. 0, they ver good men.”  
  
I jndged from this account that their every camp was  
‘a camp-meeting, and they had mistaken their route, —  
they should have gone to Eastham ; that they wanted  
‘an opportunity to preach somewbere more than to see  
Kiaadn, I read of another similar party that seem to  
hhave spent their time there singing the songs of Zion.  
‘Iwas glad that I id not go to that mountain with such  
slow coaches.  
  
However, the Indian added, plying the paddle all the  
while, that if we would go along, he must go with us,  
he our man, and he suppose that if he no takum pay for  
what he do Sunday, then ther’s no harm, but if he  
takum pay, then wrong, I told him that he was stricter  
than white men. Nevertheless, I noticed that he did  
not forget to reckon in the Sundays at Inst  
  
‘He appeared to be a very religious man, and eaid his  
prayers in a loud voice, in Indian, kneeling before the

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200 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
‘camp, morning and evening, — sometimes scrambling up  
‘again in haste when he had forgotten this, and saying  
‘them with great rapidity. In the course of the day, he  
remarked, not very originally, “ Poor man remember-  
‘um God more than rich.”  
  
‘We soon passed the island where I bad camped four  
years before, and I recognized the very spot. The dead  
‘water, a mile or two below it, the Indian called, Besta  
dekulskishtut, from the lake Beskabekub, which empties  
in above. This dead water, he said, was “a great place  
for moose always.” We saw the grass bent where a  
moose came out the night before, and the Indian said  
‘that he could smell one as far as he could see him; but,  
hhe added, that if he should see five or six to-day close  
bby canoe, he no shoot ’em. Accordingly, as he was  
‘the only one of the party who had a gun, or had come  
schunting, the moose were safe.  
  
Just below this, a cat-owl flew heavily over the  
stream, and he, asking if T know what it was, imitated  
very well the common hoo, hoo, hoo, hoorer, hoo, of our  
woods; making a hard, guttural sound, «Ugh, ugh, ugh,  
—ugh, ugh.” When we passed the Moose-horn, he  
said that it had no name, What Joe Aitteon had  
called Ragmuf, he called Pay tay te quick, and eaid that  
it meant Burnt Ground Stream. We stopped there,  
where I had stopped before, and I bathed in this tribu-  
tary. It was shallow but cold, apparently too cold for  
the Indian, who stood looking on. As we were pushing  
away again, a white-beaked eagle sailed over our heads.  
A reach some miles above Pine Stream, where there  
‘were several islands, the Indian eaid was Nonglangyis,  
dead-water. Pine Stream he called Black River, and  
said that its Indian name was Karsaootuk, He could  
om ta Carihom Lake that way.

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 201  
  
We carried a part of the baggage about Pine Stream  
Falls, while the Indian went down in the canoe. A.  
Bangor merchant had told us that two men in his em-  
ploy were drowned some time ago while passing these  
fall in a bateau, and a third clung to a rock all night,  
‘and was taken off in the morning. ‘There were mag-  
nificent great purple-fringed orchises on this carry and  
the neighboring shores. I measured the largest eanoe-  
birch which I saw in this journey near the end of the  
carry. Tt was 144 feet in circumference at two feet from  
the ground, but at five fect divided into three parts. ‘The  
‘canoe-birches thereabouts were commonly marked by  
conspicuous dark spiral ridges, with a groove between, £0  
that I thought at fret that they bad been struck by light-  
ning, but, as the Indian said, it was evidently caused by  
the grain of the tree. He cut « small, woody knob, as  
big as a filbert, from the trunk of a fr, apparently an old  
balsam vesicle filled with wood, which he said was good.  
medicine.  
  
After we had embarked and gone half a mile, my  
companion remembered that he had left his knife, and  
‘we paddled back to get it, against the strong and swift  
current. This taught ua the difference between going  
up and down the stream, for while we were working  
our way back a quarter of @ mile, we should have gone  
down a mile and a half at least. So we landed, and  
while he and the Indian were gone back for it, I  
watched the motions of the foam, a kind of white water-  
fowl near the shore, forty or fifty rods below. It alter~  
nately appeared and disappeared behind the rock, being  
carried round by an eddy. Even this semblance of life  
‘was interesting on that lonely river.  
  
‘Immediately below these falls was the Chesuncook,  
  
\*

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208 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
dead-water, caused by the flowing back of the lake. As  
‘we paddled slowly over this, the Indian told us a story  
of his hunting thereabouts, and something more interest=  
about himself. Tt appeared that he had represented  
his tribe at Augusta, and also once at Washington, where  
hhe bad met some Western chiefs. He had been con-  
sulted at Augusta, and gave advice, which he said was  
followed, respecting the eastern boundary of Maine, a8  
determined by highlands and streams, at the time of the  
difficulties on that side. He was employed with the  
surveyors on the line. Also he had called on Daniel  
‘Webster in Boston, at the time of his Bunker  
oration.  
  
‘Iwas surprised to hear him say that he liked to go to  
Boston, New York, Philadelphia, &c, &e.; that he would  
Tike to live there. But then, aa if relenting a litle, when  
hhe thought what a poor figure he would make there, he  
added, “I suppose, I live in New York, I be poorest  
Ibunter, I expect” He understood very well both hi  
‘superiority and his inferiority to the whites. He critix  
cised the people of the United States as compared with  
‘other nations, but the only distinct idea with which he  
Inbored was, that they were “very strong,” but, like  
some individuals, “too fast.” He must have the eredit  
of saying tis just before the general breaking down of  
railroads and banks. He had a great idea of education,  
‘and would occasionally break out into such expressions  
as this, “ Kademy—a-cad-e-my — good thing—I sup-  
pose they usum Fifth Reader there. .... You been cole  
lege ?”  
  
From this dead-water the outlines of the mountains  
about Ktaadn were visile. The top of Ktaadn was  
concealed by a eloud, but the Souneunk Mountains were

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THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 208  
  
nearer, and quite visible. We steered across the north-  
‘west end of the lake, from which we looked down soath-  
southeast, the whole length to Joe Merry Mountain, seen  
over its extremity. It is an agreeable change to cross a  
lake, after you have been sbut up in the woods, not only  
‘on account of the greater expanse of water, but also  
of sky. It is one of the surprises which Nature has in  
store for the traveller in the forest. To look down, in  
this case, over eighteen miles of water, was liberating  
and civilising even. No doubt, the short distance to  
‘which you can see in the woods, and the general twilight,  
‘would at length react on the inhabitants, and make them  
taloages. ‘The lakes also reveal the mountains, and give  
‘ample scope and range to our thought.. The very gulls  
which we saw sitting on the rocks, like white specks, or  
circling about, reminded me of eustom-house officers  
Already there were half a dozen log-huts about this end  
of the lake, though so far from a road. I perceive that  
in these woods the earliest settlements are, for various  
restons, clustering about the lakes, but partly, I think,  
for the sake of the neighborhood as the oldest clearings.  
They: are forest schools already established, — great  
centres of light. Water is a pioneer which the settler  
follows, taking advantage of its improvements.  
  
‘Thus far only I had been before. About noon we  
‘turned northward, up a broad kind of estuary, and at its  
northeast comer found the Caucomgomoe River, and  
after going about a mile from the lake, reached the Um-  
Dazookskus, which comes in on the right at a point where  
the former river, coming from the west, turns short to  
the south. Our course was up the Umbazookskus, but  
‘a5 the Indian knew of a good camping-place, that is, a  
cool place where there were few mosquitoes, about balf a

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204 THE MAINE WOODS,  
  
nile farther up the Caucomgomoc, we went thither. ‘The  
latter river, judging from the map, is the longer and  
principal stream, and, therefore, its name must prevail  
below the junction. So quickly we changed the civilize  
ing sky of Chesuncook for the dark wood of the Cas-  
comgomoc. On reaching the Indian's camping-ground,  
‘on the south side, where the bank was about a dozen feet  
high, I read on the trunk of a firtree blazed by an axe  
‘an insoription in charcoal which had been left by him.  
‘It was surmounted by a drawing of a bear paddling a  
‘canoe, which he said was the sign which had been used  
by his family always. ‘The drawing, though rude, could  
not be mistaken for anything but a bear, and he doubted  
‘ay ability to copy it. ‘The inscription ran thus, verbatim  
at lieratim, 1 interline the English of his Indian as he  
gave it to me.  
  
[the Sgare of «bear i  
  
Saly 26,  
1885,  
  
‘Niwoa,  
‘We alone Joseph.  
Polis elioh  
Polis start  
wa ola  
for Oldtown  
uke on  
right away.  
‘quambi  
  
   
  
   
  
oat]  
  
   
  
Saly 15,  
1855.  
Mawes.  
  
‘Ho added now below:—  
  
1952,  
aly 26.  
Jo. Polis

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 205  
  
   
  
This was ono of his homes. I saw where he had  
sometimes stretched his moose-hides on the opposite or  
sunny north side of the river, where there was a narrow  
meadow.  
  
‘After we ad selected placo for our camp, and ki  
led our fire, almost exactly on the site of the Indian's  
last camp here, he, looking up, observed, “That tree  
danger.” Tt was a dead part, more than a foot in diame  
ter, of a large canoe-birch, which branched at the ground.  
‘This branch, rising thirty feet or more, slanted directly  
‘over the spot which we had chosen for our bed. I told  
hhim to try it with his axe; but he could not shake it  
perceptibly, and, therefore, seemed inclined to disregard  
it, and my companion expressed his willingness to run  
the risk. But it seemed to me that we should be fools  
tolie under it, for though the lower part was frm, the  
top, for aught we knew, might be just ready to fall, and  
‘wo should at any rate be very uneasy if the wind arose  
in the night, It is a common accident for men camping  
in the woods to be killed by a falling tree. So the camp  
‘was moved to the other side of the fire.  
  
Tt was, as usual, a damp and shaggy forest that Cau  
‘eomgomoe one, and the most you knew about it was, that  
‘on this side it stretched toward the settlements, and on  
that to still more unfeequented regions. You carried co  
‘much topography in your mind always,— and sometimes  
it seemed to make a considerable difference whether  
you sat or lay nearer the settlements, or farther off, than  
‘Your companions, — were the rear or frontier man of the  
‘camp, But there is really the same difference between,  
‘our positions wherever we may be camped, and some are  
nearer the frontiers on feather-beds in the towns than  
‘others on fir-twigs in the backwoods.

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206 THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘The Indian said that the Umbazookskus, being a dead  
stream with broad meadows, was good place for moose,  
‘and he frequently came a-hunting here, being out alone  
‘three wocks or more.from Oldtown. He sometimes,  
‘alto, went achunting to the Seboois Lakes, taking the  
stage, with his gun and ammunition, axe and blankets,  
hard bread and pork, perhaps for a hundred miles of the  
‘way, and jumped off at the wildest place on the road,  
‘where he was at once at home, and every rod was a tay-  
ero-tite for him. ‘Then, after a short journey through  
the woods, he would build a spruce-bark eanoe in one  
day, putting but few ribs into it, that it might be light,  
‘and after doing his hunting with it on the lakes, would  
return with his fors the same way he had come. Thus  
you have an Indian availing himself cunningly of the  
‘advantages of civilization, without losing any of his  
‘wooderaf, but proving himself the more successful hunter  
for it  
  
‘This man was very clever and quick to lean anything  
fn his line. Our tent was of a kind new to him; but  
‘when he had once seen it pitched it was surprising how  
quickly he would find and prepare the pole and forked  
stakes to pitch it with, cutting and placing them right the  
first time, though Iam sure that the majority of white  
‘men would have blundered several times.  
  
‘This river came from Caucomgomoe Lake, about ten  
miles farther up. ‘Though it was sluggish here, there  
‘were falls not far above us, and we saw the foam from  
them go by from time to time. ‘The Indian said that  
Caueomgomoe meant Big-gull Lake, (i. Herring-gull,  
suppose,) gomoc meaning lake. Hence this was Cau-  
omgomoctook, or the river from that lake. ‘This was the  
Penobscot Caucomgomoc-ook! there was another St

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 207  
  
John one not far north, He finds the eggs of this gull,  
sometimes twenty together, as big as hen's eggs, on rocky  
ledges on the west side of Millinocket River, for instance,  
and eats them.  
  
‘Now I thought Iwould observe how be spent his Sun~  
day. While I and my companion were looking aboat at  
‘tha trees and river, he went to sleep. Indeed, he ime  
proved every opportunity to get a nap, whatever the day.  
  
‘Rambling about the woods at this camp, I noticed that  
they consisted chiefly of fir, black epruce, and some  
white, red maple, canoe-birch, and, along the river, the  
hhoary alder, Alnus incana. I name them in the order of  
their abundance. The Viburnum nudum was a common  
shrub, and of smaller plants, there were the dwarf-cornel,  
‘great round-leaved orchis, abundant and in bloom (a  
greenish-white flower growing in little communities),  
Coularia grandiflora, whose stem tasted like a cucumber,  
Pyrola secunda, apparently the commonest Pyrola in those  
‘woods, now out of bloom, Pyrola elliptica, and Chiogenes  
hispidula, The Clintonia borealis, with ripe berries, was  
very abundant, and perfectly at home there. Its leaves,  
\lisposed commonly in triangles about its stem, were just  
ss handsomely formed and green, and its berries as blue  
‘and glossy, as if it grew by some botanist’ favorite path.  
  
T could trace the outlines of lange birches that had  
fallen long ago, collapsed and rotted and turned to soil,  
by faint yellowish-green lines of feather-like moss,  
eighteen inches wide and twenty or thirty feet long,  
crossed by other similar lines.  
  
T heard a Maryland yellow-throat’s midnight strain,  
‘wood-thrush, kingfisher (tweezer bird), or parti-colored  
warbler, and a night-hawk. I also heard and saw red  
squirrels, and heard bullfog. ‘The Indian said that  
he heard a snake.

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208, ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘Wild as it was it was hard for me to get rid of the  
associations of the settlements. Any steady and monote  
‘onous sound, to which I did not distinctly attend, passed  
for sound of buman industry. The waterfalls which,  
‘heard were not without their dams and mills to my im- -  
‘agination, — and several times I found that I had been re=  
garding the steady rushing sound of the wind from over  
the woods beyond the rivers as that of a train of ears —  
the cars at Quebec. Our minds anywhere, when lef to  
‘themselves, are always thus busily drawing conclusions  
from falso premises.  
  
Tasked the Indian to make us a sugar-bow! of birch-  
bark, which he id, using the great Knife which dangled  
  
‘8 sheath from his belt; but the bark broke at the oor~  
ners when he bent it up, and he said it was not good  
that there was a great difference in this respect between,  
the bark of one canoe-birch and that of another, i.e, one  
‘racked more easily than another. I used some thin and  
delicate sheets of this bark which he split and cut, in my  
flower-book ; thinking it would be good to separate the  
dried specimens from the green.  
  
My companion, wishing to distinguish between tho  
black and white spruce, asked Polis to show him a twig  
of the latter, which he did at once, together with the  
black ; indeed, he could distinguish them about as far as  
hhe could see them; but as the two twigs appeared very  
‘much alike, my companion asked the Indian to point out  
the difference ; whereupon the latter, taking the twige, in-  
stantly remarked, as he passed his hand over them success  
sively ina stroking manner, that the white was rough (i.e.  
the needles stood up nearly perpendicular), but the black.  
smooth (i.e. a8 if bent or combed down). ‘This was an  
obvious difference, both tosight and touch. However, if 1

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‘AE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 209  
  
remember rightly, this would not serve to distinguish the  
‘white spruce from the light-colored variety of the black.  
‘asked him to let me seo him get some black spruce  
root, and make some thread. Whereupon, without look-  
ing up at the tzees overhead, he began to grub in the  
ground, instantly distinguishing the black spruce roots,  
and cutting off a slender one, three or four feet long, and  
1s big as a pipe-stem, he eplit the end with his knife, and  
taking a half between the thumb and forefinger of each  
hand, rapidly separated its whole length into two equal  
cylindrical halves then giving me another root, ho  
said, “You try.” But in my hands it immediately ran  
off one side, and I got only a very short piece. In short,  
though it looked very easy, I found that there was a  
great art in splitting these roots, ‘The split is skilfully  
Jhumored by bending short with this hand or that, and s0  
kept in the middle, He then took off the bark from  
cach half, pressing a short piece of codar bark against  
the convex side with both bands, while he drew the root  
upward with his teeth. An Indian's teeth are strong,  
and I noticed that he used his often where we should  
have used ahand. ‘They amounted toa third hand. He  
‘thos obtained, in a moment, a very neat, tough, and flexi-  
ble string, which he could tie into a knot, or make into a  
fish-line even. It is said that in Norway and Sweden the  
roots of the Norway spruce (Abies ezelsa) are used in  
‘the same way for the same purpose. He said that you  
would be obliged to give half a dollar for spruce root  
enough for a canoe, thus prepared. He had hired the  
‘sewing of his own canoe, though ie made all the rest.  
The root in his canoe was of a pale slate color, probably  
‘acquired by exposure to the weather, or perhaps from  
‘being boiled in water first.

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210 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘He had discovered the day before that his canoe leaked  
f little, and said that it was owing to stepping into it  
violently, which forced the water under the edge of the  
hhorizontal seams on the side. I asked him where he  
‘would get pitch to mend it with, for they commonly uso  
hhard-pitch, obtained of the whites at Oldtown, He said  
that he could make something very similar, and equally  
good, not of spruce gum, or the like, but of material  
which we had with us; and he wished me to guess what.  
But I could not, and be would not tell me, though he  
showed me a ball of it when made, as big as a pee, and  
se black pitch, saying, at last, that there were some  
‘things which a man did not tell even his wife. It may  
have been his own discovery. In Arnold's expedition  
the pioncers used for their canoe “the turpentine of the  
pine, and the scrapings of the pork-bag.”  
  
Being curious to see what kind of fishes there were  
in this dark, deep, sluggish river, Teast in my line just  
before night, and caught several small somewhat yeliow-  
{sh sucker-ike fishes, which the Indian at once rejected,  
saying that they wore Michigan fish (|. e. aft and stink  
ing fish) and good for nothing. Also, he would not  
touch a pout, which I caught, and said that neither  
Indians nor whites thereabouts ever ate them, which I  
‘thought was singular, since they are esteemed in Massa-  
chusetts, and he had told me that he ate hedgehogs,  
loons, &c. But he said that some small silvery fishes,  
Which I called white chivin, which were size  
and form to the first, were the best fish in the Penobscot  
‘waters, and if T would toss them up the bank to him, he  
would cook them for me. After cleaning them, not very  
carefully, leaving the heads on, he laid them on the coals  
and so broiled them.

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 211  
  
Returning from a short walk, he brought a vine in his  
hand, and asked me if I knew what it was, saying that  
it made the best tea of anything in the woods. It was  
the Creeping Snowberry (Ghiogenes hispidula), which  
‘was quite common there, its berries just grown. He  
called it cowoenebagosar, which name implies that it  
grows where old prostrate trunks have collapsed and  
rotted. So we determined to have some tea made of  
this to-night. It had a slight checkerberry flavor, and  
‘we both agreed that it was really better than the black  
tea which we had brought. We thought it quite a dis-  
covery, and that it might well be dried, and sold in the  
shops. I, for one, however, am not an old tea-drinker,  
‘and cannot speak with authority to others. It would  
have been particularly good to carry along for a cold  
drink during the day, the water thereabouts being inva-  
riably warm. The Indian said that they also used for  
tea a certain herb which grew in low ground, which he  
did not find there, and Ledum, or Labrador tea, which I  
Ihave since found and tried in Concord; also hemlock  
leaves, the last especially in the winter, when the other  
plants were covered with snow; and various other things  
Dut he did not approve of arbor vita, which I said I had  
drunk in those woods. We could have had a new kind  
of tea every night.  
  
‘Just before night we saw a musquash, (he did not say  
rmuskrat,) the only one we saw in this voyage, swimming  
downward on the opposite side of the stream. ‘The  
Indian, wishing to get one to eat, hushed us, saying,  
“Stop, me call em”; and sitting flat on the bank,  
began to make a curious squeaking, wiry sound with his  
lips, exerting himself considerably. I was greatly sur.  
prised, — thought that I had at last got intc the wilder:

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212 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
ness, and that he was a wild man indeed, to be talking  
toa musquash! I did not know which of the two was  
the strangest to me. He seemed suddenly to have quite  
forsaken humanity, and gono over to the musquash side.  
‘The musquash, however, as near as I could see, did not  
tom aside, though he may have hesitated a little and the  
Tndian said that he saw our fre; but it was evident that  
‘he was in the babit of calling the musquash to him, as bo-  
said. An acquaintance of nine who was bunting moose  
in those woods a month after this, tells me that his Indian  
in this way repeatedly called the musquash within reach.  
of his paddle in the moonlight, and struck at them,  
  
‘Tho Indian said particularly long prayer this San-  
day evening, as if to atone for warking in the morning.  
  
. Moxpar, July 27.  
  
Having rapidly loaded the canoe, which the Indian  
always carefully attended to, that it might be well  
trimmed, and each having taken a look, as usual, to seo  
that nothing was left, we set out again, descending the  
Ceucomgomoe, and turning northeasterly up the Umba~  
zookskus. This name, the Indian said, meant Auch,  
‘Meadow River. We found it a very meadowy stream,  
‘and dead water, and now very wide on account of the  
rains, though, he said, it was sometimes quite narrow.  
‘The space between the woods, chiefly bare meadow, was  
from fifty to two hundred rods in breadth, and is a rare  
place for moose. It reminded me of the Concord; and  
what increased the resemblance, was one old musquash  
house almost afloat  
  
In tho water on the meadows grew sedges, wool-grass,  
the common blue-fag abundantly, its lower just showing  
itzelf above the high water, as if it were a blue water-

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 218.  
  
ly, and higher in the meadows a great many clumps of  
1 peculiar narrow-leaved willow (Saliz petilaris), which  
{is common in our river meadows. It was the prevailing  
‘one here, and the Indian said that the musquash ate  
much of it; and here also grew the red osier (Cornus  
stolonifera), its large fruit, now whitish.  
  
‘Though it was still early in the morning, we saw night~  
hawks circling over the meadow, and as usual heard the  
Pepe (Muscieapa Coopers), which ia one of tho prow  
ling birds in these woods, and the robin.  
  
‘It was unusual for the woods to be 90 distant from the  
shore, and there was quite an echo from them, bat when  
I was shouting in order to awake it, the Indian reminded  
‘me that I should scare the moose, which he was looking  
‘out for, and which we all wanted to see. The word for  
echo was Pod  
  
A broad belt of dead larch-trees along the distant edge  
of the meadow, against the forest on each side, increased  
the usual wildnese-of the scenery. ‘The Indian ealled  
these juniper, and said that they had been killed by the  
back water caused by the dam at the outlet of Chesun-  
cook Lake, some twenty miles distant. I plucked at the  
water’s edge the Asclepias incarnata, with quite hand-  
come flowers, a brighter red than our variety (the pul-  
chra). Tt was the only form of it which I saw there.  
  
Having paddled several miles up the Umbazookskus,  
it suddenly contracted to a mire brook, narrow and  
swift, the larches nd other trees approaching the bank  
and leaving no open meadow, and we landed to get a  
Dlack-spruce pole for pushing against the stream. ‘This  
‘was the first occasion for one. ‘The one selected was quite  
slender, cut about ten feet long, merely whittled to a point,  
fnd the bark sbaved of The stream, though narrow

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214 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
and swift, was still deep, with a muddy bottom, as I  
proved by diving to it. Beside the plants which I bave  
mentioned, I observed on the bank here the Salix cor-  
data and rostrata, Ranunculus recurvatus, and Rubus  
triflorus with ripe fruit.  
  
‘While we were thus employed, two Indians in a canoo  
‘hove in sight round the bushes, coming down stream.  
‘Our Indian knew one of them, an old man, and fell into  
conversation with him in Indian, He belonged at the  
foot of Moosehead. ‘The other was of another  
‘They were returning from huating. I asked the younger  
if they had seen any moose, to which he said no ; but I,  
seeing the moose-hides sticking out from a great bundle  
made with their blankets in the middle of the canoe,  
added, “ Only their hides.” As he was a foreigner, he  
may have wished to deceive me, for it is against the law  
for white men and foreigners to kill moose in Maine  
at this season, But, perhaps, he need not have been  
alarmed, for the moose-wardens are not very particular.  
T heard quite directly of one, who being asked by a white  
rman going into the wots what he would say if he killed  
18 moose, answered, “If you bring me a quarter of it, I  
guess you wor't betroubled.” His duty being, as he said,  
‘only to. prevent the “ indiscriminate ” slaughter of them  
for their hides, T suppose that he would consider it an  
indiscriminate slaughteg when & quarter was not re-  
served for himself, Such are the perquisites of this  
office,  
  
‘We continued along through the most extensive larch  
‘wood which I had seen, — tall and slender trees with fan-  
tastic branches. But though this was the prevailing tree  
here, I do not remember that we saw any afterward.  
‘You do not find straggling trees of this species here and

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 215  
  
there throughout the wood, but rather a little forest of  
them, ‘The same is the case with the white and red  
pines, and some other trees, greatly to the convenience  
of the lumberer. ‘They are of a social habit, growing in  
veins,” “ clumps,” \* groups,” or \* communities” as the  
explorers call them, distinguishing them far away, from  
the top of a hill or a tree, the white pines towering above  
the surrounding forest, or else they form extensive forests  
by themselves. I would have liked to come across a  
large community of pines, which had never been invaded  
by the lumbering army.  
  
‘We saw some fresh moose tracks along the shore, but  
‘the Indian’ said that the moose were not driven out of the  
‘woods by the fies, as usual at this season, on account of  
the abundance of water everywhere. ‘The stream was  
‘oly from one and one half to three rods wide, quite  
winding, with occasional small islands, meadows, and  
some very swift and shallow places. When we came to  
‘an island, the Indian never hesitated which side to take,  
‘as if the current told him which was the shortest and  
deepest. Twas lucky for us that the water was to high.  
‘We had to walk but once on this stream, carrying a part  
of the load, at a swift and shallow reach, while he got up  
with the canoe, not being obliged to take out, hough he  
said it was very strong water. Once or twice we passed  
the red wreck of a bateau which had been stove some  
spring.  
  
‘While making this portage Tsaw many splendid speci-  
‘mens of the great purple-fringed orchis, three feet high.  
tis remarkable that such delicate flowers should here  
ado these wildemess paths.  
  
Having rosumed our seats in the canoe, T felt the In-  
dian wiping my back, which he had accidentally spat

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216 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
upon. He said it was a sign that I was going to be  
‘married,  
  
‘The Umbazookskas River is called ten miles long.  
Having polled up the narrowest point some three or four  
tiles, the next opening in the sky was over Umbazook-  
‘skus Lake, which we suddenly entered about eleven  
o'clock in the forenoon. It stretches northwesterly four  
or five miles, with what the Indian called the Caueom-  
{gomoo Mountain seen far beyond it. It was an agree~  
‘able change.  
  
This lake was very shallow a long distance from the  
shore, and I saw stone heaps on the bottom, like those  
in the Assabet at home. ‘The canoe ran into one. The  
Indian thought that they were made by an eel. Joe  
Aitteon in 1858 thought that they were made by chub.  
‘We crossed the southeast end of the lake to the carry  
into Mud Pond.  
  
Umbazookskus Lake is the head of the Penobscst  
in this direction, and Mud Pond is the nearest bend of  
the Allegash, one of the chief sources of the St. Jol.  
Hodge, who went through this way to the St Lawrence  
in the service of the State, calls the portage here a mile  
and three quarters long, and states that Mud Pond has  
‘been found to be fourteen feet higher than Umbazook~  
skus Lake. "As the west branch of the Penobscot at the  
‘Moosehead carry is considered about twenty-five feet  
lower than Moosehead Lake, it appears that the Penob-  
‘cot in the upper part of its course runs in a broad and  
shallow valley, between the Kennebec and St. Johns,  
‘and lower than either of them, though, judging from the  
‘map, you might expect it to be the highest.  
  
‘Mud Pond is sbout half-way from Umbazookskus to  
Chamberlain Lake, into which it empties, and to which

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 17  
  
we were bound. ‘The Indian said that this was the  
‘wettest carry in the State, and as the scason was a very  
wet one, we anticipated an unpleasant walk. As usual  
Ihe made one large bundle of the pork-keg, cooking utene  
sils, and other loose traps, by tying them up in his blan-  
ket, We should be obliged to go over the carry twice,  
and our method was to carry one half part way, and  
then go back for the rest.  
  
ur path ran close by the door of a log-hat in a clear-  
ing at this end of the carry, which the Indian, who alone  
entered it, found to be occupied by a Canadian and his  
family, and that the man had been blind for a yenr. He  
seemed peculiarly unfortunate to be taken blind there,  
where there were 0 few eyes to see for him. He could  
not even be led out of that country by a dog, but must  
be taken down the rapids as passively as a barrel of  
flour. This was the first house above Chesuncook, and  
the last on the Penobscot waters, and veas built here, no  
doubt, because it was the route of the Iumberers in the  
winter and spring.  
  
After slight ascent from the lake through the springy  
soil of the Canadian’s clearing, we entered on a level and  
‘very wet and rocky path through the universal dense  
‘evergreen forest, a loosely paved gutter merely, where  
‘we went leaping from rock to rock and from side to side,  
in the vain attempt to keep out of the water and mud.  
‘We concluded that it was yet Penobscot water, though  
there was no flow to it. Tt was on this carry that the  
white hunter whom I met in the stage, as he told me,  
had shot two bears a few months before. ‘They stood  
irectly in the path, and did not turn out for him. ‘They  
‘might be excused for not turning out there, or only tak~  
ing the right as the law directs. He said that at this  
  
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218 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
season bears were found on the mountains and hillsides,  
in search of berries, and were apt to be saucy,  
‘we might come across them up ‘Trout Stream; and he  
added, what I hardly credited, that many Indians slept  
in their canoes, not daring to sleep on land, on account  
of them.  
  
Hero commences what was called, twenty years ago,  
tue best timber land in the State. ‘This very spot was,  
described as “covered with the greatest abundance of  
ppine;” but now this appeared to me, coniparatively, an  
‘uncommon tree there, —and yet you did not see where  
any more ebuld have stood, amid the dense growth of  
cedar, fir, &e. It was then proposed to cut a canal from  
Jake to lake here, bat the outlet was finally made farther  
cast, at Telos Lake, as we shall see.  
  
‘The Indian with his canoe soon disappeared before  
us; but erelong he came back and told us to take a path  
which turned off westward, it being better walking, and,  
ft my suggestion, be agreed to leave a bough in the  
regular carry at that place, that we might not pasa it by  
mistake. Thereafter, he said, we were to keep the main  
path, and he added, You see ’em my tracks.” But I  
hhad not much faith that we could distinguish his tracks,  
since others had passed over the carry within » few  
days.  
  
‘We turned off at the right place, but were soon con-  
fused by numerous logging-paths, coming into the one  
wwe were on, by which lumberers had been to pick out  
those pines which I have mentioned. However, we kept  
‘what we considered the main path, though it was a  
ing one, and in this, at long intervals, we distinguished a  
faint trace of a footstep. ‘This, though comparatively  
unworn, was at first 4 better, or, at least, a drier road,

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 219  
  
than the regular carry which we bad left, Ttled through  
fan arbor-vite wilderness of the grimmest character.  
‘The great fallen and rotting trees had been eut through  
‘and rolled aside, and their huge trunks abutted on the  
path on each side, while others still lay across it two  
‘or three feet Tt was impossible for us to discern  
the Tndian’s trail in the elastic moss, which, like a thick  
carpet, covered every rock and fallen tree, as well as the  
earth. Nevertheless, I did occasionally detect the track  
of aman, and I gave myself some credit for it. T carried  
my whole load at once, a heavy knapsack, and a large  
India-rubber bag, containing oar bread and a blanket,  
swung on a paddle; in all, about sixty pounds; but my  
companion preferred to make two journeys, by short  
stages, while I waited for him. We could not be sure  
that we were not depositing our loads each time farther  
‘off from the true path.  
  
As I sat waiting for my companion, he would seem to  
be gone a long time, and I had ample opportunity to  
make observations on the forest. I now first began to  
be seriously molested by the black-fly, a very small but  
perfectly formed fly of that color, about one tenth of an  
inch long, which I first felt, and then saw, in swarms  
about me, as I sat by @ wider and more than usually  
doubtful fork in this dark forest-path. ‘The hunters tell  
bloody stories about them, —how they settle in aring abont  
your neck, before you know it, and are wiped off in  
‘great numbers with your blood. But remembering that  
T had a wash in my knapsack, prepared by a thoughtful  
hand in Bangor, I made haste to apply it to my face  
and hands, and was glad to find it effectaal, as long as it  
was fresh, or for twenty minutes, not only against black-  
flies, but all the insects that molested us. ‘They would ~

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220 ‘THE MAINE Woons  
  
not alight on the part thus defended. Tt was composed  
‘of sweetoil and oil of turpentine, with a little oil of  
‘spearmint, and camphor. However, I finally concluded  
‘that the remedy was worse than the disease. It was so  
disagreeable and inconvenient to have your face and  
hhands covered with such a mixture.  
  
‘Three large slate-colored birds of the jay genus (Gar-  
‘rulus Canadensis), the Canada-jay, moose-bird, meat-bird,  
‘or what not, came fitting silently and by. degrees toward  
‘me, and hopped down the limbs inquisitively to within  
seven or eight feet. ‘They were more clumsy and not  
nearly s0 handsome as the bluejay. Fish-hawks, from  
the lake, uttered their sharp whistling notes low over the  
top of the forest near me, as if they were anxious about  
nest there.  
  
‘After I had sat there some time, I noticed at this fork.  
in the path a tree which had been blazed, and the letters  
“Cham. L.” written on it with red chalk. ‘This I knew  
tomean Chamberlain Lake. So I concluded that on the  
whole we were on the right courte, though as we had  
come nearly two miles, and saw no signs of Mud Pond,  
did harbor the suspicion that we might be on a direct  
course to Chamberlain Lake, leaving out Mud Pond.  
‘This I found by my map would be about five miles nob  
easterly, and I then took the bearing by my compass.  
  
‘My companion having returned with his bag, and also  
defended his face and hands with the insect-wash, we set  
forward again. ‘The walking rapidly grew worse, and  
the path more indistinct, and at length, after passing  
through a patch of ealla palustris, still abundantly in  
loom, we found ourselves in a more open and regular  
swamp, made less passable than ordinary by the unusual  
‘wetness of the season. We sank a foot deep in water

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 221.  
  
fand mud at every step, and sometimes up to our knees,  
and the trail was almost obliterated, being no more than  
that a musquash Jeaves in similar places, when he parts  
the floating sedge. In fact, it probably was a musquash  
trail in some places. We concluded that if Mud Pond  
‘was as muddy as the approach to it was wet, it certainly  
Aeserved its name, Tt would have been amusing to  
behold the dogged and deliberate pace at which wo  
entered that swamp, without interchanging a word, as if  
determined to go through it, though it should come up  
toour necks. Having penetrated considerable distance  
into this, and found a tussuck on which we could deposit  
our loads, though there was no place to sit, my com-  
panion went back for the rest of his pack. I had thought  
to observe on this carry when we crossed the dividing  
line between the Penobscot and St. John, but as my feet  
hhad hardly been out of water the whole distance, and it  
was all level and stagnant, I began to despair of finding  
it, Tremembered hearing a good deal about the “ high-  
lands” dividing the waters of the Penobscot from those  
of the St. John, as well as the St. Lawrence, atthe time  
of the northeast boundary dispute, and I observed by  
‘my map, that the line claimed by Great Britain as the  
‘boundary prior to 1842 passed between Umbazookskus  
Lake and Mud Pond, 60 that we had either crossed or  
were then on it, These, then, according to er inter-  
pretation of the treaty of ’83, were the “highlands which  
divide those rivers that empty themselves into the St.  
Lawrence from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean.”  
‘Traly an interesting spot to stand on, — if that were it, —  
though you could not sit down there, I thought that if  
the commissioners themselves, and the king of Holland  
‘with them, bad spent a few days here, with their packs

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222 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘upon their backs, looking for that “highland,” they would  
hhave had an interesting time, and perhaps it would have  
‘modified their views of the question comewhat. ‘The  
kking of Holland would have been in his element. Such  
‘were my meditations while my companion was gone back  
for his bag.  
  
Tt was a cedar swamp, through which the peculiar  
note of the white-throated sparrow rang loud and clear.  
There grew the side-saddle fower, Labrador tea, Kal-  
sméa glauca, and, what was new to me, the Low Birch (Be-  
tula pumila), a little round-leafed shrub, two or three feet  
  
igh only. We thought to name this swamp after the  
latter.  
  
After a long while my companion came back, and the  
Indian with him. We had taken the wrong road, and  
the Indian had lost us. He had very wisely gone back  
to the Canadian’s exmp, and asked him which way we  
had probably gone, since he could better understand the  
ways of white men, and he told him correctly that we  
had undoubtedly taken the supply road to Chamberlain  
Lake (slender supplies they would get over stch a road  
at this season). ‘The Indian was greatly surprised that  
‘we should have taken what he called a “tow”  
or toting or supply) road, instead of a carry path, —  
that wp had not followed his tracks,—said it was  
strange,” and evidently thought little of our woodcraft.  
  
Having held consultation, and eaten a mouthful of  
bread, we concluded that it would, perhaps, be nearer for  
us twonow to keep on to Chamberlain Lake, omitting Mud  
Pond, than to go back and start anew for the last placey  
though the Indian had never been through this way, and  
knew nothing about i, In the meanwhile he would go  
back and finish carrying over his canoe and bundle to

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THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 223  
  
Mud Pond, cross that, and go down its outlet and up  
Chamberlain Lake, and trust to meet us there before  
night. Tt was now a little after noon. Fle supposed  
that the water in which we stood had flowed back from  
‘Mud Pond, which could not be far off eastward, but was  
‘unapproachable throngh the dense cedar swamp.  
Keeping on, we were erclong agreeably disappointed  
by reaching firmer ground, and we crossed a ridge where  
the path was more distine, but there was never any out-  
look over the forest. While descending the last, T saw  
‘many specimens of the great round-leaved orchis, of large  
size; one which I measured had leaves, as usual, flat on  
the ground, nine and a half inches Jong, and nine wi  
and was two feet high. ‘The dark, damp wilderness is  
favorable to some of these orchidaceous plants, though  
they are too delicate for cultivation. I also saw the  
swamp gooseberry (Ribes lacustre), with green fruit, and  
in all the low ground, where it was not too wet, the Ru-  
‘bus triflorus in frait. At one place I heard a very cleat  
and piercing note from’a small hawk, like a single note  
from a white-throated sparrow, only very much louder,  
1s he dashed through the tree-tops over my head. T  
‘wondered that he allowed himself to be disturbed by out  
presence, singe it seemed as if he could not easly find  
his nest again himself in that wilderness. We also saw  
and heard several times the red squirrel, and often, as  
before observed, the bluish scales of the fir cones which  
it had left on a rock or fallen tree, ‘This, according to  
the Indian, is the only squirrel found in those woods, ex-  
cept a very few striped ones. It must have a solitary  
time in that dark evergreen forest, where there is so little  
life, seventy-five miles from a road as we had come. T  
‘wondered how he could call any particular tree there his

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224 THE MAINE Woops.  
  
hhome and yet he would run up the stem of one out of the  
  
is, as if it were an old road to him. How can «  
hhawk ever find him there? I fancied that he must be  
glad to eee us, though he did seem to chide us. One of  
those sombre fir and spruce woods is not complete unless  
you hear from out its cavernous mossy and twigey  
Tecesses his fine alaram,—his spruce voice, like the  
‘working of the sap through some crack in a tree,— the  
working of the spruce-beer. Such an impertinent fellow  
‘would occasionally try to alarm the wood about me.  
O} said 1, “Tam well acquainted with your family, I  
‘know your cousins in Concord very well. Guess the  
rail’ irregular in these parts, and you ’a like to hear  
from em.” But my overtures were vain, for he would  
‘withdraw by bis aerial tarnpikes into a more distant cedar  
top, and spring his rattle again.  
  
‘We then entered another swamp, at a necessarily slow  
pace, where the walking was worse than ever, not only  
‘on account of the water, but the fallen timber, which  
often obliterated the indistinet trail entirely. The fallen  
trees were so numerous, that for long distances the route  
‘was through a succession of small yards, where we  
<limbed over fences as high as our heads, down into water  
‘often up to our knees, and then over another fence into a  
second yand, and ¢0 on; and going back for his bag my  
companion once lost his way and came back without it.  
Tn many places the eanoe would have run if it had not  
been for the fallen timber. Again it would be more  
open, but equally wet, too wet for trees to grow, and no  
place to sit down. Tt was « mossy swamp, which it re-  
{quired the long legs of a moose to traverse, and itis very  
likely that we scared some of them in our transit, though,  
‘we saw none. It was ready to echo the growl of a bear,

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‘THE ALLUGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 225  
  
the howl of a wolf or the scream of @ panther; but  
when you get fairly into the middle of one of these grim  
forests, you are surprised to find that the larger inbabit-  
ants are not at home commonly, but have left only a puny  
red squirrel to bark at you. Generally speaking, a howl-  
ing wildemess does not howl: it is the imagination of  
the traveller that does the howling. I did, however, see  
‘one dead porcupine; perhaps he had succumbed to the  
difficulties of the way. These bristly fellows are a very  
suitable small fruit of such unkempt wildernesses.  
  
‘Making a logging-road in the Maine woods is called  
“swamping it,” and they who do the work are called  
“swampers.” I now perceived the fitness of the term.  
‘This was the most perfectly swamped of all the roads I  
ever saw. Nature must have co-operated with art here.  
However, I suppose they would tell you that this name  
took its origin from the fact that the chief work of road-  
makers in those woods is to make the swamps passable.  
‘We came to a stream where the bridge, which had been  
made of logs tied together with cedar bark, had been  
broken up, and we got over as we could. ‘This proba-  
bly emptied into Mud Pond, and perhaps the Tndian  
might have come up it and taken us in there if he had  
known it, Such as it was, this ruined bridge was the  
chief evidence that we were on a path of any kind.  
  
‘We then crossed another low rising ground, and I,  
who wore shoes, had an opportunity to wring out my  
stockings, but my companion, who used boots, had found  
that this was not a safe experiment for him, for he might  
not be able to get his wet boots on again. He went over  
the whole ground, or water, three times, for which rea  
fon our progress was very slow beside that the water  
‘oflened our feet, and to some extent unfitted them for  
  
ioe °

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226 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
walking. As T sat waiting for him, it would naturally  
seem an unaccountable time that he was gone. There-  
fore, as T could see through the woods that the sum was  
getting low, and it was uncertain how far the lake might  
be, even if we were on the right course, and in what  
part of the world we should find ourselves at nightfall, T  
proposed that I should push through with what speed I  
could, leaving boughs to mark my path,and find the lake  
and the Indian, if possible, before night, and send the  
latter back to earry my companion’s bag.  
  
Having gone about a mile, and got into low ground  
sugain, I heard a noise like the note of an owl, which I  
s00n discovered to be made by the Indian, and answering,  
im, we soon came together. He had reached the lake,  
after crossing Mud Pond, and running some rapids be-  
Jow it, and had come up about a mile and a half on our  
path. If he had not come back to meet us, we probably  
should not have found him that night, for the path  
branched once or twice before reaching this particular  
part of the lake. So he went back for my companion  
‘and his bag, while I kept on. Having waded through  
‘another stream where the bridge of logs had been broken.  
up and half floated away, — and this was not altogether  
‘worse than our ordinary walking, since it was less maddy,  
—we continued on, through alternate mud and water, to  
the shore of Apmoojenegamook Lake, which we reached in  
season for a late supper, instead of dining there, as we  
hhad expected, having gone without our dinner. It was,  
at least five miles by the way we had come, and as my  
companion had gone over most of it three times, he had  
walked full a dozen miles, bad as it was. In the winter,  
when the water is frozen, and the snow is four feet deep,  
it is no doubt a tolerable path to a footman. As it was,

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 297  
  
would not have missed that walk for a good deal. If  
‘yon want an exact recipe for making such a road, tako  
‘one part Mud Pond, and dilute it with equal parts of  
Umbazookskus and Apmoojenegamook; then send a  
family of musquash through to locate it, look after the  
‘grades and culverts, and finish it to their minds, and let  
a hurricane follow to do the fencing.  
  
‘We had come out on a point extending into Apmoo-  
Jjenegamook, or Chamberlain Lake, west of the outlet of  
‘Mud Pond, where there was a broad, gravelly, and rocky  
shore, encumbered with bleached logs and trees. We  
‘were rejoiced to see such dry things in that part of the  
world. But at first we did not attend to dryness #0 much,  
  
to mud and wetness. We all three walked into the  
lake up to our middle to wash our clothes.  
  
This was another noble lake, called twelve miles Jong,  
‘east and west; if you add Tebos Lake, which, since the  
dam was built, has been connected with it by dead water,  
it will be twenty ; and it is apparently from a mile and  
‘8 half to two miles wide, We were sbout midway its  
length, on the south side. We could sce the only clear-  
ing in these parts called the “ Chamberlain Farm,” with  
toro oF three log buildings close together, on the opposite  
shore, some two and a balf miles distant. The smoke  
of our fire on the shore brought over two men in a canoe  
from the farm, that being a common signal agreed on  
‘when one wishes to cross. It took them about half an  
hour to come over, and they bad their labor for their  
pains this time. Even the English name of the lake bad  
8 wild, woodland sound, reminding me of that Chamber-  
lain who killed Paugus at Lovewell’s fight.  
  
‘After patting on such dry clothes as we had, and hang-  
ing the others to dry on the pole which the Indian ar-

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228 THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
ranged over the fire, we ate our supper, and lay down on  
the pebbly shore with our feet tothe fre, without pitching  
‘our tent, making a thin bed of grass to cover the stones.  
  
Here first I was molested by the little midge ealled the  
‘No-see-em (Simulium nocioum, the latter word is not  
the Latin for no-see-em), especially over the sand at the  
water's edge, for it is « kind of sand-Aly. You would not  
observe them but for their lightolored wings. They  
are said to get under your clothes, and produce a fever-  
ish heat, which I suppose was what I felt that night.  
  
Our insect foes in this excursion, to sum them up,  
‘were, first, mosquitoes, the chief ones, but only troublesome  
‘at night, or when we sat still on shore by day; second,  
bblack flies (Simudium molestum), which molested us more  
‘or less on the earries by day, a8 I have before described,  
and sometimes in narrower parts of the stream, Harris,  
mistakes when he says that they are not seen after June.  
hind, moose-fies. ‘The big ones, Polis said, were called  
Bososquasis. Itis a stout brown fly, much like a horse-tly,  
about eleven sixteenths of an inch long, commonly rusty  
colored beneath, with unspotted wings. They can bite  
smartly, according to Polis, but are easily avoided or  
Killed. Fourth, the No-see-ems above mentioned. Of  
all these, the mosquitoes are the only ones that troubled  
‘me seriously ; but, as I was provided with a wash and a  
veil, they have not made any deep impression.  
  
‘The Indian would not use our wash to protect his face  
fand hands, for fear that it would hurt his skin, nor bad  
he any veil; he, therefore, suffered from insects now, and  
throughout this journey, more than either of us. I think.  
that he suffered more than T did, when neither of us was  
protected. He regularly tied up his face in his handker+  
chief, and buried it in his blanket, and he now finally lay

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‘THE ATLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 229,  
  
own on the sand between us and the fire for the sake  
of the smoke, which he tried to make enter his blanket  
about his face, and for the same purpose he lit his pi  
and breathed the smoke into hia blanket.  
  
‘As we lay thus on the shore, with nothing between us  
fand the stars, I inquired what stars he was acquainted  
with, or had names for. ‘They were the Great Bear,  
which he called by this name, the Seven Stars, which he  
Ihad no English name for, “the morning star,” and \* the  
north star.”  
  
In the middle of the night, as indeed each time that  
‘we lay on the shore of a lake, we heard the voice of the  
Joon, loud and distinct, from far over the lake, Tt  
very wild sound, quite in keeping with the place and the  
circumstances of the traveller, and very unlike the voice  
of abird. I could lie awake for hours listening to it, it  
is so thrilling, When camping in such a wilderness as,  
this, you are prepared to hear sounds from some ofits in-  
hhabitanta which will give voice to its wildness. Some idea  
of bears, wolves, or panthers runs in your head naturally,  
and when this note is first heard very far off at midnight,  
1s you lie with your ear to the ground,— the forest being  
perfectly still about you, you take it for granted that it,  
is the voice of a woif or some other wild beast, for only  
the last part is heard when at a distance, — you conclude  
that it is a pack of wolves baying the moon, or, per  
chance, cantering after a moose. Strange as it may  
seem, the \* mooing” of a cow on a mountain  
nearest to my idea of the voice of a bear; and  
note resembled that, It was the unfailing and character.  
istic sound of those lakes. We were not so lucky as ta  
hear wolves howl, though that is an oceasional serenade.  
Some friends of mine, who two years ago went up the

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230 THE MAINE Woops.  
  
Cancomgomoc River, were serenaded by wolves whilo  
‘moose-hunting by moonlight. It was a sudden burst, as  
if'a hundred demons had broke loose, —a startling eound  
enough, which, if any, would make your hair stand on  
‘end, and all was still again, Tt lasted but a moment, and  
you'd have thought there were twenty of them, when  
probably there were only two or three. They heard it  
‘twice only, and they said that it gave expression to the  
‘wilderness which it lacked before. I heard of some men  
‘who, while skinning amoose lately in those woods, were  
riven off from the carcass by a pack of wolves, which  
‘ate it up.  
  
"This of the Joon —T do not mean it laugh, but it  
Tooning —is long-drawn call, as it were, sometimes  
fingularly human to my ear,—hoo-hoo-00000, like the  
hallooing of a man on a very high key, having thrown  
his voice into his head, I have heard a sound exactly  
like it when breathing heavily through my own nostril  
half awake at ten at night, suggesting my afinity to the  
Joon 5 as if its language were but a dialect of my own,  
after all. Formerly, when lying awake at midnight in  
those woods, I had listened to hear some words or syl-  
lables of their language, but it chanced that T listened in  
vain until I heard the ery of the loon. I have heard it  
cecasionally on the ponds of my native town, but thers  
its wildness is not enhanced by the surrounding scenery.  
  
Twas awakened at midnight by some heavy, low-fly-  
ing bird, probably a loon, flapping by close over my  
hhead, along the shore. + So, turning the other side of my  
hhalfclad body to the fire, I sought slumber again.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘Toxspax, Joly 28,  
‘When we awoke we found a heavy dew on our blan-

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 281.  
  
kets, Tay awake very early, and listened to the clear,  
shrill ah-tetetettete, of the white-throated sparrow, re-  
peated at short intervals, without the least variation, for  
half an hour, as if it could not enough express its hap-  
piness, Whether my companions heard it or not, I  
know not, but it was a kind of matins to me, and tho  
‘event of that forenoon.  
  
Ii was pleasant sunrise, and we had a view of the  
‘mountains in the southeast. Kiaadn appeared about  
southeast by south. A double-topped mountain, about  
southeast by east, and another portion of the same, east  
southeast. ‘The Iast the Indian called Nerlumskeechti-  
cook, and said that it was at the head of the East Branch,  
‘and we should pass near it on our return that way.  
  
‘We did some more washing in the lake this morning,  
‘and with our clothes hung abot on the, dead trees  
and rocks, the shore looked like washing-day at home,  
‘The Indian, taking the hint, borrowed the soap, and  
walking into the lake, washed his only cotton shirt on his  
person, then put on his pants and let it dry on him.  
  
T observed that he wore a cotton shirt, originally  
white, a greenish flannel one over it, but no waisteoat,  
flannel drawers, and strong linen or duck pants, which  
also had been white, blue woollen stockings, cowhide  
boots, and a Kossuth hat He carried no change of  
clothing, but putting on a stout, thick jacket, which he  
aid asids in the cance, and seizing a full-sized axe, his  
gun and ammunition, and a blanket, which would do for  
sail or knapsack, if wanted, and strapping on bis belt  
which contained a large sheath-Knife, he walked of at  
‘once, ready to be gone all summer. ‘This looked very  
independent ; a few simple and effective tools, and no  
India-rubber clothing. He was always the first ready

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to start in the morning, and if it had not held some of  
‘our property would not have been obliged to roll up his  
blanket. Instead of carrying a large bundle of his own  
extra clothing, &c., he brought back the great-coats of  
moose tied up in his blanket. I found that his outfit was  
the result of a long experience, and in the main hardly to  
be improved on, unless by washing and an extra shirt.  
‘Wanting a button here, he walked off to a place where  
some Indians had recently encamped, and searched for  
one, but I believe in vain.  
  
‘Having softened our stiffened boots and shoes with  
the pork fat, the usual disposition of what was left at  
breakfast, we crossed the Inke early, steering in a diag.  
onal direction northeasterly about four miles, to the out-  
let, which was not to be discovered tll we were close to  
it. The Indian name, Apmocjenegamook, means lake  
that is crossed, because the usual course lies across, and  
not along it. ‘This is the largest of the Allegash lakes,  
and was the first St. John’s water thet we floated on.  
Ibis shaped in the main like Chesuncook. ‘There are  
xno mountains or high hills very near it. At Bangor we  
hhad been told of township many miles farther north-  
west; it was indicated to us as containing the highest  
land thereabouts, where, by climbing « particular tree in  
the forest, we could get a general idea of the country.  
T have no doubt that the last was good advice, but we  
id not go there. We did not intend to go far down the  
Allegash, but merely to get a view of the great lakes  
which are its source, and then return this way to the  
East Branch of the Penobscot. The water now, by good  
rights flowed northward, if it could be said to flow at all.  
  
‘After reaching the middle of the lake, we found the  
waves as usual pretty high, and the Indian warned my

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‘(THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 239  
  
‘companion, who was nodding, that he must not allow  
himself to fall asleep in the canoe lest he should upset  
us; adding, that when Indians want to sleep in a  
‘canoe, they lie down straight on the bottom. But in this  
crowded one that was impossible. However, he said  
that he would nudge him if he saw him nodding.  
  
‘A belt of dead trees stood all around the Inke, some  
far out in the water, with others prostrate behind them,  
and they made the shore, for the most part, almost inac-  
cessible, This is the effect of the dam at the outlet.  
"Thus the natural sandy or rocky shore, with its green  
fringe, was concealed and destroyed. We coasted west-  
‘ward along the north side, searching for the outlet, about  
fone quarter of a mile distant from this savage-looking  
shore, on which the waves were breaking violently,  
‘knowing that it might easily be concealed amid this rub-  
biah, or by the over-lapping of the shore. It is remark-  
able how little these important gates to a lake are bla-  
zoned. There is no triumphal arch over the modest  
inlet or outlet, but at some undistinguished point it tric-  
les in or out through the uninterrupted forest, almost as  
through a sponge.  
  
‘We reached the outlet in about an hour, and carried  
cover the dam there, which is quite a solid structure, and  
about one quarter of a mile farther there was a second,  
dam. ‘The reader will perceive that the result of thi  
particular damming about Chamberlain Lake is, that the  
hhead-waters of the St.John are made to flow by Ban-  
gor. They have thus dammed all the larger lakes, rais-  
ing their broad surfaces many feet ; Moosehead, for  
instance, some forty miles long, with its steamer on its  
thus turning the forees of nature against herself, that they  
‘might float their spoils out of the country. ‘They rapidly

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rrun out of these immense forests all the finer, and more  
‘accessible pine timber, and then leave the bears to watch  
the decaying dams, not clearing nor cultivating the land,  
nor making roads, nor building houses, but leaving it a  
wilderness, as they found it, In many parts, only these  
dams remain, like deserted beaverdams. Think how  
much land they have flowed, without asking Nature's  
leave! When the State wishes to endow an academy of  
university, it grants it a tract of forest land: one saw  
represents an academy; @ gang, a university.  
  
‘The wildemess experiences a sudden rise of all her  
streams and lakes, she feels ten thousand vermin gnaw-  
ing at the base of her noblest trees, many combining,  
deg them off, jarring over the roots of the survivors, and  
‘tumble them into the nearest stream, tll the fairest hav-  
ing fallen, they scamper off to ransack some new wilder-  
ness, and all is still again. It is as when a migrating  
army of mice giniles a forest of pines. The chopper  
fells trees from the same motive that the mouse gnaws  
them,—to got his living. You tell me that he has a  
‘more interesting family than the mouse. ‘That is as it  
happens. He speaks of a “berth” of timber, a good  
place for him to get into, just as a worm might. When  
the chopper would praise pine, he will commonly tell  
‘you that the one he cut was 60 big thet a yoke of oxen  
‘stood on its stump; as if that were what the pine ha  
‘grown for, to become the footstool of oxen. In my mind’s  
eye, I can sce these unwieldy tame deer, with a yoke  
inding them together, and brazen-tipped horns betray-  
ing their servitude, taking their stand on the stump of  
each giant pine in succession throughout this whole fore  
est, and chewing their eud there, until it is nothing but  
‘an ox-pastare, and run out at that. As if it were good

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 235  
  
for the oxen, and some terebinthine or other medicinal  
{quality ascended into their nostrils. Or is their elevated  
position intended merely as « symbol of the fact that the  
pastoral comes next in order to the sylvan or hunter life  
  
‘The character of the logger’s admiration is betrayed  
by his very mode of expressing it. IF he told all that  
‘was in his mind, he would say, it was 60 big that I cut,  
it down and then a yoke of oxen could stand <n its  
stump. He admires the log, the carcass or corpse, more  
than the tree. Why, my dear sir, the tree might have  
stood on its own stump, and a great deal more comforta-  
bly and firmly than a yoke of oxen can, if you had not  
cut it down. What right have you to celebrate the vir-  
‘ues of the man you murdered?  
  
‘The Anglo-American can indeed cut down, and grub  
  
‘up all this waving forest, and make a stump speech, and  
‘vote for Buchanan on its ruins, but he cannot converse  
‘with the spirit of the tree he fells, he cannot read the  
poetry and mythology which retire as he advances. ° He  
jgnoranily erases mythological tablets in onder to print  
his handbills and town-meeting warrants on theih. Be-  
fore he has learned his a b in the beautiful but mystio  
lore of the wilderness which Spenser and Dante had just  
begun to read, he cuts it down, coins a pinesree shilling,  
(as if to signify the pine’s value to him,) puts up a  
deestrict schoolhouse, and introduces Webster's speliing-  
book.  
Below the last dam, the river being swift and shallow,  
‘though broad enough, we two walked about half a mile  
to lighten the canoe. \_Imade it a rule to carry my knap-  
‘sack when I walked, and also to Keep it tied to a cross  
bar when in the canoe, that it might be found with the  
canoe if we should upset.

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286 THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
Theard the dog-day locust here, and afterward on the  
carries, a sound which I had associated only with more  
‘open, if not settled countries. The area for locusts mast  
be small in the Maine woods.  
  
‘We were now fairly on the Allegash River, which  
name our Indian said meant hemlock bark. ‘These  
waters flow northward about 100 miles, at first very  
feebly, then southeasterly 250 more to the Bay of Fun-  
y. After perhaps two miles of river, we entered Heron  
‘Lake, called on the map Pongokwahem, scaring up forty  
or fifty young sheconways, sheldrakes, at the entrance,  
which ran over the water with great rapidity, as usual  
in a long line.  
  
‘This was the fourth great lake, lying northwest and  
southeast, like Chesuncook, and most of the long lakes  
in that neighborhood, and, judging from the mip, it is  
about ten miles long. We had entered it on the south~  
‘west side, and saw a dark mountain northeast over the  
lake, not very far off nor high, which the Indian said was  
called Peaked Mountain, and used by explorers to look  
for timber from. ‘There was also some other high land  
‘more easterly. ‘The shores were in the same ragged  
‘and unsightly condition, encumbered with dead timber,  
both fallen and standing, asin the last Inke, owing to the  
‘dam on the Allegash below. Some low points or islands  
were almost drowned.  
  
T saw something white a mile off on the water, which  
turned out to be a great gull on a rock in the middle,  
  
the Indian would have been glad to kill and eat,  
but it flew away long before we were nears and also  
a fiock of summer ducks that were about the rock with  
it. T asking him about herons, since this was Heron  
Lake, he said that he found the blue heron’s nests in

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the hanl-wood trees, I thought that I saw a lightool-  
ored object move along the opposite or northern shore,  
four or five miles distant. He did not know what it  
could be, unless it were a moose, though he had never  
seen a white one; but he said that he could distinguish a  
moose “anywhere on shore, clear across the lake.”  
  
‘Rounding a point, we stood across a bay for a mile and  
a half or two miles toward a lange island, three or four  
miles down the lake. We met with ephemera: (shady)  
midway, about a mile from the shore, and they evident-  
ly fly over the whole lake, On Moosehead I had seen a  
large devil’s-needle half a mile from the shore, coming  
from the middle of the lake, where it was three or four  
miles wide at least. It had probably crossed. But at  
last, of course, you come to Inkes so large that an insect  
cannot fly across them ; and this, perhaps, will serve to  
distinguish a large lake from a small one.  
  
‘We landed on the southeast side of the island, which  
was rather elevated, and densely wooded, with a rocky  
shore, in season for an early dinner. Somebody had  
camped there not long before, and left the frame on which  
they stretched a moose-hide, which our Indian eriticised  
severely, thinking it showed but litle wooderaft. Here  
were plenty of the shells of erayfish, or fresh-water lob-  
sters, which had been washed ashore, such as have given  
fname tosome ponds and streams. ‘They are commonly  
four or five inches long. ‘The Indian proceeded at once  
to cut canoe-birch, slanted it up against another tree  
on the shore, tying it with a withe, and lay down to sleep  
in its shade.  
  
‘When we were on the Caucomgomoe, he recommended  
tous a new way home, the very one which we had first  
thought of, by the St. John. He even said that it waa

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easier, and would take but little more time than the  
other, by the east branch of the Penobscot, though very  
‘much farther round; and taking the map, he showed  
‘where we should be each night, for he was familiar with  
the route. According to his calculation, we should reach  
tho French settlements the next night after this, by keep  
ing northward down the Allegash, and when we got into  
the main St, John the banks would be more or less set-  
fled all the way; as if that were a recommendation,  
‘There would be but one or two falls, with short earrying-  
‘places, and we should go down the stream very fast, even  
‘hundred miles a day, if the wind allowed ; and he in-  
dicated where we should carry over into Eel River to  
save a bend below Woodstock in New Brunswick, and  
0 into the Schoodic Lake, and thence to the Matta-  
wamkeag. It would be about three hundred and sixty  
tiles to Bangor this way, though only about one hun~  
dred and sixty by the other; but in the former case wo  
should explore the St. John from ite souree through two  
thirds of its course, as well as the Schoodie Lake and  
Mattawamkeag, —and we were again tempted to go that,  
way. feared, however, that the banks of the St. John  
wore too much settled. When Tasked him which course  
would take us through the wildest country, he said the  
route by the East Branch. Partly from this considera-  
tion, as also from its shortness, we resolved to adhere to  
the latter route, and perhaps ascend Kiaadn on the wa}  
We made this island the limit of our excursion in this  
direction.  
  
‘We had now seen the largest of the Allegash Lakes,  
‘The next dam “was about fifteen miles” farther north,  
down the Allegash, and it was dead water so far. We  
‘had been told in Bangor of a man who lived alone, a sort

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 339  
  
   
  
at that dam, to take care of it, who spent his  
time tossing a bullet from one hand to the other, for want  
‘of employment, —as if we might want to call on him.  
‘This sort of tit-fortat intercourse between his two hands,  
bandying to and fro a leaden subject, seems to have been  
his symbol for society.  
  
This island, according to the map, was about a hun-  
dred and ten miles in a straight line north-northwest  
from Bangor, and about ninety-nine miles east-southeast  
from Quebec. ‘There was another island visible toward  
the north end of the lake, with an elevated clearing on  
its but we learmed afterward that it was not inhabited,  
had only been used as a pasture for cattle which sum-  
ered in these woods, though our informant said. that  
there was a hut on the mainland near the outlet of t  
lake. ‘This unnaturally smooth-shaven, squarish spot, in  
the midst of the otherwise uninterrupted forest, only re-  
minded us how uninhabited the country was. You  
‘would sooner expect to meet with a bear than an ox in  
such a clearing. At any rate, it must have been a sur~  
prise to the bears when they came across it. Such, scen  
far or near, you know at once to be man’s work, for Na-  
ture never does it, In order to let in the light to the  
earth as on a lake, he clears off the forest on the hillsides  
and plains, and sprinkles fine grass-seed, like an ene  
chanter, and so carpets the earth with a firm sward,  
  
Polis had evidently more curiosity respecting the few  
settlers in those woods than we. If nothing was said,  
he took it for granted that we wanted to go straight to  
the next log-hut. Having observed that we came by  
‘the log-huts at Chesuncook, and the blind Canadian’s at  
the Mud Pond carry, without stopping to communicate  
‘with the inbabitants, he took occasion now to suggest

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240 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘that the usual way was, when you came near a house, to  
0 to it, and tell the inhabitants what you had seen or  
hheard, and then they tell you what they had seen ; but  
‘we laughed, and said that we had had enough of houses  
for the present, and had come here partly to avoid them.  
  
Tn the mean while, the wind, inereasing, blew down the  
Indian's birch and ereated such a sea that we found our-  
selves prisoners on the island, the nearest shore, which  
‘was the western, being perhaps a mile distant, and we  
took the canoe out to prevent its drifting away. We did  
not know but we should be compelled to spend the rest of|  
the day and the night there. At any rate the Indian went  
to sleep again in the shade of his birch, my companion  
busied himself drying his plants, and I rambled along the  
shore westward, which was quite stony, and obstructed  
‘with fallen bleached or drifted trees for four or five rods  
jin width. I found growing on this broad rocky and  
gravelly shore the Salix rostrata, discolor, and lucida,  
Ranunculus reeurvatus, Potentilla Norvegioa, Seutellaria  
laterifora, Eupatorium purpurewm, Aster Tradescanti,  
Mentha Canadensis, Epilobium angusifolium, abundant.  
Lycopus minatus, Solidago lanceolata, Spiraea salici-  
folia, Antennaria margaraticea, Prunella, Rumex aceto-  
ella, Raspberries, Wool-grass, Onoclea, &. ‘The nearest  
trees were Betula papyracea and excelsa, and Populus  
tremuloides. I give these names because it was my  
farthest northern point  
  
Our Indian said that he was doctor, and could tell  
‘me some medicinal use for every plant I could show him.  
I immediately tried him, He said that the inner bark  
‘of the aspen (Populus tremuloides) was good for sore  
eyes; and so with various other plants, proving himself  
as good as his word. According to his account, he had

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 241  
  
acquired such knowledge in his youth from a wise old  
Indian with whom he associated, and he lamented that  
the present generation of Indians \* had lost a great deal.”  
  
‘Hr said that the earibou was a “very great. runner,”  
that there was none about this lake now, though there  
used to be many, and ‘pointing to the belt of dead trees  
‘caused by the dams, he added, “ No likum stump, — when  
hie sees that he seared.”  
  
Pointing southeasterly over the lake and distant for-  
est, he observed, “Me go Oldtown in three days.” I  
asked how he would get over the swamps and fallen trees.  
0,” said he, “in winter all covered, go anywhere on snow-  
shoes, right across lakes.” When T asked how he went,  
he said, “First I go Ktaadn, west side, then I go Milli-  
rocket, then Pamadumeook, then Nickatou, then Lincoln,  
then Oldtown,” or else he went a shorter way by the  
Piscataquis. What a wilderness walk for a man to take  
tilone! None of your half-mile swamps, none of your  
mile-wide woods merely, as on the skirts of our towns,  
without hotels, only a dark mountain or a lake for guide-  
board and station, over ground much of it impassable in  
  
It reminded me of Prometheus Bound. Here was  
travelling of the ola heroic kind over the unaltered face  
of nature. From the Allegash, or Hemlock River, and  
‘Pongoquahem Lake, across great Apmoojenegamook, and  
leaving the Nerlumskeechticook Mountain on his left, he  
takes his way under the bear-hiunted slopes of Souneunk.  
and Ktaain Mountains to Pamadameook and Milinocket’s  
inland seas, (where often gulls-eggs may increase his  
‘store,) and so om to the forks of the Nickatou, (nia eoseb  
“we alone Joseph” seeing what our folks see,) ever  
  
pushing the boughs of the fir and spruce aside, with his  
1 F

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242 ‘THE MAINE Woops,  
  
load of fars, contending day and night, night and day,  
with thé shaggy demon vegetation, travelling through the  
mossy graveyard of trees. Or he could go by “that  
ough tooth of the sea,” Kineo, great source of arrows  
fand of spears to the ancients, when weapons of stone  
were used. Seeing and hearing moose, caribou, bears,  
porcupines, Iynxes, wolves, and panthers. Places where  
he might live and die and never hear of the United  
States, which make such a noise in the world, —never  
hear of America, s0 called from the name of a European  
gentleman.  
  
There is a lomberer’s road called the Eagle Lake  
road, from the Seboois to the eastside of this lake, Tt  
‘may seem strange that any road through such a wilder-  
ness should be passable, even in winter, when the snow  
is three or four feet deep, but at that season, wherever  
Iumbering operations are actively carried on, teams are  
continually passing on the single track, and it becomes as  
smooth almost as a railway. Tam told that inthe Aroos-  
took country the sleds are required by law to be of one  
‘width, (four feet) and sleighs must be altered to ft the  
‘rack, 20 that one runner may go in one rut and the other  
follow the horse. Yet it is very bad turning out.  
  
‘We had for some time seen a thunder.shower coming  
up from the west over the woods of the island, and heard  
the muttering of the thunder, though we were in doubt  
whether it would reach us; but now the darkness rapidly  
increasing, and a fresh breeze rustling the forest, we  
hastily put up the plants which we had been drying, and  
with one consent made a rush for the tent material and  
set about pitching it. A place was selected and stakes  
and pins cut in the shortest possible time, and we were  
pinning it down lest it should be blown away, when the  
storm suddenly burst over us

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 248.  
  
‘As we lay huddled together under the tent, which  
leaked considerably about the sides, with our baggage  
at our feet, we listened to some of the grandest thunder  
which I ever heard,—rapid peals, round and plump, bang,  
bang, bang, in succession, like artillery from some fortress  
in the sky ; and the lightaing was proportionally brilliant,  
The Indian said, “It must be good powder.” All for  
the bencfit of the moose and us, echoing far over the  
concealed lakes. I thought it must be a place which the  
thunder loved, where the lightning practised to keep its  
hand in, and it would do no harm to shatter a few pines.  
‘What had become of the ephemerm and devileneedles  
then? Were they prudent enough to seek harbor bee  
fore the storm? Perhaps their motions might guide the  
voyageur.  
  
‘Looking out I perceived thatthe violent shower falling  
fon the lake had almost instantancously flattened the  
‘waves, —the commander of that fortress had smoothed it  
for us 90,—and it clearing off, we resolved to start imme-  
diately, before the wind raised them again.  
  
Going outside, T said that T saw clouds still in the  
southwest, and heard thonder there. ‘The Indian asked  
if the thunder went lound” (round), saying that if it  
did we should have more rain. I thought that it did.  
‘We embarked, nevertheless, and paddled rapidly back  
toward the dams. ‘The white-throated sparrows on the  
shore were about, singing, Ah te, «6 t, 6 « te, or else  
10,6, ty €y 65 Ly € & Le 4  
  
‘At the outlet of Chamberlain Lake we were overtaken  
by another gusty rain-storm, which compelled us to take  
shelter, the Indian under his canoe on the bank, and we  
ran under the edge of the dam. However, we were  
more seared than wet. From my covert T could see the

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24d ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
Indian peeping out from beneath his canoe to see what  
Ihad become of the rain. When we had taken our respec  
tive places thus once or twice, the rain not coming down,  
in earnest, we commenced rambling about the neighbor-  
hhood, for the wind had by this time raised such waves  
fon the lake that we could not stir, and we feared that we  
should be obliged to camp there. We got an early sup-  
per on the dam and tried for fish there, while waiting for  
‘the tumult to subside. The fishes were not only few,  
but small and worthless, and the Indian declared that  
‘there were no good fishes in the St. John’s waters that  
‘we must wait till we got to the Penobscot waters.  
  
“At length, just before sunset, we set out again. Tt  
was a wild evening when we coasted up the north side  
of this Apmogjenegamook Lake. One thunderstorm  
‘was just over, and the waves which it had raised otill  
running with violence, and another storm was now seen,  
‘coming up in the southwest, far over the lakes but it  
might be woree in the morning, and we wished to got as  
far as possible on our way up the lake while we might.  
Jt blowed hard against the northem shore about an  
‘eighth of a mile distant on our left, and there was just as  
uch sea as our shallow canoe would bear, without our  
taking unusual care. That which we kept off, and toward  
Which the waves were driving, was as dreary and har-  
Dorless a shore as you ean conceive. For half a dozen  
rods in width it was a perfect maze of submerged trees,  
all dead and bare and bleaching, some standing half their  
original height, others prostrate, and criss-across, above  
‘or beneath the surface, and mingled with them were loose  
trees and limbs and stumps, beating about. Imagine  
the wharves of the largest city in the world, decayed,  
‘and the earth and planking washed away, leaving the

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 245  
  
piles standing in loose order, but often of twice the ordi-  
nary height, and mingled with and beating against them  
the wreck of ten thousand navies, all their spars and tim-  
bers, while there rises from the water's edge the densest  
‘and grimmest wilderness, ready to supply more material  
‘when the former faile, and you may get a faint idea of  
that const. We could not have landed if we would,  
without the greatest danger of being swamped ; s0 blow  
‘a5 it might, we must depend on coasting by it. It was  
twilight, too, and that stormy cload was advancing rap-  
idly in our rear. It was a’pleasant excitement, yet wo  
were glad to reach, at length, in the dusk, the cleared  
hore of the Chamberlain Farm.  
  
‘We landed on low and thinly wooded point there,  
and while my companions were pitching the tent, T ran  
up to the honse to get some sugar, our six pounds being  
‘gone; —it was no wonder they were, for Polis had a sweet  
tooth. He would first ill his dipper nearly a third fll  
of sugar, and then add the coffee to it Here was a  
clearing extending back from the lake to hilltop, with  
rome dark-colored log buildings and a storehouse in it,  
and bal? a dozen men standing in front of the principal  
hut, greedy for news. Among them was the man who  
tended the dam on the Allegash and toseed the bullet,  
He having charge of the dams, and learning that we  
were going to Webster Stream the next day, told me that  
some of their men, who were haying at Telos Lake, had  
sbut the dam at the canal there in order'to catch trout,  
and if we wanted more water to take us through the  
canal we might raise the gate, for he would like to have  
it raised. The Chamberlain Farm is no doubt a cheerful  
opening in the woods, but euch was the lateness of the  
hour that it has left but a dusky impreseion on my mind

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246 THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
   
  
‘As Thave said, the influx of light merely is civilizing,  
yet I fancied that they walked about on Sundays in their  
clearing somewhat as in a prison-yard.  
  
They were unwilling to spare more than four pounds  
‘of brown sugar, —unlocking the storehouse to get it, —  
since they only kept a little for such cases as this, and  
they charged twenty cents a pound for it, which cer-  
tainly it was worth to get it up there.  
  
‘When I returned to the shore it was quite dark, but  
wwe had a rousing fire to warm and dry us by, and a snug  
apartment behind it, ‘The Indian went up to the house  
1 inquire ater a brother who had been absent hunting,  
‘8 year or two, and while another shower was beginning,  
T groped about cutting spruce and arbor-vite twigs for a  
bed. I preferred the arbor-vite on account of its fra-  
‘grance, and spread it particularly thick about the shoul-  
dors. It is remarkable with what pure satisfaction the  
traveller in these woods will reach his camping-ground  
on the eve of tempestuous night like this, as if he had  
got to his ion, and, rolling himself in his blanket, stretch  
himself on his eix feet by two bed of dripping fir-twigs,  
‘with a thin sheet of cotton for roof, snug as a meadow-  
‘mouse in itsnest. Invariably our best nights were those  
‘when it rained, for then we were not troubled with mos-  
auitoes.  
  
‘You soon come to disregard rain on such excursions,  
at least in the summer, itis so easy to dry yourself, sup-  
posing a dry change of clothing is not to be had. You  
‘ean much sooner dry you by such a fire as you ean make  
{in the woods than in anybody’s kitchen, the fireplace is 0  
uch larger, and wood so-much more abundant. A shed~  
shaped tent will catch and reflect the heat like a Yankee=  
baker, and you may be drying while you are sleeping.

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 247  
  
Some who have leaky roofs in the towns may have  
een kept awake, but we were soon lulled asleep bya  
steady, soaking rain, which lasted all night. ‘To-nigbt, the  
rain not coming at once with violence, the twigs were  
soon dried by the reflected heat.  
Weomespar, July 20  
  
‘When we awoke it had done raining, though it was  
still cloudy. ‘The fire was put out, and the Indian's  
‘boots, which stood under the eaves of the tent, were half  
fall of water. He was much more improvident in such  
respects than cither of us, and he had to thank us for  
keeping his powder dry. We decided to cross the lake  
‘at once, before breakfast, or while we could ; and before  
starting I took the bearing of the shore which we wished  
to strike, 8. S. E. about three miles distant, lest a sud-  
den misty rain should conceal it when we were midway.  
Though the bay in which we were was perfectly quiet  
fand smooth, we found the lake already wide awake  
outside, but not dangerously or unpleasantly so; never-  
theless, when you get out on one of those lakes in a ca-  
noe like this, you' do not forget that you are completely  
at the merey of the wind, and a fickle power it is. ‘The  
playful waves may at any time become too rude for you  
in their sport, and play right on over you. We saw afew  
shecor-says and a jish-hawk thus early, and after much  
steady paddling and dancing over the dark waves of  
Apmoojenegamook, we found ourselves in the neighbor  
hood of the southern land, heard the waves breaking on  
it, and tarned our thoughts wholly to that side. After  
coasting eastward along this shore a mile or two, we  
Dreakfasted on a rocky point, the first convenient place  
‘that offered.  
  
Ji was well enough that we erossed thus early, for the

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248 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
waves now ran quite high, and we should have been  
obliged to go round somewhat, but beyond this point we  
hhad comparatively smooth water. You can commonly  
{go along one side or the other of a lake, when you can-  
not cross it.  
  
‘The Indian was looking at the hard-wood ridges from  
time to time, and said that he would like to buy a fow  
hundred acres somewhere about this lake, asking our  
advice. It was to buy as near the crossing place as pos-  
sible.  
  
‘My companion and I having a minute's discussion on  
some point of ancient history, were amused by the atti-  
tude which the Indian, who could not tell what we were  
talking about, assumed. He constituted himself umpire,  
and, judging by our air and gesture, he very seriously  
remarked from time to time, you beat,” or “ he beat.”  
  
Leaving a spacious bay, a northeasterly prolongation  
‘of Chamberlain Lake, on our left, we entered through =  
short strait into a small lake a couple of miles over,  
called on the map Telasinis, but the Indian had no dis-  
tinct name for it, and thence into Telos Lake, which he  
called Paytaywecomgomoe, or Burat-Ground Lake. ‘This  
curved round toward the northeast, and may have been  
three or four miles long as we paddled He had not  
been here since 1825. He did not know what ‘Telos  
meant thought it was not Indian, He used the word  
“ Spokelogan” (for an inlet in the shore which led no-  
where), and when I asked its meaning said that there  
‘was “no Indian in ’em.” There was a clearing, with a  
hhouse and barn, on the southwest shore, temporarily oo-  
cupied by some men who were getting the hay, as wo  
hhad been told; also a clearing for a pasture on a hill on  
‘the west side of the lake.

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 249  
  
‘We landed on a rocky point on the northeast side, to  
Took at some Red Pines (Pinus resinosa), the first wo  
hind noticed, and get some cones, for our few which grow  
in Concord do not bear any.  
  
‘The outlet from the lake into the East Branch of the  
Penobscot is an artificial one, and it was not very appar-  
‘ent where it was exactly, but the lake ran curving far  
up northeasterly into two narrow valleys or ravines, as  
fit had for a long time been groping its way toward the  
Penobscot waters, or remembered when it anciently  
flowed there ; by observing where the horizon was lowest,  
and following the longest of these, we at length reached  
the dam, having come about adozen miles from the last  
camp. Somebody had left a line set for trout, and the  
Jjackknife with which the bait had been cut on the dam  
beside it, an evidence that man was near, and on a de-  
serted log close by a loaf of bread baked in a Yankee-  
baker. These proved the property of solitary bunter,  
whom we soon met, and canoe and gun and traps  
were not far off; He told us that it was twenty miles  
farther on our route to the foot of Grand Lake, where  
you could catch as many trout as you wanted, and that  
the first house below the foot of the lake, on the East  
Branch, was Hunt's, about forty-five miles farther; though  
there was one about a mile and a half up ‘Trout stream,  
some fifteen miles ahead, but it was rather @ blind route  
to it, It tamed out that, though the stream was ia our  
favor, we did not reach the next house till the morning,  
of the third day after this. ‘The nearest permanently in-  
hhabited house behind us was now a dozen miles distant,  
0 that the interval between the two nearest houses on  
‘our route was about sixty miles.  
  
‘This hunter, who was a quite small, sunburnt man,,  
ue

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250 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
hhaving already carried his canoe over, and baked his  
loaf, had nothing so interesting and pressing to do as to  
observe our transit. He had been out a month or more  
alone. How much more wild and adventurous his life  
‘than that of the hunter in Concord woods, who gets back  
to his house and the mill-dam every night! Yet they in  
the towns who have wild oats to sow commonly sow them  
on cultivated and comparatively exhausted ground. And  
as for the rowdy world in the large cities, so litle enter~  
prise has it that it never adventures in this direction, but  
like vermin clubs together in alleys and drinking-saloons,  
its highest accomplishment, perchance, to run beside @  
fire-engine and throw brickbats. But the former is com-  
paratively an independent and successfull man, getting  
his living in a way that he likes, without disturbing  
his human neighbors. How much more respectable  
alzo is the life of the solitary pioneer or settler in these,  
for any woods,—having real difficulties, not of his own  
creation, drawing his subsistence directly from nature, —  
than that of the helpless multitudes in the towns who de-  
pend on gratifying the extremely artificial wants of so-  
ciety and are thrown out of employment by hard times!  
  
‘Here for the first time we found the raspberries really  
plenty, — that is, on passing the height of land between  
tho Allegash and the East Branch of the Penobscot  
tho same was true of the blueberries  
  
‘Telos Lake, the head of the St. John on this side, and.  
‘Webster Pond, the head of the East Branch ofthe Penob-  
scot, are only about a mile apart, and they are connected  
by a ravine, in which but litte digging was required to  
make the water of the former, which is the highest, fw  
{nto the later. This canal, which is something less then  
‘mile long and about four rods wide, was made a few

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‘years before my first visit to Maine. Since then the lam  
hher of the upper Allegash and its lakes has been run  
down the Penobscot, that is, up the Allegash, which here  
consists principally of @ chain of large and stagnant  
lakes, whose thoroughfares, or river-inks, have been  
made nearly equally stagnant by damming, and then  
down the Penobscot. ‘The rush of the water has pro-  
duced such changes in the canal that it has now the  
appearance of a very rapid mountain stream flowing  
through ravine, and you would not suspect that any  
digging had been required to persuade the waters of the  
St. John to flow into the Penobscot here, Tt was 50  
winding that one could see but little way down.  
  
It is stated by Springer, in his “Forest Life,” that  
the cause of this canal being dug was this. According  
to the treaty of 1842 with Great Britain, it was agreed  
that all the timber run down the St.John, which rises  
in Maine, “when within the Province of New Bruns-  
wick... shall be dealt with as if it were the produce  
of the said Province,” which was thought by our side to  
‘mean that it should be free from taxation. Immediately,  
the Province, wishing to get something out of the Yan-  
kees, levied a duty on all the timber that passed down  
the St.John; but to satisfy its own subjects “made a  
corresponding discount on the stumpage charged those  
hhauling timber from the crown lands.” ‘The result was  
‘that the Yankees made the St.John run the other way;  
‘or down the Penobscot, s0 that the Province lost both  
its duty and its water, while the Yankees, being greatly  
‘enriched, had reason to thank it for the suggestion.  
  
tis wonderful how well watered this country is. As  
you paddle across a lake, bays will be pointed out to  
you, by following up which, and perhaps the tributary

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252 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
stream which empties in, you may, after a short portage,  
or possibly, at some sensons, none at all, get into another  
river, which empties far away from the one you are on.  
Generally, you may go in any direction in a canoe, by  
making frequent but not very long portages. You are  
only realizing once more what all nature distinetly ro-  
members here, for no doubt the waters flowed thus in  
1 former geological period, and instead of being a lake  
country, it was an archipelago. Tt seems as if the more  
youthful and impressible streams can hardly resist the  
‘numerous invitations and temptations to leave their na-  
five beds and run down their neighbors’ channels.  
‘Your carries are often over half-submerged ground, on  
the dry channels of a former period. In carrying from  
one river to another, I did not go over such high and  
rocky ground as in going about the falls of the same  
river. For in the former case I was once lost in a  
swamp, as T have related, and, again, found an artificial  
canal which appeared to be natural.  
  
T remember once dreaming of pushing a canoe up the  
rivers of Bfaine, and that, when I had got so high that  
the channels were dry, I kept on through the ravines  
‘and gorges, nearly as well as before, by pushing a little  
hharder, and now it seemed to me that my dream was  
partially realized.  
  
‘Wherever there is a channel for water, there is a road  
for the canoe. ‘The pilot of the steamer which ran from  
Oldtown up the Penobscot in 1854 told me that she drew  
‘only fourteen inches, and would run easily in two feet of  
water, though they did not like to. It is said that some  
‘Western steamers can run on a heavy dew, whence we  
‘ean imagine what a canoe may do, Montresor, who was  
sent from Quebee by the English about 1760 to explore

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 258  
  
the route to the Kennebec, over which Amold after-  
‘ward passed, supplied the Penobscot near its source with  
water by opening the beaver-dams, and he says, “This  
is often done.” He afterward states that the Governor  
‘of Canada had forbidden to molest the beaver about the  
outlet of the Kennebec from Moosehead Lake, on ac-  
‘count of the service which their dams did by raising the  
water for navigation.  
  
‘This canal, so called, was a considerable and extremely  
rapid and rocky river. ‘The Indian decided that there  
‘was water enough in it without raising the dam, which  
‘would only make it more violent, and that he would run  
down it alone, while we carried the greater part of the  
Daggage. Our provision being about half consumed,  
there was the less left in the canoe, We had thrown  
away the pork-keg, and wrapt its contents in birch bark,  
which ia the unequalled wrapping-paper of the woods.  
  
Following a moist trail through the forest, we reached  
the head of Webster Pond about the same time with the  
Indian, notwithstanding the velocity with which he  
moved, our route being the most direct. ‘The Indian  
name of Webster Stream, of which this pond is the  
souree, is, according to him, Madunkchunt, i.e. Height  
‘of Land, and of the pond, Madunkehunk-gamooe, ot  
Height of Land Pond. ‘The latter was two or threo  
ss long. We passed near a pine on its shore which  
hhad been splintered by lightning, perhaps the day before.  
‘This was the first proper East Branch Penobscot water  
‘that we came to.  
  
At the outlet of Webster Lake was another dam, at  
‘which we stopped and picked raspberries, while the In-  
dian went down the stream a half-mile through the for-  
‘est, to see what he had got to contend with. ‘There was

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254 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
f deserted log camp here, apparently used the previous  
winter, with its “hovel” or barn for eattle, In the hut  
vwas a large fir-twig bed, raised two feet from the floor,  
‘occupying a large part of the single apartment, a long,  
narrow table against the wall, with a stout log bench be-  
fore it, and above the table a emall window, the only one  
there was, which admitted a feeble light. Tt was a sim  
ple and strong fort erected against the cold, and suggested  
‘what valiant trencher work had been done there. I dis-  
covered one or two curious wooden traps, which had not  
been used for a long time, in the woods near by. “The  
principal part consisted of a long and slender pole.  
  
‘We got our dinner on the shore, on the upper side of  
the dam. As we were sitting by our fire, concealed by  
the earth bank of the dam, a long line of sheldrake,  
half grown, came waddling over it from the water below,  
passing within about a rod of us, s0 that we could almost  
hhave caught them in our hands. ‘They were very abun-  
dant on all the streams and lakes which we visited, and  
every two or three hours they would rush away in a long  
string over the water before us, twenty to fifty of them  
at once, rarely ever flying, but running with great rapid-  
ity up or down the stream, even in the midst of the most  
violent rapids, and apparently as fast up as down, or else  
crossing diagonally, the old, as it appeared, behind, and  
Griving them, and flying to the front from time to time,  
as°if to direct them. We also saw many small black  
dippers, which behaved in a similar manner, and, once  
or twice, a few black ducks.  
  
An Indian at Oldtown had told us that we should be  
obliged to carry ten miles between Telos Lake on the  
St. John’s and Second Lake on the East Branch of the  
Penobscot ; but the lumberers whom we met assured us

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THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 255  
  
that there would not be more than a mile of carry. Tt  
tumed out that the Indian, who had lately been over  
this route, was nearest right, as far as we were concerned.  
However, if one of us could have assisted the Indian in  
‘managing the canoe in the rapids, we might have ran  
the greater part of the way ; but as he was alone in the  
‘management ofthe canoe in such places, we were obliged  
to walk the greater part. I did not feel quite ready to  
try auch an experiment on Webster Stream, which has  
0 bad a reputation. According to my observation, a  
Dateau, properly manned, shoots rapids as a matter of  
course, which a single Indian with a canoe carries round,  
  
‘My companion and I carried a good part of the bag-  
gage on our shoulders, while the Indian took that which  
‘would be least injured by wet in the canoe. We di  
not know when we should see him again, for he had not  
‘been this way since the canal was cut, nor for more than  
thirty years. He agreed to stop when he got to smooth  
‘water, come up and find our path if he could, and halloo  
for us, and after waiting a reasonable time go on and  
try again, —and we were to look out in like manner  
for him.  
  
‘He commenced by running through the stuice-way  
and over the dam, a: usual, standing up in his tossing  
canoe, and was soon out of sight behind a point in a wild  
gorge. ‘This Webster Stream is well known to lumber-  
‘men as a difficult one. It is exceedingly rapid and  
rocky, and also shallow, and can hardly be considered  
navigable, unless that may mean that what is launched  
in it is sure to be carried swiflly down it, though it may  
bbe dashed to pieces by the way. It is somewbat like  
navigating thunder-spout. With commonly an irre-  
sistible force urging you on, you have got to choose your

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256 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
own course each moment, between the rocks and shal-  
lows, and to get into it, moving forward always with  
‘the utmost possible moderation, and often holding on, if  
‘you ean, that you may inspect the rapids before you.  
  
By the Indian’s direction wo took an old path on the  
south side, which appeared to keep down the stream,  
though at a considerable distance from it, cutting off  
ends, perhaps to Seoond Loke, having frst taken the  
course from the map with @ compass, which was north-  
easterly, for safety. It was « wild wood-path, with a fow  
tracks of oxen which had been driven over it, probably:  
to some old camp clearing, for pasturage, mingled with  
the tracks of moose which had lately used it. We kept on  
steadily for about an hour without putting down our packs  
‘ccasionally winding around or climbing over a fallen tree,  
for the most part fur out of sight and hearing of the riv-  
er; til after walking about three miles, we were glad to  
find that the path came to the river again at an old camp  
ground, where there was a small opening in the forest,  
at which we paused. Swiflly as the shallow and rocky  
iver ran here, a continuous rapid with dancing waves, I  
saw, as Tsat on the shore, a long string of sheldrakes,  
which something scared, run up the opposite side of the  
stream by me, with the same easo that they commonly  
did down it, just touching the surface of the waves, and  
keting an impulse from them as they flowed from under  
them ; but they soon came back, driven by the Indian,  
who had fallen a litte behind us,on account of the wind-  
ings. He shot round a point just above, and came to  
land by us with considerable water in his canoe. He  
Ihad found it, as he said, “very strong water,” and had  
been obliged to land once before to empty out what he  
hhad taken in. He complained that it strained him to

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 257  
  
‘paddle so hard in order to keep his canoe straight in its  
‘course, having no one in the bows to aid him, and, shal-  
low as it was, said that it would be no joke to upset  
‘there, for the force of the water was such that he had as  
lief I would strike him over the head with a paddle as  
hhave that water strike him. Seeing him come out of that  
gap was as if you should pour water down an inclined  
and zigeag trough, then drop nutshell into it, and take  
ing a short ent to the bottom, get there in time to see it,  
come out, notwithstanding the rush and tumult, right  
side up, and only partly full of water.  
  
After a moment’s breathing space, while I held his ca-  
noe, he was soon out of sight again around another bend,  
and we, shouldering our packs, resumed our course.  
  
‘We did not at once fall into our paths again, but made  
‘our way with difficulty along the edge of the river, till at  
length, striking inland through the forest, we recovered  
it, Before going a mile we heard the Indian calling to  
‘us. He bad come up through the woods and along the  
path to find us, having reached sufficiently mooth water  
to warrant his taking us in. ‘The shore was about one  
fourth of a mile distant, through a dense, dark forest, and  
1 he led us back to it, winding rapidly about to the  
right and left,I had the curiosity to look down carefully,  
‘and found that he was following his steps backward. I  
could only occasionally perceive his trail in the moss,  
and yet he did not appear to look down nor hesitate an  
natant, but led us out exactly to his canoe. This sur-  
prised me, for without a compass, or the sight or noise  
‘of the river to guide us, we could not have kept our  
‘course many minutes, and could have retraced our steps  
Dut a short distance, with a great deal of pains and very  
slowly, using a laborious circumspection. But it was

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258, ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
evident that he could go back through the forest wher  
ever he had ben during the day.  
  
‘After this rough walking in the dark woods it was an  
agreeable change to glide down the rapid river in the  
canoe once more, ‘This river, which was about the size  
‘of our Assabet (in Concord), though still very swift, was  
almost perfectly smooth here, and showed a very visible  
declivity, a regularly inclined plane, for several miles,  
like @ mirror set a litle aslant, on which we coasted  
down. This very obvious regular descent, particularly  
plain when I regarded the water-line a  
made a singular impression on me, which the swiftness  
‘of oar motion probably enhanced, so that we seemed to  
be gliding down a much steeper declivity than we were,  
‘and that we could not eave ourselves from rapids and  
falls if we should suddenly come to them. My compan-  
jon did not perceive this slope, but I have a surveyor’s  
eyes, and I satisfied myself that it was no ocular illusion.  
‘You could tell at a glance on approaching such a river,  
which way the water flowed, though you might perceive  
xno motion. observed the angle at which a level line  
‘would strike the surface, and calculated the amount of  
fall in a rod, which did not need to be remarkably great  
‘0 produce this effect.  
  
Tt was very exhilarating, and the perfection of trav-  
tanlike floating on our dead Concord River,  
‘the coasting down this inclined mirror, which was now  
‘and then gently winding, down a mountain, indeed, be-  
‘tween two evergreen forests, edged with lofty dead  
white pines, sometimes slanted half-way over the stream,  
‘and destined soon to bridge it. I saw some monsters  
there, nearly destitute of branches, and scarcely dimine  
ishing in diameter for eighty or ninety feet,

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 259  
  
As we thus swept slong, our Indian repeated in a  
deliberate and drawling tone the words “Daniel Webster,  
great lawyer,” apparently reminded of him by the name  
of the stream, and he described his calling on him once  
in Boston, at what he supposed was his boarding-house,  
He had no business with him, but merely went to pay  
his respects, as we should say. In answer to our ques-  
tions, he described his person well enough, It was on  
the day after Webster delivered his Bunker Hill oration,  
‘which I believe Polis heard. ‘The first time he called  
he waited tll he was tired without seeing him, and then  
‘went away. ‘The noxt time, he saw him go by the door  
of the room in which he was waiting several times, in  
his shirt-sleeves, without noticing him. He thought that  
if he had come to see Indians, they would not have treated  
hhim so. At length, after very long delay, he came in,  
walked toward him, and ssked in a loud voice, grufly,  
What do you want?” and he, thinking at first, by the  
‘motion of his hand, that he was going to strike him, eaid  
to himself, “You'd better take care, if you try that I  
shall know what to do.” He did not like him, and de-  
lared that all he said “was not worth talk about a  
musquash.” We suggested that probably Mr. Webster  
‘was very busy, and bad a great many visitors just then.  
Coming to fala and rapids, our easy progress was sud-  
denly terminated. ‘The Indian went along shore to in-  
spect the water, while we climbed over the rocks, picking  
berries. ‘The peculiar growth of blueberries on the tops  
of large rocks here made the impression of high land,  
and indeed this was the Height-ofand stream. When  
the Indian came back, he remarked, “You got to walks  
ver strong water.” So, taking out his canoe, be launched,  
it again below the falls, and was soon out of sight. At

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260 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
‘such times, he would step into the canoe, take up his  
‘paddle, and, with an air of mystery, etart off, looking far  
down stream, and keeping his own counsel, as if absorb-  
ing all the intelligence of forest and stream into himself;  
but I eometimes detected a little fan in his face, which  
could yield to my sympathetic smile, for he was thor-  
oughly good-bumored. We meanwhile scrambled along,  
the shore with our packs, without any path. This was  
the last of our boating for the day.  
  
‘Tho prevailing rock here was a kind of slate, standing  
on its edges, and my companion, who was recently from  
California, thought it exactly like that in which the gold  
fs found, and said that if he had had a pan he would have  
liked to wash a litle of the eand here.,  
  
‘The Indian now got along much faster than we, and  
‘waited for us from time to time. I found here the only  
cool spring that I drank at anywhere on this excursion,  
a litde water filling « hollow in the sandy bank. Tt was  
‘quite memorable event, and due to the elevation of the  
country, for wherever else we bad been the water in the  
rivers and the streams emptying in was dead and warm,  
compared with that of a mountainous region. Tt was  
very bad walking slong the shore over fallen and drifted  
‘trees and bushes, and rocks, from time to time swinging  
‘ourselves round over the water, or else taking to a gravel  
bar or going inland. At one place, the Indian being  
ahead, I was obliged to take off all my clothes in order  
to ford a small but deep stream emptying in, while my  
‘companion, who was inland, found a rude bridge, high up  
in the woods, and T saw no more of him for some time.  
saw there very fresh moose tracks, found a new goklen-  
rod to me (perhaps Solidago thyraoidea), and I passed  
‘one white-pine log, which had lodged, in the forest near

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 261  
  
the edge of the stream, which was quite five feet in  
diameter at the but. Probably its size detained it,  
Shortly ater this, I overtook the Indian at the edge of  
some burnt land, which extended three or four miles at  
least, beginning about three miles above Second Lake,  
which we were expecting to reach that night, and which  
{is about ten miles from Telos Lake. This burnt region  
‘was still more rocky than before, but, though compara-  
tively open, we could not yet see the lake. Not having  
seen my companion for some time, I climbed, with the  
Indian, a singular high rock on the edge of the river,  
forming a narrow ridge only a foot or two wide at topy in  
onder to look for him; and after ealling many times, T at  
length heard him answer from a considerable distance in-  
land, he having taken a trail which led off from the river,  
perhape directly tothe lake, and was now in search of the  
iver again. Seeing a much higher rock, of the same  
character, about one third of a mile farther east, or down  
stream, I proceeded toward it, through the burnt land, in  
order to look for the lake from its summit, supposing that  
the Indian would keep down the stream in his eanoe, and  
hallooing all the while that my companion might join me  
fon the way. Before we came together, I noticed where  
‘a moose, which possibly I had scared by my shouting,  
had apparently just run along a large rotten trunk of a  
‘Pine, which made a bridge, thirty or forty feet long, over  
‘s hollow, as convenient for him as for me. The tracks  
‘were as large as those of an ox, but an ox could not have  
crossed there. This burnt land was an exceedingly wild  
and desolate region. Judging by the weeds and sprouts,  
it appeared to have been burnt about two years before.  
Tt was covered with charred trunks, either prostrate or  
standing, which crocked our clothes and hands, and we

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262 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
could not easily have distinguished a bear there by his  
color. Great shells of trees, sometimes unbirnt without,  
‘or burnt on one sie only, but black within, stood twenty  
or forty feet high. ‘The fire bad ran up inside, as in a  
chimney, leaving the sap-wood. Sometimes we erossed  
a rocky ravine fifty feet wide, on a fallen trunk; and there  
wwere great felds of fire-weed (Bpilobium angustifolium)  
on all sides, the most extensive that I ever saw, which  
presented great masses of pink. Intermixed with these  
were blueberry and raspberry bushes.  
  
Having crossed a second rocky ridge, like the first,  
when I was beginning to ascend the third, the Indian,  
whom I had left on the shore some fifty rods behind,  
‘beckoned to me to come to him, but I made sign that I  
‘would frst ascend the highest rock before me, whence T  
expected to see the lake. My companion accompanied  
me to the top. This was formed just like the others.  
Being struck with the perfect parallelism of these sin-  
gular rock-bills, however much one might be in advance  
of another, I took out my compass and found that they  
lay northwest and southeast, the rock being on its edge,  
‘and sharp edges they were. ‘This one, to speak from  
memory, was perhaps a third of a mile in length, bat  
quite narrow, rising gradually from the northwest to the  
height of- about eighty feet, but steep on the southeast  
fend. The southwest side was as steep as an ordinary  
roof, or as we could safely climb; the northeast was an  
abrupt precipice from which you could jump clean to the  
bottom, near which the river flowed while the level top  
of the ridge, on which you walked along, was only from  
‘one to three or four feet in width. For a rude illustra-  
tion, take the half of a pear cut in two lengthwise, lay it  
on its Bat side, the stem to the northwest, and then halve

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 268,  
  
it vertically in the direction of its length, keeping the  
southwest half. Such was the general form.  
  
There was a remarkable series of these great rock  
waves revealed by the burning; breakers, asit were. No  
wonder that the river that found its way through them  
‘was rapid and obstructed by falls. No doubt the absence  
of soil on these rocks, or its dryness where there was any,  
caused this to be a very thorough burning. We could  
see the lake over the woods, two or three miles ahead,  
and that the river made an abrupt turn southward around  
the northwest end of the cliff on which we stood, or a  
litle above us, ¢0 that we had cut off a bend, and that  
there was an important fall in it a short distance below  
tus. I could sce the canoe a hundred rods behind, but  
niow on the opposite shore, and supposed that the Indian  
hhad concluded to take out and carry round some bad  
rapids on that side, and that that might be what he had  
beckoned to me fors but after waiting a while I could st  
see nothing of him, and T observed to my companion that  
Twondered where he was, though I began to suspect  
that he had gone inland to look for the lake from some  
hilltop on that side, as we had done. This proved to be  
  
cease; for after I had started to return to the canoe,  
T heard a faint halloo, and desoried him on the top of &  
distant rocky hill on that side. But a, after a long time  
hhad elapsed, I still saw his canoe in the same place, and  
the had not returned to it, and appeared in no hurry to do  
0, and, moreover, as I remembered that he had previ-  
ously beckoned to me, I thought that there might be  
‘something more to delay him than I knew, and began to  
return northwest, along the ridge, toward the angle in  
the river. My companion, who had just been separated  
from us, and bad even contemplated the necessity of

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264 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
   
  
camping slone, wishing to husband his steps, and yet  
to keep with us, inquired where I was going to which I  
answered, that I was going far enough back to communi-  
cate with the Indian, and that then I thought we had bet-  
ter go along the shore together, and keep him in sight.  
‘When we reached the shore, the Indian appeared from  
‘out the woods on the opposite side, but on account of the  
roar of the water it was dificult to communicate with  
hhim. He kept along the shore westward to his canoe,  
‘hile we stopped at the angle where the stream turned  
southward around the precipice. I again said to my  
companion, that we would keep along the shore and  
keep the Indian in sight. We started to do so, being  
‘lose together, the Indian behind us having launched  
his canoe again, but just then I saw the latter, who had  
crossed to our side, forty or fifty rods behind, beckoning  
to me, and I called to my companion, who had just dis-  
appeared behind large rocks at the point of the precipice,  
three or four rods before me, on his way down the stream,  
that I was going to help the Indian a moment. I did so,  
— helped get the canoe over a fall, ying with my breast  
over a rock, and holding one end while he received it,  
below, —and within ten oF fifteen minutes at most I was  
back again at the point where the river tamed south-  
ward, in order to catch up with my companion, while  
Polis glided down the river alone, parallel with me, But  
‘to my surprise, when I rounded the precipice, though the  
shore was bare of trees, without rocks, for a quarter of a  
ile at least, my companion was not to be seen. Tt was  
1s if he had sunk into the earth. This was the more un-  
accountable to me, because I knew that his feet were  
since oar swamp walk very sore, and that he wished to  
keep with the party ; and besides this was very bad walk

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 265,  
  
ing, climbing over or about the rocks. I hastened along,  
hallooing and searching for him, thinking he might be  
concealed behind a rock, yet doubting if he had not taken  
the other side of the precipice, but the Indian had got  
‘long still faster in his canoe, till he was arrested by the  
falls, about a quarter of a mile below. He then landed,  
and said that we could go no farther that night. ‘The  
fam was setting, and on account of falls and rapids we  
should be obliged to leave this river and carry a good  
‘way into another farther east. ‘The first thing then was  
to find my companion, for I was now very much alarmed  
about him, and I sent the Indian along the shore down  
stream, which began to be covered with unburnt wood  
‘again just below tho falls, while T searched backward  
about the precipice which we had passed. The Indian  
showed some unwillingness to exert himself, complaining  
that he was very tired, in consequence of his day's work,  
that it had strained him very much getting down 60  
‘many rapids alone; but he went off ealling somewhat like  
an owl, I remembered that my companion was near-  
  
ighted, and I feared that he ad either fallen from the  
precipice, or fainted and sank down amid the rocks be-  
neath it. I shouted and searched above and below this  
precipice in the twilight till I could not see, expecting,  
nothing less than to find his body beneath it. For half  
an hour I anticipated and believed only the worst. I  
thought what I should do the next day, if I did not  
find him, what I could do in such a wilderness, and how  
his relatives would feel, if T should retura without him,  
J felt that if he were really lost away from the river  
‘there, it would be a desperate undertaking to find him;  
‘and where were they who could help you? What would  
it be to raise the country, where there were only two  
  
a

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266 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
or three camps, twenty or thirty miles apart, and no  
road, and perhaps nobody at home? Yet we must try  
the harder, the less the prospect of success.  
  
T rushed down from this precipice to the canoe in  
arder to fire the Indian’s gun, but found that my com-  
anion had the caps. Iwas still thinking of getting it  
off when the Indian returned. He had not found him,  
Dut he said that he had seen hie tracks once or twice  
along the shore. This encouraged me very much. He  
objected to fring the gun, saying that if my companion  
heard it, which was not likely, on account of the roar of  
the stream, it would tempt him to come toward us, and  
he might break his neck in the dark. For the same rea-  
son we refrained from lighting a fire on the highest rock.  
I proposed that we should both keep down the stream to  
the lake, or that I should go at any rate, but the Indian  
i, “No use, can't do anything in the dark; come morn-  
y then we find ‘em. No barm,— he make ’em camp.  
No bad animals here, no gristly bears, such as in Califor-  
nia, where he's been,— warm night,— he well off as  
you and I.” I considered that if he was well he could do  
‘without us, He had just lived eight years in California,  
sand had plenty of experience with wild beasts and wilder  
‘men, was peculiarly accustomed to make journeys of  
great length, but if he were sick or dead, he was near  
‘were we were. ‘The darkness in the woods was by this 0  
thick that it alone decided the question. We must camp  
where we were. I knew that he had bis knapsack, with  
Vlankets and matches, and, if well, would fare no worse  
‘than we, except that he would have no supper nor socity.  
  
‘This side of the river being so encumbered with rocks,  
‘we crossed to the eastern or smoother shore, and jro-  
cocded to camp there, within two or three rods of the

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 267  
  
Falls. We pitched no tent, but lay on the sand, putting  
1 few handfuls of grass and twigs under us, there being  
no evergreen at hand. For fuel we had some of the  
charred stumps. Our various bags of provisions had got  
quite wet in the rapids, and T arranged them about the  
fire to dry. ‘The fall close by was the principal one on  
this stream, and it shook the earth under us. Tt was a  
cook because dewy, night; the more so, probably, owing  
to the nearness of the falls. ‘The Tndiancomplained a  
good deal, and thought afterward that he got a cold there  
which occasioned a more serious illness. We were not  
much troubled by mosquitoes at any rate. T lay awake a  
good deal from anxiety, but, unaccountably to myself, was  
at length comparatively at ease respecting him. At frst  
Thad apprehended the worst, but now I bad little doubt  
bout that Tshould find kim in the morning, Prom time  
to time I fancied that I heard his voice ealling through  
the roar of the falls from the opposite side of the rivers  
bat it is doubtful if we could have heard him across the  
stream there. Sometimes I doubted whether the Indian  
hhad really seen his tracks, since he manifested an un~  
willingness to make much of a search, and then my anx-  
iety returned.  
  
Tt was the most wild and desolate region we hail,  
camped in, where, if anywhere, one might expect to meet  
with befitting inhabitants, but I heard only the squeak of  
i-hawk flitting over. ‘The moon in her frst quar  
ter, in the fore part of the night, setting over the bare  
rocky hills garnished with tal, charred, and hollow stumps  
or shells of trees, served to reveal the desolation.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘TaunsDAr, Jay 80  
aroused the Indian early this morning to go in search

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268 THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘of our companion, expecting to find him within @ mile or  
two, farther down the stream. ‘The Indian wanted his  
breakfast first, but reminded him that my companion  
had had neither breakfast nor supper. We were obliged  
first to carry our canoe and baggage over into another  
stream, the main East Branch, about three fourths of a  
mile distant, for Webster Stream was no farther navi-  
gable. We went twice over this carry, and the dewy  
bushes wet us through like water up to the middle; I  
hhallooed in a high Key from time to time, though I had  
little expectation that T could be heard over the roar of  
the rapids, and moreover we were necessarily on the  
opposite side of the stream to him. In going over this  
portage the last time, the Indian, who was before me  
‘with the canoe on his head, stumbled and fell heavily  
nee, and lay for a moment silent, as if in pain. I hastily  
stepped forward to help hi, asking if he was much hurt,  
but after a moment’s pause, without replying, he sprang  
up and went forward. He was all the way subject to  
taciturn fits, but they were harmless ones.  
  
‘We had launched our canoe and gone but litle way  
down the East Branch, when I heard an answering shout,  
from my companion, and soon after saw him standing on  
‘8 polnt where there was a clearing a quarter of a mile  
below, and the smoke of his fire was rising near by.  
Before I saw him Inaturally shouted again and agai  
Dut the Indian curtly remarked, “ He hears you,” aa if  
once was enough. It was just below the mouth of  
‘Webster Stream. When we arrived, he was smoking i  
pipe, and said that he had passed pretty comfortable  
night, though it was rather cold, on account of the dew.  
  
Tt appeared that when we stood together the previous  
evening, and I was shouting to the Indian across the

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 269  
  
river, he, being near-sighted, had not seen the Tndian nor  
Ikis canoe, and when I went back to the Indians assist-  
‘ance, aid not soe which way T went, and supposed that  
we were below and not above him, and so, making haste  
to catch up, he ran away from us, Having reached this  
‘clearing, a mile or more below our camp, the night over-  
took him, and he made a fire in a little hollow, and lay  
down by it in his blanket, still thinking that we were  
‘ahead of him. He thought it likely that he had heard  
the Indian call once the evening before, but mistook it for  
an owl He had seen one botanical rarity before it was  
ark, — pure white Epilobium angustifolium amidst the  
fields of pink ones, in the burnt lands. He had already  
stuck up the remnant of a lumberer’s shirt found on the  
point, on a pole by the waterside, for a signal, and  
attached a note to it, to inform us that he had gone on  
to the lake, and that if he did not find us there, he would  
bbe back in a couple of hours. IF he ha not found us  
soon, he had some thoughts of going back in search of  
the solitary hunter whom we had met at Telos Lake, ten  
riles behind, and, if successful, hire him to take him to  
Bangor. But if this hunter had moved as fast as we,  
he would have been twenty miles off by this time, and  
who could guess in what direction? Tt would have been  
like looking for @ needle in @ hay-mow, to search for  
hhim in these woods. He had been considering how long  
hie could live on berries alone.  
  
‘Wo substituted for his note a card containing our  
names and destination, and the date of our visit, whi  
Polis neatly enclosed in a piece of birch-bark to keep it  
ary. This has probably been read by come hunter or  
explorer ere this.  
  
‘We all had good appetites for the breakfast which wo

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270 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
made haste to cook here, and then, having partially  
dried our clothes, we glided swiftly down the winding  
stream toward Second Lake.  
  
‘As the shores became flater with frequent gravel and  
sand bars, and the stream more winding in the lower  
land near the lake, elms and ash trees made their ap-  
pearance; also the wild yellow lily (Lilium Canadense),  
some of whose bulbs I collected for a soup. On some  
ridges the burnt land extended as far as the lake. ‘This  
‘was a very beautiful lake, two or three miles long, with  
high mountains on the southwest side, the (as our Tndian  
said) Nerlumskeechticook, i. e. Dead-Water Mountain,  
It appears to be the same called Carbuncle Mountain on  
the map. According to Pols, it extends in separate ele-  
vations all along this and the next lake, which is much  
larger. ‘The lake, too, I think, is called by the eame  
name, or perhaps with the addition of gamoe or mooe.  
‘The morning was bright one, and perfectly still and  
serene, the lake as emooth as glass, we making the  
only ripple as we paddled into it The dark mountains  
‘about it were seen through a glaucous mist, and the  
brilliant white stems of canoe-birches mingled with the  
‘other woods around it. ‘The wood-thrush sang on the  
distant shore, and the laugh of some loons, sporting in a  
‘concealed western bay, as if inspired by the morning,  
‘came distinet over the lake to us, and, what was remark-  
able, the echo which ran round the lake was much louder  
than the original note; probably beeanse, the loon being  
in a regularly curving bay under the mountain, we were  
exactly in the focus of many echoes, the sound being  
reflected like light from a concave mirror. ‘The beauty  
of the scene may have been enhanced to oar eyes by the  
fact that we had just come together again after a night

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 971  
  
   
  
‘of some anxiety. This reminded me of the Ambejijis  
Lake on the West Branch, which I crossed in my frst  
coming to Baine. Having paddled down three quaxters  
of the lake, we came to a stand still, while my companion  
Jet down for fish. A white (or whitish) gull sat on a  
rock which rose above the surface in mid-lake not far off  
quite in harmony with the scenes and as we rested there”  
in the warm sua, we’ heard one loud crushing or erack-  
ling sound from the forest, forty or fifty rods distant, as of  
astick broken by the foot of some large animal. Even  
this was an interesting incident there. In the midst of  
our dreams of giant lake-trout, even then supposed to  
be nibbling, our fisherman drew up a diminutive red  
perch, and we took up our paddles again in haste.  
  
It was not apparent where the outlet of this lake was,  
‘and while the Indian thought it was in one direction, T  
‘thought it was in another. He said, “I bet you four-  
pence it is there,” but he sill held on in my direction,  
which proved to be the right one. As we were approach-  
ing the outlet, it being still early in the forenoon, he sud-  
denly exclaimed, “Moose! moose!” and told us to be  
still, He pat a cap on his gun, and standing up in the  
stern, rapidly pushed the canoe straight toward the shore  
‘and the moose. It was a cow-moose, about thirty rods  
off, standing in the water by the side of the outlet, partly  
behind some fallen timber and bushes, and at that dis-  
tance she did not look very large. She was flapping her  
lange ears, and from time to time poking of the fies with  
hher nose from some part of her body. She did not ap-  
pear much alarmed by our neighborhood, only occasion-  
ally turned her head and looked straight at us, and then  
gave her attention to the flies again. As we approached,  
nearer, she got out of the water, stood higher and rex

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272 THE MAINE Woops.  
  
garded us more suspiciously. Polis pushed, the canoe  
steadily forward in the shallow water, and T for a mo-  
‘ment forgot the moose in attending to some pretty rose-  
colored Polygonums just rising above the surface, but the  
ceanoe soon grounded in the mud eight or ten rods dis-  
tant from the moose, and the Indian seized his gun and  
prepared to fire. After standing still a moment, she  
turned slowly, as usual, so as to expose her side, and he  
improved this moment to fire, over our heads. She  
‘thereupon moved off eight or ten rods at a moderate  
pace, across a shallow bay, to an old standing-place of  
hers, behind some fallen rod maples, on the opposite  
shore, and there she stood still again a dozen or fourteen  
rods from us, while the Indian hastily loaded and fired  
twice at her, without her moving. My companion, who  
ppassed him his eaps and bullets, said that Polis was as  
excited as a boy of fifteen, that his hand trembled, and  
he once put his ramrod back up-side down. ‘This was  
remarkable for so experienced hunter. Perhaps he  
‘was anxious to make a good shot before us. ‘The white  
hunter had told me that the Indians were not good shots,  
because they were excited, though he said that we bad  
got a good hunter with us.  
  
‘The Indian now pushed quickly and quietly back, and  
a long distance round, in order to get into the outlet,  
for he had fired over the neck of a peninsula between it,  
1nd the lake, — till we approached the place where the  
‘moose had stood, when he exclaimed, « She is a goner,”  
and was surprised that we did not see her as soon as he  
did. There, to be sure, she lay perfectly dead, with her  
tongue hanging out, just where she bad stood to receive  
the last shots, looking unexpectedly large and horse-ike,  
and we saw where the bullets had scarred the trees.

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 973  
  
‘Using tape, Ifound that the moose measured just  
six fect from the shoulder to the tip of the hoof, and  
was eight feet long as she lay. Some portions of tho  
body, for a foot in diameter, were almost covered with  
fies, apparently the common fly of our woods, with a  
dark spot on the wing, and not the very large ones  
which oceasionally pursued us in mid-stream, though both  
are called moose-fier  
  
Polis, preparing t0 skin the moose, asked me to help  
him find a stone on which to sharpen his lange knife. Tt  
being all a flat alluvial ground where the moose had  
fallen, covered with red maples, &c, this was no easy  
‘matter; we searched far and wide, a long time, till at  
length I found a flat kind of slate-stone, and soon after  
hhe returned with a similar one, on which he soon made  
his knife very sharp.  
  
‘While he was skinning the moose, I proceeded to  
‘ascertain what kind of fishes were to be found in the  
sluggish and muddy outlet. The greatest difficulty was  
tofind a pole. It was almost impossible to finda slender,  
straight pole ten or twelve feet long in those woods.  
‘You might search half an hour in vain. They are  
commonly spruce, arbor-vite, fir, &c short, stout, and  
Dranchy, and do not make good fish-poles, even after you  
hhave patiently cut off all their tough and scraggy  
branches. The fishes were red perch and chivin,  
  
‘The Indian having cut off a large piece of sirloin, the  
upper lip and the tongue, wrapped them in the hide, and  
placed them in the bottom of the canoe, observing that  
there was one man,” meaning the weight of one. Our  
Toad had previously beon reduced some thirty pounds,  
but a hundred pounds were now added, a serious addi-  
tion, which made our quarters still more narrow, and  
  
ie ®

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27 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
considerably increased the danger on the lakes and rap-  
fds, as well as the labor of the carries. The skin was  
ours according to custom, since the Indian was in our  
‘employ, but we did not think of claiming it, He being  
1 skilful dresser of moose-hides, would make it worth  
seven or eight dollars to him, as Twas told. He caid  
that he sometimes earned fifty or sixty dollars in a day at  
them ; be had killed ten moose in one day, though the  
skinning and all took two days. ‘This was the way he  
had got his property. ‘There were the tracks of a calf  
thereabouts, which he eaid would come “by, by,” and he  
could get it if we cared to wait, but I east cold water on  
the project.  
  
‘We continued along the outlet toward Grand Lake,  
through swampy region, by a long, winding, and nar-  
row dead water, very much choked up by wood, where  
‘we were obliged to land sometimes in order to get the  
ceanoe over a log. It was hard to find any channel, and  
‘we did not know but we should be lost in the swamp. It  
abounded in ducks, as usual. At length we reached  
Grand Lake, which the Indian called Matungamook.  
  
At the head of this we saw, coming in from the south-  
‘west, with a sweep apparently from a gorge in the moun-  
tains, Trout Stream, or Uncardnerheese, which name, the  
Indian said, had something to do with mountai  
  
‘We stopped to dine on an interesting high rocky  
island, soon after entering Matungamook Lake, securing  
our canoe to the cliffy shore. It is always pleasant to  
step from a boat on to a large rock or elif. Here was  
1 good opportunity to dry our dewy blankets on the open  
‘sunny rock. Indians had recently camped here, and ac-  
‘identally burned over the western end of the island, and  
Polis picked up a gun-case of blue broadcloth, and said

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THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 275  
  
that he knew the Indian it belonged to, and would carry:  
it to him. Histribe is not so large but he may know  
all its effects. We proceeded to make a fire and cook  
‘our dinner amid some pines, where our predecessors had  
done the same, while the Indian busied himself about  
hhis moose-hide on the shore, for he said that he thought  
it a good plan for one to do all the cooking, i. eT sup-  
pose if that one were not himself. A peculiar ever-  
‘green overhung our fire, which at first glance looked like  
‘pitch pine (P. rigida), with leaves litle more than an  
inch long, spruce-like, but we found it to be the Pinus  
Banksiana,—\* Banks's, or the Labrador Pine,” also called  
Scrub Pine, Gray Pine, &c.,a new tree to ux These  
rust have been good specimens, for several were thirty  
or thirty-five feet high. Richardson found it forty feet  
‘igh and upward, and states that the porcupine feeds on  
itsbark, Here also grew the Red Pine (Pinus resinosa).  
  
Taw where the Indians had made canoes in a little  
secluded ‘hollow in the woods, on the top of the rock,  
where they were ont of the wind, and large piles of  
whittlings remained. ‘This must have been a favorite re-  
sort for their ancestors, and, indeed, we found here tho  
point of an arrow-head, such as they have not used for  
two centuries and now know not how to make. ‘The  
Indian, picking up a stone, remarked to me, “That very  
strange lock (rock).” It was a piece of hornstone, which  
told him his tribe had probably brought here centuries  
before to make arrow-heads of. He also picked up a  
yellowish curved bone by the side of our fireplace and  
‘asked me to guess what it was. Tt was one of the upper  
incisors of a beaver, on which some party had feasted  
within @ year or two. I found also most of the teeth,  
and the skull, &«. We here dined on fried moose-meat.

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276 THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
One who was my companion in my two previous ex-  
ccursions to these woods, tells me that when hunting up  
the Caucomgomoe, about two years ago, he found him-  
self dining one day on moose-meat, mud-turtle, trout, and  
beaver, and he thought that there were few places in the  
‘world where these dishes could easily be brought together  
‘on one table.  
  
After the almost incessant rapids and falls of the Ma~  
dunkchuok (HeightofLand, or Webster Stream), we  
hhad just passed through the dead-water of Second Lake,  
and were now in the much larger dead-water of Grand  
‘Lake, and I thought the Tndian was entitled to take an  
extra nap here. Kiaadn, near which we were to pass  
the next day, is said to mean “ Highest Land.” So much  
geography is there in their names. The Indian naviga-  
tor naturally distinguishes by a name those parts of a  
stream where he has encountered quick water and forks,  
‘and again, the lakes and smooth water where he can rest  
‘weary arms, since those are the most interesting and  
‘more arable parts to him. The very sight of the Ner=  
lumskeechticook, oF Dead-Water Mountains, a day's jou  
ney off over the forest, as we first saw them, must awaken,  
in him pleasing memories. And not less interesting is it  
to the white traveller, when he is crossing a placid lake  
in these out-of-the-way woods, perhaps thinking that he  
is in some sense one of the earlier discoverers of it, to be  
reminded that it was thus well known and suitably  
named by Indian hunters perhaps a thousand years  
ago.  
  
“Ascending the precipitous rock which formed this long  
narrow island, I was surprised to find that its summit was  
narrow ridge, with a precipice on one side, and that its  
axis of elevation extended from northwest to southeast,

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 27  
  
exactly like that of tho great rocky ridge at the com-  
mencement of the Burnt Ground, ten miles northwesterly.  
‘The same arrangement prevailed here, and we could  
plainly see that the mountain ridges on the west of the  
lake trended the same way. Splendid large harebells  
nodded over the edge and ia the clefts of the elif, and  
‘the blueberries (Vaccinium Canadense) were for the  
first time really abundant in the thin soil on its top.  
‘There was no lack of them henceforward on the East  
Branch. ‘There was a fine view hence over the spark-  
ling lake, which looked pure and deep, and had two or  
three, in al, rocky islands in it. Our blankets being dry,  
we set out again, the Indian as usual having left his  
‘gazette on a tree. This time it was we three in a canoe,  
‘my companion smoking. We paddled southward down  
this handsome lake, which appeared to extend nearly as  
far east as south, keeping near the western shore, just  
outside a small island, under the dark Werlumskeechti  
cook mountain, For I had observed on my map that  
this was the course. It was three or four miles across it.  
It struck me that the outline of this mountain on the  
southwest of the lake, and of another beyond it, was not  
only like that of the huge rock waves of Webster Stream,  
but in the main like Kinco, on Moosehead Lake, having,  
a similar but less abrupt precipice at the southeast end ;  
in short, that all the prominent hills and ridges here-  
abouts were larger or smaller Kineos, and that possibly  
there was such a relation between Kineo and the rocks of  
‘Webster Stream.  
  
‘The Indian did not know exactly where the outlet  
vwas, whether at the extreme southwest angle or more  
‘easterly, and had asked to sce my plan at the last stop-  
ing-place, but I had forgotten to show it to him. As

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278, ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
usual, he went feeling his way by a middle course be-  
‘tween two probable points, from which he could diverge  
‘ither way at last without losing much distance. In ap-  
proaching the south shore, as the clouds looked gusty,  
‘and the waves ran pretty high, we 60 steered as to get  
partly under the lee of an island, though at a great dis-  
tance from it.  
  
T could not distinguish the outlet till we were almost  
in it, and heard the water falling over the dam there.  
  
Here was a considerable fall, and a very substantial  
dam, but no sign of acabin or camp. ‘The hunter whom  
wwe met at Telos Lake had told us that there were plenty  
of trout here, but at this hour they did not rise to the  
bait, only cousin trout, from the very midst of the rash-  
ing waters. ‘There are not so many fishes in these rivers  
as in the Concord.  
  
‘While we loitered here, Polis took occasion to cut with  
his big knife some of the hair from his moose-hide, and  
0 lightened and prepared it for drying. I noticed at  
several old Indian camps in the woods the pilé of hair  
which they had cut from their hides.  
  
Having carried over the dam, he darted down the rap-  
fds, leaving us to walk for a mile or more, where for the  
most part there was no path, but very thick and difficult  
travelling near the stream. At length he would call to  
Tet us know where he was waiting for us with his canoe,  
‘when, on account of the windings of the stream, we did  
not know where the shore was, but he did not call often  
enough, forgetting that we were not Indians. He seemed  
to be very saving of his breath,—yet he would be sur  
prised if we went by, or did not strike the right spot.  
This was not because he was unaccommodating, but «  
proof of superior manners. Indians like to get along

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 279  
  
with the least possible communication and ado. He  
‘was really paying us a great compliment all the while,  
thinking that we preferred a hint to a kick.  
  
At length, climbing over the willows and fallen trees,  
‘when this was easier than to go round or under them, we  
‘overtook the canoe, and glided down the stream in smooth  
but swift water for several miles. Ihere observed again,  
‘asat Webster Stream, and on a still lager seale the next  
day, that the river was a smooth and regularly inclined  
plane down which we coasted. As we thus glided along  
we started the first black ducks which we had distin~  
guished.  
  
‘We decided to camp early to-night, that we might have  
‘ample time before dark; s0 we stopped at the first favor-  
able shore, where there was a narrow gravelly beach on  
the western side, some five miles below the outlet of the  
lake. Tt was an interesting spot, where the river began  
to make a great bend tothe east, and the last of the pecu-  
Tiar moote-faced Nerlumskeechticook mountains not far  
southwest of Grand Lake rose dark in the northwest a  
short distance behind, displaying its gray precipitous  
southeast side, but we could not see this without coming  
cout upon the shore.  
  
‘Two steps from the water on either side, and you  
come to the abrupt bushy and rooty if not turfy edge  
of the bank, four or five feet high, where the intermina-  
blo forest begins, as if the stream had but just cut its  
way through  
  
tis surprising on stepping ashore anywhere into this  
‘unbroken wilderness'to see so often, at least within &  
few rods of the river, the marks of the axe, made by  
lumberers who have either camped here, or driven logs  
‘past in previous springs. You will eee perchance where,

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280 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
going on the same errand that you do, they have cut  
lange chips from a tall white-pine stump for their fire.  
‘While we were pitching the camp and getting supper,  
the Indian cut the rest of the hair from his moose-hide,  
‘and proceeded to extend it vertically on a temporary  
frame between two small trees, half a dozen feet from the  
opposite side of the fire lashing and stretching it wi  
arbor-vite bark, which was always at hand, and in this  
cease was stripped from one of the trees it was tied to.  
Acking for a new kind of tea, he made us some, pretty  
good, of the checkerberry (Gaultheria procumbens),  
which covered the ground, dropping a little bunch of it  
tied up with cedar bark into the Kettle; but it was not  
quite equal to the Chiogenes. We called this therefore  
‘Checkerberry-tea Camp.  
  
was struck with the abundance of the Zinnea bore=  
ais, checkerberry, and Okiogenes hispidula, almost every-  
where in the Maine woods. The wintergreen (Chima~  
phila umbellata) was still in bloom here, and Clintonia  
berries were abundant and ripe. This handsome plant  
is one of the most common in that forest. We here first  
noticed the moose-wood in fruit on the banks. ‘The pre  
vailing trees were spruce (commonly black), arbor-vite,  
canoe-birch, (black ash and elms beginning to appear,)  
yellow birch, red maple, and a little hemlock skulking in  
the forest. ‘The Indian said that the white-maple punk  
was the beat for tinder, that yellow-birch punk was pretty  
‘good, but hard. After supper he put on the moose tongue  
and lips to boil, eutting out the septum. He showed mo  
how to write on the under side of birch bark, with m  
black spruce twig, which is hard and tough and can be  
Drought to a point  
  
‘The Indian wandered off into the woods a short dix

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THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 281  
  
tance just before night, and, coming back, said, “Me found  
‘great treasure — fifty, sixty dollars worth.” “What a  
that?” we asked. “Steel traps, under a log, thirty or  
forty, I id n't count’em. I guess Indian work — worth  
three dollars apiece.” It was a singular coincidence that  
he should have chanced to walk to and Jook under that  
particular log, in that trackless forest.  
  
I saw chivin and chub in the stream when washing  
my hands, but my companion tried in vain to catch them.  
Talo heard the sound of bull-frogs from a swamp on the  
opposite side, thinking at first that they were moose 5 a  
duck paddled swifily by ; and sitting in that dusky wilder-  
ness, under that dark mountain, by the bright river which  
‘was full of reflected light, still T heard the wood-thrush  
sing, as if no higher civilization could be attained. By  
this time the night was upon us.  
  
‘You commonly make your camp just at sundown, and  
are collecting wood, getting your supper, or pitching your  
tent while the shades of night are gathering around and,  
adding to the already dense gloom of the forest. You  
have no time to explore or look around you before it is  
dark. You may penetrate half a dozen rods farther into  
that twilight wilderness, after some dry bark to kindle  
your fire with, and wonder what mysteries lie hidden still,  
Geeper in it, say at the end of a long day's walks oF  
‘you may run down to the shore for a dipper of water, and  
got a clearer view for a short distance up or down the  
stream, and while you stand there, see a fish leap, or duck,  
  
ight in the river, or hear a wood-thrush or robin sing  
in the woods. ‘That is as if you had been to town oF  
civilized parts. But there is no sauntering off to seo  
the country, and tei or fen rods seems a great way.  
from your companions, and you come back with the air

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282 ‘THE MAINE Woops.  
  
of a much travelled man, as from a long journey, with  
adventures to Telate, though you may have heard the  
crackling of the fire all the while, —and at a hundred  
rods you might be lost past recovery, and have to camp  
out. It is all mossy and moosey. In some of those dense  
fir and spruce woods there is hardly room for the emoke  
to go up. The trees are a standing night, and every fir  
and spruce which you felis a plume plucked from night’s  
raven Then at night the general stiliness is more  
impressive than any eound, but occasionally you hear  
the note of an owl farther or nearer in the woods, and  
if near a lake, the semichuman ery of the loons at their  
unearthly revels.  
  
To-night the Indian lay between the fire and his  
stretched moose-hide, to avoid the mosquitoes. Indeed,  
he also made a small smoky fire of damp leaves at his  
hhead and his feet, and then as usual rolled up his head  
in his blanket. We with our veils and our wash were  
tolerably comfortable, bat it would be difficult to pursue  
any sedentary occupation in the woods at this season:  
‘you cannot see to read much by the light of a fire through  
4 veil in the evening, nor handle pencil and paper well  
‘with gloves or anointed fingers.  
  
On the mainland were Norway pines, indicating a  
new geological formation, and it was such a dry and  
‘sandy soil as we had not noticed before.  
  
‘As we approached the mouth of the East Branch, we  
passed two or three huts, the first sign of civilization  
after Hunt's, though we saw no road as yet; we heard a  
cow-bell, and even saw an infant held up to a small  
‘square window to see us pass, but apparently the infant  
fand the mother that held it were the only inhabitants  
‘then at home for several miles. ‘This took the wind out

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 283  
  
   
  
of our sails, reminding us that we were travellers surely,  
while it was a native of the soil, and had the advantage  
of us Conversation flagged. I would only hear the  
Indian, perhaps, ask my companion, “You load my  
pipe?” He said that he smoked alder bark, for medic  
cine. On entering the West Branch at Nickertow it  
‘appeared much larger than the East. Polis remarked  
‘that the former was all gone and lost now, that it was  
all smooth water hence to Oldtown, and he threw away  
his pole which was cut on the Umbazookskus. ‘Thinking  
of the rapids, he said once or twice, that you would n't  
‘atch him to go East Branch again; but he did not by  
‘any means mean all that he said.  
  
‘Things are quite changed since T was here eleven  
years ago. Where there were but one or two houses, I  
now found quite a village, with saw-mills and a store  
(the latter was locked, but its contents were so much the \_  
more safely stored), and there was a stage-road to Mat-  
tawamkeag, and the rumor of a stage. Indeed, a steamer  
Ihad ascended thus far once, when the water was very  
high. But we were not able to get any sugar, only a  
better shingle to lean our backs against.  
  
‘We camped about two miles below Nickertow, on the  
south side of the West Branch, covering with fresh twigs  
‘the withered bed of a former traveller, and feeling that  
‘we were now in a settled country, especially when in the  
evening we heard an ox meeze in its wild pasture  
facross the river. Wherever you land along the fre-  
4quented part of the river, you have not far to go to find  
these sites of temporary inns, the withered bed of flat-  
tened twigs, the charred sticks, and perhaps the tent-  
poles, And not long since, similar beds were spread  
‘long the Connecticut, the Hudson, and the Delaware,

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284 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
and longer still ago, by the Thames and Seine, and they  
now help to make the soil where private and public gar-  
dens, mansions and palaces are, We could not get fir  
‘twigs for our bed here, and the spruce was harsh in com-  
parison, having more twig in proportion to its leaf, but  
wwe improved it somewhat with hemlock. ‘The Indian  
remarked as before, “Must have hard wood to cook  
‘moose-meat,” as if that were a maxim, and proceeded to  
‘get it. My companion cooked some in California fashion,  
winding a long string of the meat round a stick and  
slowly turning it in his hand before the fre. Tt was very  
good. But the Indian not approving of the mode, or  
‘because he was not allowed to cook it his own way, would  
not taste it, After the regular supper we attempted to  
‘make a lily soup of the bulbs which T hed brought along,  
fot I wished to learn all I could before I got out of the  
woods. Following the Indian’s directions, for he began  
to be sick, I washed the bulbs carefully, minced some  
‘moose-meat and some pork; salted and boiled all together,  
Dut we had not patience to try the experiment fairly, for  
hie said it must be boiled till the roots were completely  
softened so as to thicken the soup like flour; but though,  
‘we left it on all night, we found it dried to the kettle in  
the morning, and not yet boiled to a flour. Perhaps the  
roots were not ripe enough, for they commonly gather  
them in the fall. As it was, it was palatable enough,  
but it reminded me of the Irishman's limestone broth  
‘The other ingredients were enough alone. ‘The Indian’s  
name for these bulbs was Sheepnoe. I stirred the soup  
bby accident with a striped maple or moose-wood stick,  
which I had peeled, and he remarked that its bark was  
an emetic,  
  
‘He prepared to camp as usual between his moose-hide

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THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 285  
  
and the fre, but it beginning to rain suddenly, he took  
refuge under the tent with us, and gave us a song before  
falling asleep.  
  
Faupar, Joly 81  
  
The Indian said, “You and I kill moose last night,  
therefore use ’em best wood. Always use hard wood  
to cook moose-meat.” His “best wood” was rock-  
maple. He cast the moose’s lip into the fire, to burn  
‘the hair off, and then rolled it up with the meat to carry  
along. Observing that we were sitting down to break-  
fast without any pork, he eaid, with a very grave look,  
“Mee want some fat” 60 he was told that he might have  
fas much as he would fry.  
  
‘We had smooth but swift water for a considerable dis-  
tance, where we glided rapidly along, searing up ducks  
and kingfshers. But as usual, our smooth progress ere-  
long came to an end, and we were obliged to earry canoe  
and all about half a mile down the right bank, around  
‘some rapids or falls: It required sharp eyes sometimes  
to tell which side was the carry, before you went over  
the falls, but Polis never failed to land us rightly. ‘The  
raspberries were particularly abundant and large here,  
‘and all hands went to eating them, the Indian remarking  
‘on their size.  
  
Often on bare rocky carries the trail was so indistinct  
that I repeatedly lost it, but when I walked behind him  
T observed that he could keep it almost like a bound, and  
rarely hesitated, or, if he paused a moment on a bare  
rock, his eye immediately detected some sign which  
‘would have escaped me. Frequently we found no path  
at all at these places, and were to him unaccountably  
delayed. He would only say it was “ver strange.”  
  
‘We had heard of a Grand Fall on this stream, and

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286 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
‘thought tnat each fall we came to must be it, but after  
christening several in succession with this name, we gave  
up the search. ‘There were more Grand or Petty Falls  
‘than I can remember. .  
  
cannot tell how many times we bad to walk on ac-  
‘count of falls or rapids. We were expecting all the  
while that the river would take a final Ieap and get to  
‘smooth water, but there was no improvement this fore-  
noon. However, the carries were an agreeable variety.  
So surely as we stepped out of the canoe and stretched  
‘oar legs we found ourselves in a blueberry and raspberry  
garden, each side of our rocky trail around the falls being  
Tined with one or both. ‘There was not a carry on the  
‘main East Branch where we did not find an abundance  
‘of both these berries, for these were the rockiest places,  
‘and partially cleared, such as these plants prefer, and  
‘there had been none to gather the finest before us.  
  
In our three journeys over the carries, for we were  
‘obliged to go over the ground three times whenever the  
‘canoe was taken out, we did full justice to the berries, and  
‘they were just what we wanted to correct the effect of  
‘our hard bread and pork diet. Another name for making,  
f portage would have been going a berrying. We also  
found a few Amelanckier, or service berries, though most  
were abortive, but they held on rather more generally  
tan they do in Concord. ‘The Indian called them  
Pemoymenub, and said that they bore much fait in some  
places. He sometimes also ate the northern wild red  
cherries, saying that they were good medicine, but they  
wore scarcely edible.  
  
‘We bathed and dined at the foot of one of these car-  
ries. Tt was the Indian who commonly reminded us that  
it was dinner-time, sometimes even by turning the prow

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 287  
  
to the shore. He once made an indirect, but lengthy.  
apology; by saying that we might think it strange, but  
‘that one who worked hard all day was very particalar to  
hhave his dinner in good season. At the most considera-  
Dle fall on this stream, when I was walking over the  
carry, elose behind the Indian, he observed a track on  
the rock, which was but slightly covered with soil, and,  
stooping, muttered “caribou.” When we returned, he  
observed a much larger track near the same place, where  
some animal's foot had sunk into a small hollow in the  
rock, parily filled with grass and earth, and he exclaimed  
with surprise, “What that?” Well, what is it?” I  
asked. Stooping and laying his hand in it, he answered  
‘with a mysterious ait, and in a half whisper, Devil  
[that is, Indian Devil, or cougnr] lodges about here  
—very bad animal—pull ’em iocks all to pieces.”  
“How long since it was made?” T asked. “To-day or  
yesterday,” said he. But when I asked him afterward  
ithe was sure it was the devil's track, he said he did not  
iknow. Thad been told that the scream of a cougar was  
heard about Ktaadn recently, and we were not far from  
that mountai  
  
‘We spent atleast half the time in walking to-day, and  
the walking was as bad as usual, for the Indian being  
alone, commonly ran down far below the foot of the car-  
ries before he waited for us. ‘The carry-paths themselves  
were more than usually indistint, often the route being  
revealed only by the countless small holes in the fallen  
timber made by the tacks in the drivers’ boots, or where  
there woas a slight trail we did not find it. It was a tan-  
gled and perplexing thicket, through which we stumbled  
and threaded our way, and when we had finished a mile  
of it, our starting-point seemed far away. We were glad

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288 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
that we had not got to walk to Bangor along the banks  
of this river, which would be a journey of more than a  
hhundred miles. ‘Think of the denseness of the forest,  
the fallen trees and rocks, the windings of the river, the  
streams emptying in and the frequent swamps to be  
crossed. It made you shudder. Yet the Indian from  
time to time pointed out to us where he hed thus crept  
along day after day when he was a boy of ten, and in a  
starving condition, He had been hunting far north of  
this with two grown Indians. ‘The winter came on un-  
expectedly early, and the ice compelled them to leave  
their eanoe at Grand Lake, and walk down the bank.  
‘They shouldered their furs and started for Oldtown.  
‘The snow was not deep enough for sow-shoes, or to  
cover the inequalities of the ground. Polis was soon  
too weak to carry any burden ; but he managed to catch  
‘one otter. This was the most they all had to eat on this  
Journey, and he remembered how good the yellow-lily  
Toots were, made into a soup with the otter oil. He  
shared this food equally with the other two, but being  
‘0 small he suffered much more than they. He waded  
‘through the Mattawamkeag at its mouth, when it was  
freezing cold and came up to his chin, and he, being  
‘very weak and emaciated, expected to be swept away.  
‘The first house which they reached was at Lincoln, and  
thereabouts they met white teamster with supplies, who  
‘seeing their condition gave them as much of his load  
fas they could eat. For six months after getting home  
the was very low, and did not expect to live, and was  
perhaps always the worse for it.  
  
‘We could not find much more than half of this day’s  
Joumey on our maps (the “Map of the Public Lands of  
Bain and Massachusetts” and “Colton’s Railroad and

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 289  
  
‘Township Map of Maine,” which copies the former). By  
the maps there was not more than fifteen miles between  
camps, at the outside, and yet we had been busily pro-  
greasing all day, and much of the time very rapidly.  
  
For seven or eight miles below that succession of  
“Grand” fall the aspect of the banks as well as the  
character of the stream was changed. After passing a  
tributary from the northeast, perhaps Bowlin Stream,  
‘we had good swift smooth water, with a regular slope,  
such as I have described. Low, grassy banks and  
muddy shores began. Many elms, as well as maples,  
‘and more ash trees overhung the stream, and supplanted  
the sprace.  
  
‘My lily-roots having been lost when the canoe was ta-  
ken out at @ carry, I landed late in the afternoon, at a  
low and grassy place amid maples, to gather more. Tt  
‘was slow work grubbing them up amid the sand, and the  
mosquitoes were all the while feasting on me. Mosqui-  
toes, black flies, &, pursued us in mid-channel, and we  
were glad sometimes to get into violent rapids, for then  
‘we eseaped them.  
  
‘A redheaded woodpecker flew across the river, and  
‘the Indian remarked that it was good to eat. As we  
glided swifily down the inclined plane of the river, a  
‘great cat-owl launched itself away from a stump on the  
bank, and flew heavily across the stream, and the Indian,  
3 usual, imitated itsnote. Soon the same bird flew back  
in front of us, and we afterwards passed it perched on a  
tree, Soon afterward a white-headed eagle suiled down  
the stream before us. We drove him several miles,  
while we were looking for a good place to camp, for we  
‘expected to be overtaken by shower,—and sill we  
could distinguish him by his white tail, suiting away  
  
1 \*

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from time to time from some tree by the shore still  
farther down the stream. Some shecorways, being sur-  
prised by us, part of them dived, and we passed directly  
over them, and could trace their course here and there  
by a bubble on the surface, but we did not see them come  
up. Polis detected once or twice what he called «  
“tow” road, an indistinct path leading into the forest.  
Tn the mean while we passed tho mouth of the Seboois  
‘on our left. ‘This did not look 20 large aa our stream,  
which was indeed the main one. Tt was some time be-  
fore we found a camping-place, for the shore was either  
too grassy and muddy, where mosquitoes abounded, or  
too steep a hillside. ‘The Indian said that there were but  
few mosquitoes on a steep hillside. We examined a good  
place, where somebody had camped a long times but it  
seemed pitiful to occupy an old site, where there was 50  
muuch room to choose, so we continued on. We at length  
found a place to our minds, on the west bank, about a mile  
below the mouth of the Seboois, where, in a very dense  
spruce wood above a gravelly shore, there seemed to be  
Dut few insects. ‘The trees were so thick that we were  
obliged to clear a space to build our fire and lie down in,  
‘and the young spruce trees that were left were like the  
wall of an apartment rising around us. We were  
obliged to pull ourselves up a steep bank to get there.  
‘But the place which you have selected for your camp,  
‘though never so rough and grim, begins at once to have  
its attractions, and becomes a very centre of civilization  
to you: Home is home, be it never so homely.”  
  
It turned out that the mosquitoes were more numerous  
here than we had found them before, and the Indian com  
plained a good deal, though he lay, as the night before,  
between three fires and his stretched hide. As I sat on

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH 291  
  
‘a stump by the fire, with a veil and gloves on trying to  
read, he observed, “I make you candle,” and in a minute  
hie took a piece of birch bark about two inches wi  
nd rolled it hard, like an allumette fifteen inches long,  
lit it, and fixed it by the other end horizontally in a split  
stick three feet high, stuck it in the ground, turning the  
Dlazing end to the wind, and telling me to snuff it from  
time to time. It answered the purpose of a candle pretty  
well  
  
T noticed, as T had done before, that there was « Tull  
among the mosquitoes about midnight, and that they  
began again in the morning. Nature is thus merciful.  
But apparently they need rest as well as we. Few if  
any creatures are equally active all night. AS soon as it  
‘was light saw, through my veil, that the inside of the  
tent about our hehds was quite blackened with myriads,  
each one of their wings when flying, as has been caleu-  
lated, vibrating some three thousand times in a minute,  
‘and their combined hum was almost as bad to endure a8  
their stings. I had an uncomfortable night on this nc-  
count, though I am not sure that one succeeded in his  
attempt to sting me. We did not suffer so much from  
insects on this excursion as the statements of some who  
have explored these woods in midsummer led us to ane  
ticipate. Yet Ihave no doubt that at some seasons and  
in some places they are a much more serious pest. ‘The  
Jesuit Hierome Lalemant, of Quebec, reporting the death  
‘of Father Reni Menard, who was abandoned, lost his  
way, and died in the woods, among the Ontarios near  
Lake Superior, in 1661, dwells chiefly on his probable  
snfferings from the attacks of mosquitoes when too weak  
‘to defend himself, adding that there was a frightful nam-  
ber of them in those parts, “ and so insupportable,” says

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\* 998 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
he, “that the three Frenchmen who have made that  
‘voyage, ufirm that there was no other means of defend-  
ing one’s self but to run always without stopping, and it  
‘was even necessary for two of them to be employed in  
driving of these creatures while the third wanted to  
drink, otherwise be could not have done it” T Lave no  
doubt that this was said in good faith.  
  
   
  
Angost 1.  
  
Taught two or three large red chivin (Leuettcus pul-  
chellus) early this morning, within twenty feet of the  
camp, which, added to the mooce-tongue, that had been  
Jef in the kettle boiling over night, and to our other  
stores, made a sumptuous breakfast. The Indian made  
us some hemlock tea instead of coffee, and we were not  
to go.asfar as China for it; indeed, not quite eo  
far aa for the fish. This was tolerable, thouigh he said  
it was not strong enough. It was interesting to see s0  
simple a dish as a kettle of water with a handful of green  
hemlock sprigs in it, boiling over the huge fire in the  
‘open air, the leaves fast losing their lively green color,  
‘and know that it was for our breakfast.  
  
‘We were glad to embark once more, and leave some  
of the mosquitoes behind. We had passed the: Wassata-  
quoik without perceiving it, ‘This, according to the  
Indian, is the name of the main East Branch itself, and  
not properly applied to this small tributary alone, as on  
the maps.  
  
We found that we had camped about mile above  
‘Hunt's, which is on the east bank, and is the last house  
for those who ascend Ktaadn on this side.  
  
‘We also had expected to ascend it from this point, but  
omitted it on account of the chafed feet of one of my  
companions. The Indian, however, suggested that per

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 298  
  
   
  
haps he might get a pair of moccasins at this place, and  
that he could walk very easily in them without hurting  
his fect, wearing several pairs of stockings, and he said  
beside that they were so porous that when you had taken  
in water it all drained out again in a little while. Wo  
stopped to get some sugar, but found that the family had  
moved away, and the house was unoceupied, except tem-  
porarly by some men who were getting the hay. ‘They  
told me that the road to Ktaada left the river eight miles  
above; also that perhaps we could get some sugar at  
Fisk's, fourteen miles below. Ido not remember that  
‘we saw the mountain at all from the river. I noticed  
seine here stretched on the bank, which probably had  
been used to catch ealmon. Just below this, on the west  
Dank, we saw a moose-hide stretched, and with it a bear-  
skin, which was comparatively very small. I was the  
‘more interested in this sight, because it was near here  
that @ townsman of ours, then quite & lad, and alone,  
Killed large bear some years ago. ‘The Indian said  
‘that they belonged to Joe Aitteon, my last guide, but how  
hee told I do not know. He was probably hunting near,  
‘and had left them for the day. Finding that we were  
‘going directly to Oldtown, he regretted that he haa not  
taken more of the moose-meat to his family, saying that  
in a short time, by drying it, be could have made it so  
light as to have brought away the greater par, leaving  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
bat he suid, “That go Oldtown  
for my old woman don’t get it every day.”  
  
Maples grew more and more numerous. It was  
lowering, and rained a little during the forenoon, and, as  
wwe expected a wetting, we stopped early and dined on  
the eastside of amall expansion of the river, just abovo

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294 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
what are probably called Whetstone Falls, about a dozen  
tiles below Hunt's. ‘There were pretty fresh mooce-  
tracks by the waterside. ‘There were singular long  
Fidges hereabouts, called “horsebacks,” covered with  
ferns. My companion having lost his pipe asked the  
Indian if he could not make him one. “O yer,” said  
he, and in a minute rolled up one of birch-bark, telling  
him to wet the bowl from time to time, Here also he  
left his gazette on a tree.  
  
‘We carried round the falls just below, on the west side.  
‘The rocks were on their edges, and very sharp. The  
distance was about three fourths of a mile. When we  
hhad carried over one load, the Indian returned by the  
shore, and I by the path and though I made no particu  
lar haste, I was nevertheless surprised to find him at the  
‘other end as soon as I. It-was remarkable how easily  
he got along over the worst ground. He said to me, “I  
take canoe and you take the rest, suppose you can keep  
along with me?” I thought that he meant, that while he  
‘ran down the rapids I should keep along the shore, and  
be ready to assist him from time to time, as I had done  
before; but as the walking would be very bad, I ane  
swered, “I suppose you will go too fast for me, but I  
will try” But I was to go by the path, he said. ‘This  
I thought would not help the matter, I should have so far  
to go to get to the riverside when he wanted me. Bat  
neither was this what he meant. He was proposing a  
race over the carry, and asked me if T thought I could  
keep along with him by the same path, adding that I  
rust be pretty smart to doit, As his load, the eanoe,  
‘would be much the heaviest and bulkiest, though the  
simplest, I thought that I ought to be able to do it, and  
‘aid that I would try. So I proceeded to gather up the

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 295  
  
gun, axe, paddle, kettle, frying-pan, plates, dippers, car-  
pets, &, &c, and while I was thus engaged he threw me  
his cow-hide boots. “What, are these in the bargain?”  
T asked. “0 yer,” said he; but before I could make  
bundle of my load I saw him disappearing over a bill  
with the canoe on his head ; so, hastily scraping the vari-  
ous articles together, I started on the run, and immedi  
ately went by him in the bushes, but I had no sooner  
eft him out of sight in a rocky hollow, than the greasy  
plates, dippers, &c, took to themselves wings, and while  
T was employed in gathering them up again, he went by  
‘me; but hastily pressing the sooty kettle to my side, I  
started once more, and soon passing him again T saw  
hhim no more on the carry. I do not mention this as  
anything of a feat, for it was but poor running on my  
part, and he was obliged to move with great caution for  
fear of breaking his eanoe as well as his neck. When  
hhe made his appearance, puffing and panting like myself  
in answer to my inquiries where he had been, he said,  
“Rocks (locks) cut ’em feet,” and laughing added, “ 0,  
me love to play sometimes.” He said that he and his  
companions when they came to carries eeveral miles  
long used to try who would get over first ; each perhaps  
with a cange on his head. I bore the sign of the Kettle  
‘on my brown linen sack for the rest of the voyage.  
  
‘We made a second earry on the westside, around somo  
falls about @ mile below this. It rained hand in the  
night and spoiled another box of matches for us, which  
the Indian had left out, for he was very careless; but, as  
usual, we had so much the better night for the ra  
it kept the mosquitoes down.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
Sonpar, Angut 3  
‘Was a cloudy and unpromising morning. One of us

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296 THE MAINE Woops.  
  
observed to the Indian, “ You did not stretch your moose+  
hide last night, did you, Mr. Polis?” Whereat he re-  
plied, in a tone of surprise, though perhaps not of ill  
fhumor: “What you ask me that question for? Suppose  
Tsstretch "em, you see "em. May be your way talking,  
‘may be all right, no Indian way.” 1 had observed that  
he did not wish to answer the same question more than  
once, and was often silent when it was put again for the  
sake of certainty, as if he were moody. Not that he was  
incommunicative, for he frequently commenced a long-  
‘winded narrative of his own accord,— repeated at length  
the tradition of some old battle, or some passage in the  
recent history of his tribe in which he had acted a prom-  
nent part, from time to time drawing a long breath,  
‘and resuming the thread of his tale, with the true story-  
teller’s leisureliness, perhaps after shooting a rapid, —  
prefacing with “werll-by-by,” &c, as he paddled along.  
Especially after the day’s work was over, and he had put  
himself in posture for the night, he would be unexpect-  
‘edly sociable, exhibit even the bontommie of a French-  
‘man, and we would fall asleep before he got through  
periods.  
  
Nickertow is called eleven miles from Mattawamkeag  
by the river. Our eamp was, therefore, about nine miles  
from the latter place.  
  
‘The Indian was quite sick this morning with the colic.  
T thought that he was the worse for the moose-meat he  
had eaten.  
  
We reached the Matiawamkeag at half past eight in  
the morning, in the midst of a drizzling rain, and after  
buying some sugar set out again.  
  
‘The Indian growing much worse, we stopped in the  
north part of Lincoln to get some brandy for him, but

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failing in this, an apothecary recoinmended Brandreth's  
pills, which he refused to take, because he was not ac-  
quainted with them. He said to me, “Me doctor — first  
study my case, find out what ail ‘em — then I know what,  
to take” We dropped down a little farther, and stopped  
at mid-forenoon on an island and made him a dipper of  
tea. Here too we dined and did some washing and bot-  
nizing, while ho lay on the bank. In the afternoon we  
went on a little farther, though the Indian was no better.  
“ Burntibus}” as he called it, was a long smooth lake-ike  
reach below the Five Islands. He eaid that he owned  
‘& hundred acres somewhere up this way. As a thunder-  
shower appeared to be coming up, we stopped opposite  
f barn on the west bank, in Chester, about a mile above  
Lincoln. Here at last we were obliged to spend the  
rest of the day and night, op account of our patient,  
whose sickness did not abate. He lay groaning under  
  
ja eanoo on the bank, looking very woe-begone, yet it  
‘was only a common case of colic. You would not have  
thought, if you had seen him lying about thus, that he  
‘was the proprietor of so many acres in that neighbor  
hood, was worth $ 6,000, and had been to Washington.  
It seemed to me that like the Irish, he made a greater ado  
about his sickness than a Yankee does, and was more  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
alarmed about himself, We talked somewhat of leaving  
bim with his people in Lincoln, — for that is one of their  
hhomes,—and taking the stage the next day, but he ob-  
jected on account of the expense, saying, “ Suppose me  
  
   
  
‘well in morning, you and I go Oldtown by noon.  
  
‘As we were taking our tea at twilight, while he lay  
  
groaning still under his canoe, having at length found  
  
‘out what ail him,” he asked me to get him a dipper of  
  
water. ‘Taking the dipper in one hand, he seized his  
ie

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298 = |THE MAINE Woops.  
  
porder-horn with the other, and pouring into it a charge  
‘or two of powder, stirred it up with his finger, and drank  
  
+ it off. ‘This was all he took to-day afler breakfast beside  
his tea.  
  
‘To save the trouble of pitching our tent, when wo  
hhad secured our stores from wandering dogs, we camped  
in the solitary halfopen barn near the bank; with the  
permission of the owner, lying on new-mown hay four  
feet deop. The fragrance of the hay, in which many  
ferns, &e. were mingled, was agreeable, though it was  
‘quite alive with grasshoppers which you could hear  
crawling through it. ‘This served to graduate our ap-  
proach to houses and feather-beds. In the night some  
large bird, probably an owl, fitted throogh over our  
hheads, and very early in the morning we were awakened  
by the twittering of swallows which had their nests there.  
  
Mona, Angust 8.  
  
‘Wo started early before breakfast, the Indi  
considerably better, and soon  
another long and handsome lake-like reach, we stopped  
to breakfast on the west shore, two or three miles below  
this town,  
  
‘We frequently passed Indian Islands with thefr small  
hhousos on them. ‘The Governor, Aitteon, lives in one of  
them, in Lincoln.  
  
‘The Penobscot Indians seem to be more social, even,  
than the whites. Ever and anon in the deepest wilder-  
ness of Bfnine you come to the log-hut of a Yankee or  
Canada settler, but a Penobscot never takes up his resi-  
dence in such @ solitude. They are not even scattered  
bout on their islands in the Penobscot, which are all  
Within the settlements, but gathered together on two oF

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 299  
  
‘three, — though not always on the best soil, — evidently  
for the sake of society. I saw one or two houses not  
now used by them, because, as our Indian Polis said,  
they were too solitary.  
  
The small river emptying in at Lincoln is the Mata-  
nnaneook, which also, we noticed, was the name of a  
steamer moored there, So we paddled and floated along,  
looking into the mouths of rivers. When passing the  
‘Mohawk Rips, or, as the Indian called them, “ Mohog  
lips,” four or five miles below Lincoln, he told us at  
Jength the story of a fight between his tribe and the Mo-  
hawks there, anciently, — how the latter were overcome  
by stratagem, the Penobscots using concealed knives, —  
Dut they could not fora long time kill the Mohawk chief,  
‘who was a very large and strong man, though he was  
attacked by several canoes at once, when swimming alone  
in the river.  
  
‘From time to time we met Indians in their canoes,  
going up river. Our man did not commonly approach  
them, but exchanged a few words with them ata distance  
in hig tongue. ‘These were the first Indians we had met  
since leaving the Umbazookskus.  
  
At Piscataquis Falls just above the river of that name,  
‘we walked over the wooden railroad on the eastern shore,  
about one and a half miles long, while the Indian glided  
down the rapids. ‘The steamer from Oldtown stops here,  
and passengers take a new boat above. Piscataquis  
‘hose mouth we here passed, means “branch.” It is ob-  
structed by falls at its mouth, but can be navigated with  
bateaux or canoes above through a settled country,  
even to the neighborhood of Moosehead Lake, and we  
hhad thought at first of going that way. We were not  
obliged to get out of the canoe after this on account of

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800 ‘THE MAINE WOODS.  
  
falls or rapids, nor, indeed, was it quite necessory here,  
Wo took less notice of the scenery to-day, because we  
‘were in quite a settled country. The river became  
broad and sluggish, and we saw a blue heron, winging  
its way slowly down the stream before us.  
  
‘We passed the Passadumkeag River on our left and  
saw the blue Olamon mountains at a distance in the south~  
east. Hereabouts our Indian told us at length the story  
of their contention with the priest respecting schools. He  
thought great deal of education and had recommended  
ito his tribe. His argument in its favor was, that if you  
hhad been to college and learnt to calculate, you could  
‘keep ’em property, —no other way.” He said that his  
boy was the best scholar in the school at Oldtown, to  
which he went with whites. He himself is a Protestant,  
and goes to church regularly in Oldtown. According to  
his account, a good many of his tribe are Protestants, and  
many of the Catholics also are in favor of schools. Some  
years ago they had a schoolmaster, a Protestant, whom  
they liked very well. ‘The priest came and said that  
they must send him away, and finally he had such infu  
‘ence, telling them that they would go to the bad place at  
last if they retained him, that they sent him away. ‘The  
‘school party, though numerous, were about giving up.  
Bishop Fenwick came from Boston and used his infu-  
ence against them. But our Indian told his side that,  
‘they must not give up, must hold on, they were the  
strongest. If they gave up, then they would have no  
party. But they answered that it was ‘no use, priest  
too strong, we'd better give up.” At length he per-  
suaded them to make a stand.  
  
‘The priest was going for » sign to cut down the libe  
certy-pole. So Polis and his party had a secret meeting

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‘THE ALLEGASB AND EAST BRANCH 801.  
  
about it; he got ready fifteen or twenty stout young  
‘men, “ stript’em naked, and painted ’em like old times,”  
‘and told them that when the priest and his party went to  
‘cut down the liberty-pole they were to rush up, take hold  
of it and prevent thet, and be ascured them that there  
‘would be no war, only & moise, “no war where priest  
is” He kept his men concealed in a house near by, and  
‘when the priests party were about to cut down the lib-  
certy-pole the fall of which would have beon a death-blow  
to the school party, he gave a signal, and his young men  
rushed out and seized the pole. ‘There was a great up-  
roar, and they were about coming to blows, but the priest  
interfered, saying, “No war, no war,” and so the pole  
stands, and the school goes on still.  
  
‘We thought that it showed a good deal of tact in him,  
to seize this occasion and take his stand on it proving  
how well he understood those with whom he had to deal.  
  
‘The Olamon River comes in from the east in Green-  
bush a few miles below the Passadumkeag. When wo  
asked the meaning of this name, the Indian said that there  
‘was an island opposite its mouth which was called Olar-  
mon. ‘That in old times, when visitors were coming to  
Oldtown, they used to stop there to dress and fix up or  
paint themselves. ‘What is that which Indies used ?”  
he asked. Rouge? Red vermilion? “Yer,” he said,  
“that is Zarmon, a kind of clay or red paint, which they  
used to get here.”  
  
‘We decided that we too would  
‘ix up our inner man, at least, by  
  
Ts was a largo island with an abundance of hemp-net~  
tle, but I did not notice any kind of red paint there.  
‘The Olarmon River, at its mouth at least, is a dead  
stream. ‘There was another large island in that neigh+

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802 THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
borhood, which the Indian called “ Soogle” (j. e. Sugar)  
Island.  
  
‘About a dozen miles before reaching Oldtown he in-  
quired, “ How you like ’em your pilot?” ut we post-  
poned an answer till we had got quite back again.  
  
‘The Sunkhaze, another short dead stream, comes in  
from the east two miles above Oldtown. There is said  
to be some of the best deer ground in Maine on  
stream. Asking the meaning of this name, the Indi  
said, “Suppore you are going down Penobscot, just  
like we, and you see a canoe come out of bank and go  
along before you, but you no see ’em stream. ‘That is  
‘Sunthaze”  
  
‘He had previously complimented me on my paddling,  
saying that I paddled “just like anybody,” giving me an  
Indian name which meant “ great paddler.” When off  
this stream he sald to mo, who sat in the bows, «Me  
teach you paddle.” So turning toward the shore he got  
out, came forward and placed my hands as he wished.  
He placed one of them quite outside the boat, and the  
‘other parallel with the first, grasping the paddle near the  
end, not over the flat extremity, and told me to slide i  
back and forth on the side of the canoe. ‘This, I found,  
‘was a great improvement which I had not thought of,  
saving me the labor of lifting the paddle each time, and  
wondered that he had not suggested it before. Tt is  
true, before our baggage was reduced we had been  
obliged to sit with our legs drawn up, and our knees  
above the side of the canoe, which would have prevented  
four paddling thus, or perhaps he was afraid of wearing  
out his canoe, by constant friction on the side.  
  
Ttold him that I had been accustomed to sit in the  
stern, and lifting my paddle at each stroke, getting a pry

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‘THE ALLEGASH AND EAST BRANCH. 808  
  
‘on the side each time, and I still paddled partly as if in  
‘the stem. He then wanted to see me paddle in the stern.  
So, changing paddles, for he had the longer and better  
‘one, and turning end for end, he sitting flat on the bot-  
‘tom and I on the crossbar, he began to paddle very hard,  
‘trying to turn the canoe, looking over his shoulder and  
laughing, but finding it in vain he relaxed his efforts,  
‘though we still sped along a mile or two very swift  
He said that he had no fault to find with my paddling in  
the stern, but T complained that he did not paddle accord  
ing to his own directions in the bows.  
  
Opposite the Sunkhaze is the main boom of the Pe-  
robecot, where the logs from far up the river are collected.  
‘and assorted.  
  
‘As we drew near to Oldtown I asked Polis if he was  
not glad to get home again; but there was no relenting  
to his wildness, and he said, “It makes no difference to  
me where Iam.” Such is the Indian's pretence always.  
  
‘We approached the Indian Island through the narrow  
strait called “Cook.” He said, “I “xpect we take in  
some water there, river so high, —never see it so high at  
  
season. Very rough water there, but short; swamp  
steamboat once. Don't you paddle till I tell you, then  
you paddle right along.” It was a very short rapid.  
‘When we were in the midst of it he shouted « paddle,”  
‘and we shot through without taking in a drop.  
  
Soon after the Indian houses came in sight, but I  
‘could not at first tell my companion which of two or three  
large white ones was oar guide's. He seid it was the one  
with blin  
  
‘We landed opposite his docr at about four in the after-  
noon, having come some forty miles this day. From the  
Piscataquis we had come remarkably and unaccountably

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804 ‘THE MAINE WooDs.  
  
‘quick, probably as fast as the stage or the boat, though,  
the last dozen miles was dead water.  
  
Polis wanted to sell us his canoe, said it would last  
seven or eight years, or with care, perhaps ten ; but wo  
were not ready to buy it  
  
‘We stopped for an hour at his house, where my com-  
anion shaved with his razor, which he pronounced in  
‘very good condition. Mrs. P. wore a hat and had a sil~  
‘ver brooch on her breast, but she was not introduced to  
us. The house was roomy and neat. A large new map  
of Oldtown and the Indian Tsland ung on the wall, and  
‘clock opposite to it. Wishing to know when the cars  
Jef Oldtown, Polis’s son brought one of the Inst’ Bangor  
papers, which I saw was directed to “Joseph Polis,”  
from the office.  
  
This was the last that I'saw of Joo Polis. We took,  
the last train, and reached Bangor that night,

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APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX.  
  
   
  
‘and west branches of the Penobscot and on the upper part of tho  
“Allegash vere the fir, spruce (both black and white), and arbor.  
oF “cedar.” ‘The fr has the darkest foliage, and, together  
swith the spruce, makes a very dense “black growth” eapocally  
‘on tho upper parts of the rivers. A dealer in lumber with whom  
‘talked called the former a weed, and itis commonly regarded as  
‘8 nether for timber nor fuel. Bat itis more sooght afar as an  
‘ornamental tree than any other evergreen of these woods except  
‘the arborovitw, ‘The black apruce ie mach more common then the  
‘white, Both aro tall and slender tres. Tho arborvitw, which  
‘ofa more cheerfal hue, with ita light green fans, is also tall and.  
‘lender, though sometimes two foot in diameter. “It often fils tho  
‘Mingled wih the former, and also here and there forming exten-  
ive and more open woods by themselves, indicating, ii sald, a  
better sol, wer canoe and yellow birches (the former was always  
ft hand for kindling a fre, —we saw no small whive-birchos in that  
wilderness), and suger and red maples.  
  
‘The Aspen (Popue tremulides) was very common on burat  
grounds, We aw many strageling white pines, commonly unsound  
‘wees, which had therefore been skipped by the choppers; thes  
‘were the largest tres wo saw; and we occasionally passed a small  
‘wood in which this was the prevailing treo; bat I didnot notice  
nearly to many of thete tres as I can soe in a single walk in Con-  
‘cord. The epéckled of hoary aldor(Alnueincana) abounds every  
‘where along the maddy banks of rivers and lakes, and in swamps  
‘Hemlock could commonly be found for ea, but was nowhere aban

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ant Yet. A. Michenx stats that in Maine, Vermont, nd the  
‘upper part of New Hampshire, &c, the hemlock form three foartha  
of the evergreen woods, the ret being black spruce. It belongs to  
cold billedes.  
  
‘The elm and black ash were very common along the lower and  
stiller pars of the streams, where the shores wero flat and grassy  
for there were low gravelly islands. ‘They made « pleasing varity  
in the scenery, and we felt as if nearer home while gliding past  
them,  
  
"Tho above fourtoo treee made the balk of the woods which  
  
"The larch (Janiper), beech, and Norway pine (Pinus resinos,  
red pine), wero only occasionally seen in particular places. Tho  
‘Pinus Banksiona (gray or Northern serub-pine), and a single small  
red oak (Quereus ruiro) only, are on islands in Grand Lake, onthe  
East Branch.  
  
‘The above are almost all peculiarly Northern trees, and found  
chiefly, if not solely, on mountains southward.  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
IL FLOWERS AND SHRUBS.  
  
x appears that ina forest like this the great majority of Bowers,  
shrubs, and grasses ere confined to the banks of the rivers and  
lakes, and to the meadows, more open swamps, brat lands, and  
‘mouniain-tope; comparatively very few indeed penetrate the woods.  
‘There in no such dispersion even of wild-lowers as is commonly  
supposed, or as exists i a cleared and sated country. Most of  
‘our wild-owers, sealed, may be coosidered as nataralized in the  
localities where they grow. Rivers and lakes are the great prote-  
tors of such planta against the aggressions of tho forest, by their  
sonual vise and fall koeping open a narrow strip where these more  
Aeliato plants have light and spaco in which to grow. ‘They are  
the prayer of the rivers. ‘Thee narrow and straggling bands  
tnd isolated groups are, in a senso, he pioneer of civilization.  
Birds, quadropeds,inscta, and man also, in the main, follow the  
‘lowers, and tho later in his turn makes more room for them and

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APPENDIX. 809  
  
for berry bearing shrabs, birds, and small quadrupeds. One settler  
‘told me that not ooly blackberis and raspberries, but mountain-  
‘maples came in, i the clearing and burning.  
  
‘Though plants are often referred to primitive woods as their  
locality, it cannot be tue of very many, unless the woods are sap-  
‘posed to include such localities aa Thave mentioned. Only hots  
‘which require but lito light, and can bear the drip of the teen,  
penetrate the woods, and thes have commonly more beaaty in  
their leave than in ‘ther palo and almost colrlas blosoms  
  
‘The prevaling flowers and conypicuous small plants of tho  
seeds, which T noticed, wero: Clintnia borealis, inna, checker-  
berry (Gaultheria procumbens), Araia nudicaus (wil sareaparile),  
great roundeaved orchia, Daliarda repens, Chiogenes Kitna  
(creeping snowberry}; Oralis cella (common wood-sorel), Ai  
ter acuminats, Pyrola wcunda (one-sided pyrola), Madea Viginioa  
(Fdian excumberro0t), small Cireza (enchanter’s nightahade),  
snd perhape Cornus Canadensis (Awarf coral).  
  
‘OF these, the lst of July, 1856, nly the Aster acuminate and  
‘reat roundleaved ori wore contpicaously in boom.  
  
‘The most common flowers of the river and lake shores were:  
‘Thali cornti (meadow), Hypericum eligticom, muita, and  
Canadewe (St. John’s-wort),horeemint, horshound, Lyeopur Vir  
sinew and Buropaus, var imatus (buglomeed), Setlria gale  
Feulata(skalkenp), Solidago lanceolata ad, warrova East Branch  
(Goldenrod), Diplopappue umbels (Aoablotvisted aster), Aster  
roa, Ciewa maculata and bulifra (waterbemlock), meadow.  
tncet, Zysinacia stricta and ciliata (lowest), Golium trifdem  
(sill bedatraw), Zila Canadense (wid yllowsily), Plotanhera  
perumena and piyades (great purple orchis and stall purple:  
finged orchis), Bimal rings (monkey-fower), dock (water),  
ae g, Hydrocye Americana (marsh penny wor), Sonica Can.  
adenss (black snake-oot), Clematis Virginiana? (common vit-  
fin'sbower), Nastotim pause (marsh cress), Ramune recur  
ts (hooked crow foot), Aaclepian incarnaa (owamp milkweod), Aster  
Tredescanti (Tradeveant’s aster), Ader miter, leo logins, Bae  
  
rium purpureum apparently, lakeshore (Joe-Pye-weed), poo  
on Canale Bast Bruns Clndan hep, Pobgonum cline  
(Gind-wecd),and others. Not to mention among inferior ones  
‘wool grass aid tho sensitive fern,

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310 ‘APPENDIX.  
  
Ta tho water, Nuphar adeea (yellow pond), some palamage  
ton (pond-weed), Sapitria variabis (arrow-head), Sium linare?  
(sraterpersnip).  
  
‘OF thot, those conspicuously ia ower tho last of Jaly, 1852,  
vere: rc, Saldag loncata and ssarrona, Dilopappes ntl,  
Aver rule Litiom Canadese, great x04 stall parpe orchis, Mi-  
alas rages Dae a, virgn'bower, Be.  
  
‘The charactrntie Sowers i nwonpe were + Rb rifer (wart  
raspberry), Calla patria (wate aram), and Sarracenia purpurea  
(Pitherplant). On burt grounds: Elim angutifili, infll  
‘oom (great willow:he), and. Breck Meracflia (Sro-weed).  
On lift: Campanula rtunditin (bareell, Corms Canadensis  
(Avert corel), Arcodephyl waar’ (barber), Patna t-  
ddodatz (mosatain cinquetil), Pte apulna (common, bak  
‘Ae old campe, carrie, and loging pata Cirsium arvnse (Cans  
thistle), Prana elgris (common selfeal), clover, berdsgrst,  
Ailes mileftin (common yarrow), Lecathemso ugar (whit  
weed), Aster macophyls, Holesa dejlza East Branch (spurred  
{entan), Antemaria margaritacs (pearly everlasting), Acta ruira  
find els, wot cree (red and white coboeh), Dasma Conadenae  
(cck-reel), sore  
  
‘The handsotnest and moet interesting Sowers were tho great  
parpleorchises, rising ever and anon, with ther greet pple  
prety erect, amid the shrabe aod grass ofthe shore. Tested  
  
0ge that they shouldbe male to grow ther in such profesion,  
feo of moose and moosehunters only, while they are so rao in  
Concord. ‘have never seen this apociee fowaring nearly o ate  
‘with a, oF with the emall one.  
  
“Tho prevaling suderwoods were: Divx palustris (moose-mood),  
Acer spcstum (touniaia. maple), Vberaum lanaradee (bobble.  
bash), and frequently Torus bata, var. Canadensis (American  
yen).  
  
‘The provaliog sbrabs and small trees along the shore we  
sir rouge and alders (before mentioned) ; sallow, or small wile  
lows, of two or thre kinds, a Salix humilis roerata, end dicaor,  
Sambucus Canadensis (Back elder), rose, Viburnum opus and me  
dam (eravberrytea and withesod), Pyrus Americana (American  
‘ountsin-ash), Conus rata (beaked azsl-nat, Deri tifa  
(Gushhoneysuckie), Pramas Viriniona (choke-chery), Mica gal

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APPENDIX. ait  
  
{emcetsgale), Nemopanthes Canadensis (mountain boll), Ceptalan  
tha ecidentais (Dattontbash), Rites prosratum, in some places  
(fetid currant).  
  
‘More particularly of shrubs and small treo ia swamps: some  
willows, Kalnia glavca (pale taarel), Zed latiflum and palate  
(Labrador te), Rite lacie awamp gooseberry), and in one place  
Baila pumila (low birch). At eamps and carves: raspberry, Voc-  
ini Canadese (Caonde Dlusbery), Prunes Pennelanic also  
"long shore (wld red cherry), Amelanchier Canadensis (sbad-bsb),  
‘Sambucus pubns (e-berved elder). Among those poculias to tho  
‘mountains would be the Vaczinium vitividaa (cowberry).  
  
OF plants commonly regarded as introduced from Burope, T  
observed at Ansel Saith’s clearing, Chesencook, abundant in  
1857 : Ranunculus aera (batercups}, Plantago major (common  
plantain), Gheopdim album (lamb'e-quarters), Cops bursa-por  
fora, 1898 (shepherd's pare), Speyula areeuis, aso, north shore  
of Moosehead, i 1859, and elsewhere, 1887 (cornsparrey  
‘Tarazacum dessleonis—regarded aa indigenous by Gray, but evi  
ently introdaced thero— (common dandelion), Pelyyonum Persia  
ria and iydropiper, by a logging path in woods at Sith’ (Indy  
thumb and smartweed), Rumer aoa, common at carries  
sorrel), Trflism prot, 1888, and carrie fequent (red clover),  
Lescanthenum vulgare, carves (whito weed), Pein pratense, cares,  
1859-7 (berdegrast), Verbena hastata (bie vervain), Crim a  
sens, abundant at camps 1857 (Canada thistle), Runes cria?,  
West Branch, 1888 1 (culed dock), Verascum'thepet, betwee  
Bangor and lake, 1888 {common mullein)  
  
eappears that T saw about a dozen plants which bad accom-  
panied man a8 far into the woods as Chesuncook, and had natt-  
“alin themselves there in 1858, Plants begin thas early to spring  
ty the side ofa logging path,—-a mere vista through the moods,  
which can only be used in the winter, on account of the stamps  
snd fallen tres, — which at length are the roadside plantain old  
setlements. The pioneer of such are planed in part by the frat  
‘enue, which eannot be sammered in th woods.

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QOL LIST OF PLANTS.  
  
‘Tax following is lst of tho plants which T noticed in  
‘Maine woods, in the years 1883 and 1857, (Thow marked #  
moods.)  
  
   
  
   
  
1, Tuose waiom arta nue maicur or Taxes.  
Alnus incona (speckled or hoary alder), abundant along streams,  
be,  
  
‘hajaocdetalis (American axbor-vitn), ona of th prevaling.  
  
Frozinus sombucftia (black ash), very common, especially near  
dead water, The Tndian spoke of "yellow aih” a6 aio found  
there  
  
‘Populus tremulodes (American aspe), very common, epecaly  
on barat lands, amor a whites Brees.  
nite groiideata (agen eps), pays wo ot  
three  
  
‘Fagus feria (Acerican betch), 208 uncommon, at lent on  
the Weel Branch (saw mor in 1846)-  
  
Bala pepyraces (anoe-irch), provallig everywhere and about  
Banger.  
  
‘Bela ex (yellow bec), very common.  
  
‘Bla lena (back birch, onthe Wet Branch, in 1889.  
  
‘Baulo alo (American white birch), aboat Bangor on  
  
Tina Aneriana (American or white elm), West Branch and  
low down the ast Branch, fon ho lower and alluvial part of  
the river, very oman.  
  
‘Larie Americana (American or black larch), very common on  
the Umbazookskes, some eliewhere.  
  
Alias Cavadouis(hemlock-spruce), not abundant, some on tae  
‘West Branch and litle everywhere,  
  
‘cr saccharin ougae maple), Yry common.  
  
“Acer rbrem (red oF swamp map), very common.  
  
“Acer dascarpum (white of silver tuple), litle low on Bast  
Branch end in Chesuncook woods.  
  
Ques rbra (red oak), one on a island in Grand Take, Rast  
Branch, an, according to sete, afew om the eastside of Che  
sancook Lake; a fow lb about Bangor i 185.

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APPENDIX. 313  
  
Pinas sro (whito pine), scattered along, most abundant at  
Haron Lake.  
  
‘Pinus resinous (rod pine), Telos and Grand Lako, a litle after  
wards here and there,  
  
Abia blsames (balm fr), pethape the most coinmon tre, es  
‘pecially inthe apper parts of rivers  
  
Abit nigra (black or doable epract), next to the Inst the most  
‘common, ifaot equally common, and on mountains.  
  
“Abies alia (white or single sprae), common with the last along.  
the river.  
  
Pinus Banksiona (gray ot Northern scrab-pae), « fow on an  
Inland in Grand Lake.  
  
‘Twenty-three in all (23).  
  
   
  
2 Suaty Taxus axp Sunvns.  
  
‘Prunus depen (Awarfchery),on gravel bry, Bast Branch at  
“Hants, wit green fat obviowaly distinct from the pumila of river  
‘and meadows  
  
Vccinium eorgmtorun (common swamp baebery), Buckapor.  
  
‘Vaeciniem Conadae (Cada blueberry), cri at oeky bla  
cverywhere a far south a8 Buckspors.  
  
"Pacinium Pemnvanicam (dart Scbery 1), Whetstone Fale  
  
Betula pumila (low birch), Mad Pond Swamp. ¥  
  
‘Prins ceria (Sack aler, 87), now placed with Ter by  
Gray, 24 ed.  
  
(Copalaches occidentalis (baton-bash).  
  
‘Prunus Pennsyleanica (wild red cherry), very common at camps,  
carn, , along Fiver; fut ipe August 1, 1887,  
  
‘Prones Virgiiana (chokecherr), riverside common.  
  
Comat ceria (aleranteleavd corel), Wet Branch, 1838,  
  
Riles prostratum (fetid currant), common along streams, on Web-  
ster Sueam.  
  
‘Sumbuews Conadews (common elder), common along rier:  
siden  
  
‘Sombuews putes (rd-berid elder), not quite so common, rad  
side toward Moceshead, and nears efervard, rls basil  
  
Bie lacatre(amamp-goetbery), wampe,commoo, Mad Pood  
Swamp and Wobeter Stream; not ripe July 2%, 1857.  
  
iy

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Tazus boca, var. Canadensis (Atercan yor), © common wa  
erabrab a ao island in West Branch and Chenuncook woods.  
  
Viluraum lanvoides(hobble-bash), common, especially in Cho  
\_sancook woods; fat ripe in September, 1888, notin July, 1857.  
  
Viburnum ope (crnberry ree) on West Branch ooo Gower  
ssl, Jaly 25,1057.  
  
Viburnum madam (wither), common slong rivers  
  
Kalniagawa (plo lar!) omamps, common, as at Moosehead  
‘ary and Chamberlain ewamp.  
  
‘Kalniaanpuifia (amb-il),widh Kabmia glows.  
  
‘Ace spect (twounian maple), a prevailing wnderwood.  
  
“Aer arias (tipedmupe) in fen July 0, 1887; green tho  
first year; gren, striped with whit, th second; darker, the third,  
wth dak Hotes.  
  
Gorma lonifr re-set dogwood), proving sr onshore  
of West Branch; fait all white ia Auget, 1887.  
  
‘Pyrat Americana (American mountain ib), common along  
shores.  
  
“AndancierConadoss (sheds), rocky cari, Be. ; consider  
ste frat in 1857.  
  
abus sige (wild sed raspberry), very sbandant, bar  
sounds, camps, and caries, bat not ripe tll we goto” Cham,  
Deviain dam and on East Branch.  
  
‘Rosa Carlna (swemp-oet),common on the shores of lakes,  
  
‘Rhus yphna® (stagrora suoac),  
  
“Myrica ‘gale (sneer gas), common  
  
“Nenepanthe Canadensis (qoantaia holly), common ia low  
ground, Mootchead cary, and on Moant Kineo.  
  
Cratagu (cornea? welt thor), not uncommon ; wile  
dard frat in September, 1859.  
  
‘Salix (near t0 patil, petoled willow), very common ia Um  
‘ascokakus meadows,  
  
‘Sali rtrata (long beaked willow), commen.  
  
‘Salic Kunis (low bashwillom), common.  
  
Sale disor (glancoua willow  
  
‘Sali aca (shining will), at intnd fo Heron lake,  
  
Dircapaluaia (tm00%0 wood), common.  
  
nal, 38

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‘APPENDIX. 815  
  
3. Suant Sunups axp Humnacuous Praxs.  
  
Agrimonia Ewpatera (coinmon sgrimony), not uncommon.  
(Gircaa Alpina (enchants nightshade), very common fa wood  
Nasturtium palustre (marsh crest), va. hispid, commoi aa sb  
  
A. Smith's.  
  
“Arola Kpida (brit saranparilla) on West Branch, both years,  
  
“Arata nudicauis (wild saraparills}, Chesancook woods,  
  
‘Sapitaria sarah (arrow-heed), common at Moosehead and  
sferward.  
  
Aram iriphylion (Indian turnip), now arixema, Moosehead carry  
  
in 1858.  
  
Ancepias incaaata (swamp wilk-wood), Umbazookskus River  
snd after, redder than our, and o diferent variety from our var.  
  
“dsorccuminatus (ponte eared aster), the prevlig aster fn  
‘woods, ot long ope on South Branch Jay lst; two or'mor fet  
hig.  
  
“Aster macophle (lrgeleared str), common, and the whole  
lt sorprisigly fagrat, ken modicial her, ua ot at Toon  
Dam July 29, 1857, and after to Bangor and Buckaport; Diss  
‘tower (in woods on Pine Stream aod at Cheancook in 1882).  
  
dst radia (rougheaved aster) common, Moosehead carry  
sod afer.  
  
‘itr miter (pte ater, 1859 on West Branch, and common  
on Chesuncook shoe.  
  
‘itr lng (willw-eared Bla ster), 105, Moosehead and  
CCheauncook shores  
  
“ater condo (benreared ase), 1852, Wost Branch,  
  
‘ase Trodecant (Tradcean' aie), 187, A narrow eared  
‘oe Chomnnoook sore, 1  
  
ctr, longa ike, with small fowers, Went Branch 1859,  
  
“Auer pneu (roughatammed sar), Pi Steam.  
  
Diplopappu enbllats (large dplpeppus aster), common slong  
  
“Arcataphylt wnoaret(beactrry), Kino, Be, 1887.  
  
‘Pggoum ends (hinge jointed fuae beckwhat), common.  
  
Biden cermua (barmarigold), 1858, West Branch.  
  
‘Ranuncdueacris(Daveteups, abundant at Smid’ dam, Cbo-  
sancok, 1858.

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316 APPENDIX.  
  
Rabu trifora(Amactrapberr), low gronnds and rrampe, com  
Ciricdariavulpare™ (grate Badder-wor), Pashaw.  
  
Iris warvisdor (Iargr blaeiag), common Moosiiead, Wert  
‘Branch, Umbazookakus, 8a.  
  
‘Sparynium (barred).  
  
Calla plats (water-aram)in bloom July 27, 1687, Mind Fond  
Smamp.  
  
“Talla cardinals (cardinal ower), apparently commen, bat oxt  
of boom Angus, 1857.  
  
erat nuton (clammy wild chickweod \*).  
  
Gouiria procenbn (chcksberr),prevaling everywhers in  
‘woods along tanks of ven.  
  
‘Sara media ® (common chickweot), Bangor.  
  
hiognes spa (creeping enowbery), very common in woods  
Gita maculata (water hemlock).  
  
Gieta bibifra (bulb-beaing waterhomlock), Penobeoot and  
Chersacook shore, 1053.  
  
Gatien riftdum (onal bestow), common.  
  
Gaiam Aporine (cleaver), Chasuncok, 1858.  
  
Galiam, one kind on Piso Stream, 1858.  
  
Triflium pratense (re-clover) on carton, Be.  
  
‘Actes pz, vat. ala (white coborh), Chesuncnok woods 1883,  
‘od East Branch 1853.  
  
‘Actaa yar. rir (red cohosh), East Branch 1887.  
  
Vaccinivm viteidea (cow-bery), Kenda, very abundant.  
Corus Conadenia (Aartcorel), in woods. Chesuncook 18533  
ust ipo at Kineo Jaly 4, 1857, common alin bloom, Moose.  
iad carry September 16,1859.  
  
‘Medata. Virginica (Indian cacumbersoot), West Branch and  
‘Chemancook woods.  
  
‘Daldarde repens (Dalibarda), Moosehead carry and after, com-  
ron. In fower sill, Angus 1, 1857.  
  
‘Trazacum densleis (common dandction), Smith's 1858, only  
‘here. Ib i208 foriga  
  
‘Dierla tifa (ahs honeysuckle), very commen.  
  
‘Rumer hydolepathun ? (great watet-dock), in 1857; noticed it  
ves large seeded in 1858, common.  
  
‘Ramer erigpst (curled dock), West Branch 1888,

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‘APPENDIX. 317  
  
Apocyvam cannabinem (Indian hemp), Kine, Bralfrd, and ast  
Branch 1857, t Whewtone Fall  
  
“Aporynen cndonanifliam (spreading dogbane),Kineo, Brad.  
  
‘Clintonia torealis (Clintonia), all over woods ; fruit just ripening  
aly 25,1857.  
  
“A Jonna (duckweed), Pusha 1857.  
  
‘Bloda Viynin (mara St Joha'e-wor), Moosshead 1853,  
  
“Epiobm anguatiflom (great willow heb), great fel on barat  
lands; some wha at Websar Steam,  
  
Epilobium coloratum (purple-veined willow-herb), once in 1857.  
  
Eepatrium perpercem (Jor-Pyeweed), Hero, Moonhead, and  
CCherancook lakeshore, common.  
  
“Alin (onion), new kind to mein Bloom, witout balbs shore,  
on rocks near Whetstone Fala? East Branch.  
  
‘Hllenia deflera (sparred gentian), carries on Kast Branch, come  
  
Geranium Robertianum (Herb Robert).  
  
‘Siidagolancedata (bushy go\den-ol), very common.  
  
‘Seidage oe ofthe tree bbe in Doh years.  
  
‘Solidog grades (arge mountain golden-od}, one on Wobetor  
Steam.  
  
‘Solidago squarroea (large-epiked golden-rod), the most common  
on East Branch.  
  
‘Silidage atatna (oagh hairy golden-0d), not uncommon both  
yan.  
  
‘Cpe rifia (three eared goldthren).  
  
‘Shida hrbacen (carion ower), not ancommon both years  
  
‘Spina tomentna (bardback), Bangor.  
  
Campanula rotundifolia (harebell), cliffs Kineo, Grand Lake, &e.  
  
Hiwacin (uawk-weed), not uncommon.  
  
Veratrum srde (American white belebore)-  
  
geopus Virginie (baglo-weed), 1887.  
  
gepus Exropas (waterborebonnd), var. sina, Heron Lake  
shore.  
  
Chenopodium allan (lamb'e-quarter), Smith's  
  
Metha Canadensis (wil int), very common.  
  
Gaps rah (ommon bemp-ntle), Olarmon Tle banda,  
and below, in prime August 8, 1857.  
  
‘Howson carla (aes), now Oldeladia (Gray, 2d.) 1887

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818, APPENDIX.  
  
Hydrocetyle Amerieana (marsh penoywort), common.  
Eipericin llpticon (elipticalieaved St. John's-wort), com-  
Hypericum matilum (omall St John's wort), both years, common.  
Hypericum Canadense (Canadian St Joht’e-wort), Moosehead  
  
Lake and Chesuneook shore, 1858.  
  
Trienais Americana (star-fower), Pins Stream, 1853.  
  
Tobia inflata (Indian tobacco).  
  
‘Sprache comune (Iadis’ tenes), Kineo and after.  
‘Nabalus(ratdesnake root), 1887 ;aléusimus (tall white lettuce),  
  
‘Chesancook woods, 1859.  
  
Antenoaria margaritacea (pearly everasting), common, Moose-  
head, Smiths, be  
‘Lilium Canadense (wild yellow Wily), very common and lange,  
  
‘West and Kast Branch ; one on East Branch, 1857, with strongly  
  
revolute petals and eaves perfectly smooth beneath, but not larger  
  
than the last, and apparently only a variety.  
inne borealis (Linnea), almost everywhere in woods.  
  
‘lela Dortmana (waterlobelia), pond in Bcksport.  
Lysinachia ciliata (bairy-stalked locate), very common, Che-  
  
ssancook shore and East Branch.  
  
Zysinachia stricta (upright losestrfe), very common.  
Bicroxtylis ephiogloaoides (ader’s mouth), Kineo.  
  
‘Spirca saliciflia (common mesdow-sweet), common.  
  
‘Mimulu ringens (monkey flower), common, lakehores, Be.  
‘Seullaria golercuata(ekalleap), very common.  
  
‘Scutllaria lterifora (mad-dog.skulloap), Heron Lake, 1887,  
  
‘Chesuncook, 1883.  
  
‘Platantherapaycodes (small parplestinged orcis), very common,  
  
East Branch and Cheruncook, 1855.  
  
‘Platentherafimbrata (large parple-Stiogedorchit), very common,  
  
‘West Branch and Umbazookskus, 1887.  
  
Patasthera orbicwata (large roand-leaved orchis), very common  
  
{in woods, Moosehead and Chamberlain earls, Caucomgomee, bo.  
Amphicarpea monoont (hog pent).  
  
Aral racenoea(spikenard), common, Moosehead eqrry, Telos  
  
Lake, fe, and aPar; oat about August 1, 1857.  
  
‘Plantago major (common plantain), common in open land at  
  
‘Smiths in 1888.

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APPENDIX. 819  
  
Pontedera codata® (pickerelwoed), only near Oldtown, 1887.  
  
Poaneycton (pond-weed), not common.  
  
Potentila tridentata (moubtain cinquefol), Kine.  
  
Poerilla Norogice (cinquetil), Heron Lake shore and Smith's,  
  
Polygonum amphibian (waterpersicaria), var oguaticum, Second  
Lake.  
  
‘Polygonum Persicaria (lady's thamb), log path Chesuncook, 1853.  
  
‘Niphar adeena (yellow pond-iy), not abundant.  
  
‘Nymphaea edoraua (smoot watery), afew in West Branch, 1853.  
  
‘Palggonum hydropiper(emartweed),log-path, Chesancook.  
  
Pyrola scunda (Onesided pyrola), very common, Cancomgomoe.  
  
‘Pyrola elliption{shi-eaf), Cancomgomoe River.  
  
Ramanexles Flanmula (spearwor, var. repans).  
  
Fanuscales receutus (hooked crowfoot), Umbasookska land-  
Ing, be.  
  
Typha latifolia (common eattail or reed-mace), extremely  
sbundant between Bangor and Portland.  
  
Sanicula Marylandica (black snaker00t), Moosehead carry and  
afer.  
  
Aralia wudicauls (wild saruparila),  
  
Capeala burs pastors (ehepherd’s-pare), Smith's, 1853,  
  
Provdllavugare (seltheal), very common everywhere.  
  
Freche hieaciflia (Sreweed), 1887, and Smith's open land,  
18s,  
  
‘Sarracenia purpurea (pitcherplant), Mud Pond wwamp.  
  
Snilacina bia (Fulse Solomon'eseal), 1887, and. Chesancook  
woods, 1853.  
  
‘Smilacina racemosa (false spikenard), Umbazookekue carry  
(aly 27, 1853).  
  
Veronica setllata (marsh speedvwell).  
  
Sperula arvensis (corn sparrey), 1857, not uncommon, 1853,  
Moosshead and Smith's.  
  
Fragaria(stranberry), 1888 Smiths, 1887 Bucksport.  
  
Thalitrum Cormati(meadow-rue), very common, especially along  
rivers, all, and conspicuously in bloom in July, 1897.  
  
Cirsium arcene (Canada thistle), abundant at camps and high-  
‘way sides in tho north of Maine.  
  
Cirsium maticum (swamp-tistl), well n bloom Webster Steam,  
Anguat 31.

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820 APPENDIX.  
  
‘Runes coda (sheepsore!), common by Hive and log paths,  
1 Cherancooklog-puch.  
  
Inpatio fea (opti touch m0-not)  
  
Trin eyhrecarpam (painted liam), common West Branch  
snd Moosehead cary.  
  
Verbena Kstata (bl verrin).  
  
Clnate Virgniana (common virgin’sbower), common on iver  
banks, feathered in September, 1885 in bloom Jaly, 187.  
  
Lescanhense vars (whitemed).  
  
‘Sim nar (water paruip, 165, and Chesencook shoe, 1853,  
  
Aches milion (common yarrow), by river and lg-paths,  
od Sid's.  
  
‘Demadiam Casadoue (Canadian tck-treil), not uncommon.  
  
Oraliscedeela (common wood-ora) tll out Jaly 25,1855,  
‘1 Moosehead carry and after  
  
‘Ocal sri (yellow wood sorrel) 1888, t Sih’ and his wood  
pas.  
  
Lipars fia (omay Ande), Kineo, Bradford  
  
‘Godaria grandiflora (argeowered bllwort), woods, common.  
  
edaria sala (el eavedbeliort Chrancook woods,  
1258.  
  
Taal, 45.  
  
   
  
   
  
4 Oz Lowsn Ozpzn.  
  
Skirpus Eriqphorum (wool-grass), very common, cepecially om  
low islands. A coarse gras, four or ie fot high, along the rive.  
‘Phileam protese (bers grass) on carves, at campe and clearings,  
Equscton syleatcum (sylvatic horse‘al),  
Pues aguiina (brake), Kineo and after.  
Onocea aes (eensitve ern), very common slong the rivet  
tides; some on the gravelly shore of Heron Lake Island.  
‘Palypodim Drypteris (brie polypody).  
Weodsia Teens (asty Woodsa), Kineo.  
Lycopediam lucidalem (toothed club-moss).  
‘Umea (x parmeliaceous lichen), common on various trees.

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APPENDIX. 921  
  
IV. LIST OF BIRDS  
  
wae I suw mx Mana aerwaex Jour 2% ap Avover  
8, 1857.  
  
Avery small hawk at Great Falls, on Wobstor Stream.  
“Heliatus lecoophals (white beaded or bald-eagle), at Regma,  
‘and above and below Hants, and on pond below Mattawamkeag.  
Pandion hatiatua (Sabchawk or osprey), head, also seen on Eat  
Branch,  
  
‘Babo Viryinianas (cat-oml), near Camp Inland, aleo above mouth  
‘of Schoons, from a stamp back and forth, also near Hunt's on  
tree,  
  
Teterus phaniass(rod-winged blackbird), Umbazookakas River.  
  
(Corous Americanus (American crow), a fow,as at outlet of Grand  
“Lake; 1 pecalisr wing.  
  
‘Fringila Canadensis (ree-eparrow), think T saw one on Mount  
ineo aly 24, which bebaved as if it had a nest there.  
  
Garradu erittus (blue).  
  
‘Paras aricapilus (chicadee), a few.  
  
Maucipa tyrannus (king bird).  
  
Buxcicapa Cooperié(olivesided fy-eatcher), everywhere a pre-  
‘alling bird.  
  
Muucicapa virens (wood powes), Moosehead, and T think be  
youd.  
  
‘Maacioapa rtcila (American redstart), Moosehead.  
  
Vireo oliaceus(red-eyod vireo), everywhere common.  
  
Tarde migraorae(red-breasted robin), some everywhere.  
  
‘Turdue melodus (wood-thrash), common in ll the woods.  
  
‘Tordua Wisoni (Wiloa's thrash), Moosehead and beyond.  
  
‘Turdusaurocapills (golden-crowned thrash or oven-bird), Moose:  
head.  
  
‘Fringila abies (whit throated sparrow), Kinco and after, ap-  
parently nesting; the provalling bird erly and laa,  
  
Fringilla melodia (so0g-sparro™), at Moosehead or beyond.  
  
‘Splia pimus (pine warbler), one part of voyage.  
  
‘Muscicapa acadioa (eoall powee, common.  
  
‘Triskas Marylandion (Maryland yellow-throat), everywhere.  
  
Coccyeus Amerizama? (yellow-billed enckoo), common.  
  
Me u

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22 APPENDIX.  
  
icus ehcp (e-beadod woodpecker), heard and sm,  
and good et  
  
‘Sitta Carokinensis ? (white-breasted American nuthatch), heard.  
  
“Alero ayn (led inghber), very commen.  
  
Caprinlpn dmeraras (uigh-bavi)-  
  
Taro wnble(prcge), Moosehead cary,  
  
‘Tetrao cupido (pinnated grouse), Webster Stream,  
  
“Ards cara (Siae heron, lower par of Pevobuet.  
  
“Teane nacsariu (opted sandpipar or pees) ererywhere,  
  
Larus rgoatus? (herring gal), Heron Take of rocks, and  
CCoamberin. Smaller gull on Seznnd Tako.  
  
“Anat our (sky o Back dnc), once in East Branch  
  
“Anos sonea (rer or wood ck), everywhere.  
  
Pipa abd (prt Gack oF dipper), common.  
  
Gynt lcs great Northern diver o loon), l the ake,  
A srllow; the nightwarbler$ once or tric.  
  
‘Mapas Merganser (burested merganser 0 sheldraks),com-  
non on lakes and ie.  
  
‘V. QUADRUPEDS.  
  
A bat on West Branch; beaver skull at Grand Lake; Mr.  
‘Thatcher ato beaver with moose on the Cancomgomoe. A musk-  
at on the last stream ; the red aqairrel is common in the depths  
‘of the woods; « dead porcupine on Chamberlain road; a cow  
‘mioote and tracks of calf; skin ofa bear, just Killed,  
  
   
  
‘VL OUTFIT FOR AN EXCURSION.  
  
‘The following willbe « good ont for one who wishes to make  
‘an oxcursion of fwaloe days into the Bane woods in July, with a  
companion, and one Indian forthe same purposes tha Idi  
‘Wear,—n check shirt, stout old shoes, thick socks, a neck rib-  
bon, thick waistcoat, thick pants, old Rostuth hat, lien sack,  
Carry, —in an India-rabber knapsack, with a large ap, two

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‘APPENDIX. 323  
  
shirts (check), one pair thick socks, one pair drawers, one flannel  
shirt, two pocket hendkerchel, alight India-rubber coat ora thick  
woollen one, two botoms and collar to go and come with, one  
nepkin, pins, needles, thread, one blanket, beat gray, seven fet  
long.  
  
‘Tent, — sx by seven fet, and fou fst high in middle, wll 40;  
veil and gloves and insect-wash, of better, mosqulto-bars to cover  
all at night; bat pocker-map, and perhaps description ofthe route  
compass; plane-book and red blotting-paper; paper and stamps,  
Dotany, small pocket apy.glass for birds, pocket microscope, tape-  
measnr insect boxes,  
  
‘Azo, fll size if possible, jackkife, chines, two only apiece,  
with 1 few hooks and corks ready, and with pork for bait in a  
packet, rigged ; matches (some also in a small vial in the waist-  
oat pocket); somp, two pieces; large knife and fron spoon (or  
all); threo or four old newspapers, much twine, and several rage  
for dishcloth; twenty fet of strong cord, foar-quart tin pail for  
‘kote, two ta dippers, thre tn plates, a fey-pan.  
  
Provisions. — Soft hardbread, twenty-eight poands; pork, six-  
teen pounds; sugar, twelre pounds ; one pound black tea or three  
‘pounds coffee, one box or pint of eat, one quart Indian meal, to  
fry fish in; six lemons, good to correct the pork and warm water;  
perhaps two or three pounds of rice, for variety. You will prob-  
ably get some berries fish, &, beside.  
  
‘A gan is not worth the carviage, unless you go as hunters. ‘The  
‘ork should be in an open keg, sawed to fit; the sugar, tn oF cof-  
fe, meal, salt, &e, should be put in eeparuto watertight India-  
rubber bags, tod with a leather string and all the provisions, and  
part of tho ret of the bageage, put into two large Tndia-rabber  
bags, which have been proved to bo watertight and darable, Ex-  
pense of preceding out is twenty-four dollars,  
  
‘An Indian may be hired for about one dollar and Sty cents per  
ay, and pechaps fifty cents a week for his canoe (this depends on  
‘the demand). The canoe should bo a strong and tight one, This  
expense willbe nineteen dollars.  
  
Sach an excursion need not cost more than twenty-five dollars  
saploce, starting at the foot of Mooschead, if you already possoss  
for can borrow a reasonable part ofthe outft. IF yon take an In-  
dian and canoe at Oldtown, i wil cot seven or eight dollars more  
to transport them tothe lake.

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324 APPENDIX.  
  
‘VIL A LIST OF INDIAN WoRDS.  
  
1, Kota, sid to mean Hight Land, Palo pos for Mt Pona-  
dn; for Gra iar ips, Kitadaigan (Poser)  
Mattawamkeag, place where two rivers meet. (Indian of carry.)  
(>. Willameons History of Maine ad Wills)  
  
‘Metin  
  
Bene rock.  
  
‘alnemack; ober nae, Shad Pond.  
  
‘Nipaqucohoeras, woodcock.  
‘Stucone, Kingfaber, Hae itnot tho pl. termination  
uh ere or ak? Joe.  
Wasm, bas, cous. Bale  
  
Lanz, Yndanederil.  
  
Upati, mocnianat.  
  
Ma, (iit called, or doon i moan, woodeater) mow, Rae,  
Kaahdinawpuh, wid to wean moasainssbout Kuade,  
Brena, eecrshery. tiny tr, a ag,  
Bale  
  
"iii «Mo wing ens, Zi, a  
paintore exntre” Bale.  
  
‘Sdamoat, Largebay Laks, Peyote ; ad or for pl  
ral, lac or @ang. Bale. Sutin oe da of  
toe, Bale. Mipone, lange waver. Poin  
  
‘Seago and See, lange open wate.  
  
Chenacot, place where many streams empty In. (¥-)  
Willis and Poter)  
Cmongamer, Gl Take (Ctgos, tn ak; me |  
‘comgomoe-took, the river, Polis.)  
‘Pannadumeso.  
Kenduaiey, it Bel River. (r. Wiis)  
‘Peeleet Rocky River,” Poapediow,ebone. case fa  
Springer)  
4 meadow stream. (Machmendow siver,  
Rolin)  
  
‘Milisocket, pace of Ilands.  
‘Sounewnk, that rans between Mountains,  
  
Abcljacarmepus, Smooth-ledge Falls and Dead-watar.  
  
Mo.  
ae

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APPENDIX. 895  
  
Atoljacarmeguscook, the river there.  
  
Muskiticook, Dead Stream. (Indian of carry.) Meakikow, or  
Mesto plne whar ther is grass, (Bal) Maabdtiond,  
Dead water,” (on)  
  
‘Mctalumbaoy, Sendereck Pond. pe  
  
Piscataquis, branch of « river. ms  
  
‘Shemaiy shades,  
  
‘Neanetin,pstweet. frm  
  
Mediu, oo.  
  
Orignal, Moosehead Lake. (Montresor.)  
  
‘Chor-chorque, usnen,  
  
‘Aaddagquamccum, woods.  
  
Bematruichtik, high land generally. (Mt. Pemadend, } Polls,  
Rata)  
  
‘open brk of vd ose, Taian taoen.  
  
Kineo, flint (Williamson; old Indian hunter). (Hodge.)  
  
Artoasoqu’, phosphorescence.  
  
‘Seekeondark whit aprace  
  
‘Skt, ack space  
  
‘Balak, te "Lobster Take” of maps  
  
‘Batol ssh the dend water below the lad.  
  
Payyeich, Burs-Gronod Stream, what Joo called Ft  
  
‘Nonlagys, tbo name of dead-vater between the lst  
0d Pio Sram.  
  
Karsaootuk, Black River (or Pine Stream). Mkazéow-  
fhe, lack.” Bale,  
  
‘Michigan, fre, Bli ppled ito a sucker of poor,  
g0odfornothing Gah. lane (1) mitgon, Rale. (Picker  
ing pate theater th fst word.)  
  
Cowomedagosar, Chiogenes hispidula, means, grows where  
nee hare rowed.  
  
‘Nelunabschzok (or quotk), (or seek), Dead water,  
and applied to the mountains ner,  
  
Apmorjeuamoo, lak that is crosnd.  
  
‘Allegash, berlock-bark. (. Willi.)  
  
Poytayeeongomec, Brot Ground Lake, Teo,

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836 “APPENDIX.  
  
Madunkshunk, Heightof and Stream (Webster Stream).  
‘Madunkehunk-ganooe, Height ofland Lake.  
‘Matunganooc, Grand Lake.  
  
Uncardaerhese, Trout Stream.  
  
Wsalaguoik (or cook), Salmon River, Kast Branch.  
(v. Wills)  
  
‘Penoynensk, Amelanchier berries, “ Penousinin, nak,  
Mack frie” Bale” Has it not hiro the’ plaral end.  
ing!  
  
‘Shepne, Lilium Canadese bulbs.“ Sipen, nak, white,  
lager than pa” Rale.  
  
‘Peyigunbiss,Peticont (where a small river comes into  
‘he Penobscot below Nickatow).  
  
‘Borntus lakoliko reach in the Penobecot  
  
‘Pastadunteag, “where the water falla into the Penobscot above  
the falls.” (Wilismson.) Paisidottiont  
  
   
   
  
‘Snhase, “Bee canoe come oat; ho seo em stream.” (Polis)  
‘The mou ofa river, acording 1 Ral, is Suipledaeyne, ‘The  
place whore one stream empties nto another, thus is saitaiou,  
(Witla)  
  
“Tonkegon Br (at Mooschoad). “atch tenahigan”” ale.  
pa \* Mena or Nt or fc  
  
2, From Wraxsaa Writs, on tho Language of the Aboaquics,  
‘Maine Hist. Coll, Vol. IV.  
  
Allajaomepu (river near Ktaadn).  
‘item (name of a pond and sachem),  
  
“Apmogenegamook (one of lak  
  
   
  
Trapua (a bak camp). Sockbasn, « Penobscot, tld him,  
‘The Indians gave this name to tho lake from the fact of their  
oping a hnting-camp there”  
  
“Banenecergamock,  
  
head of Allagash, Cross Lake, (Sock-

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APPENDIX. oT  
  
Coseongamock (a lake).  
  
Beene, mountains that have plums on them. (Sockbasin.)  
  
‘Kioadn. Sockbusin pronounces this Ke-tah-din, and seid it  
‘meant “lange mountain oF large thing.”  
  
‘Kenduskeag (tho place of Eels).  
  
Kineo (Bint), mountain on the border, Be.  
  
Maawanteag, a river with a smooth gravelly botiom. (Sock?  
basin.)  
  
Metanawecok.  
  
Milinokt, «nko with many islands init. (Bockbasin.)  
  
Matakeank (river). .  
  
‘Mobenkus (river).  
  
Nickxiow, Neccotoh, where two streams meet (“Forks of the  
Penobscot”).  
  
‘Negas (Indian village on the Kenduskeag).  
  
(Orignal (Montresor’s name for Mooscheal Lake).  
  
Pongvonganoot, Allagesh, name of « Mohawk Indian killed  
there. (Sockbasin.)  
  
Pac, Peashns, French Peay, 8a  
  
Pougoheaken (Heron Laks).  
  
‘Penaduncook (oko). . c  
  
Possadumleag, where water goos into tho°river above falls.  
(Williamson.)  
  
ipagenue (iver).  
  
‘Sunkhaze (river), Dead water,  
  
‘Souneunt.  
  
   
  
‘Sclomonk. Gockbasin says thie word means “the shape of a  
Moose’s head, and was given to the lake,” &e, Howard says  
iforenly.  
  
‘Sdbooi,a brook, a small iver, (Sockbasin.)  
  
‘Sibeo (river).  
  
‘Seago (great wate).  
  
‘Tabor (lake)  
  
“Telasiis (lake).  
  
Unbagog (lake), doubled up; vo called from its form. (Sock  
basin)  
  
Tnbasookakus (lake).  
  
Wamatipwoit, « mountain river. (Sockbasin.)

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828 ‘APPENDIX.  
  
Tadge O. B. Potter of Manchester, New Hampshire, adds ta  
Noater, 1855:  
  
 Chenncok. ‘This formed rom Chunk, ot Shun (25086),  
tnd Aute (a place), and means Tho Goote Pace.’ Chest, of  
Shunk, isthe sound mado by the wild geese when fying.”  
  
‘Kiaadn, This is doubee « correption of Kas (high), and  
Aue (a plac).  
  
‘Povlot, Peps (ton, rock-pacs), and Auk (pace)  
  
‘Swezok, Goote pace, Schun-ake.  
  
‘Tho Judge soy that echt means to rash, and hence schadic  
from Wis and uk (a place whore water ruses), and that sloon  
‘meant the same; and Sat dh Marblabead peopl and others havo  
derived tho words soon and woot from the Indians, and henco  
schooner; refers to « Mr. Chain,  
  
   
  
(Camisiige? Seotyped aad Pinte by Welch, Bigelow, & Ca

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MR. THOREAU’S WRITINGS.  
  
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Lyol 16me,  
  
A Week on the Concord and Merrimack|  
. Rivers.  
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Excursions.  
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The Maine Woods,  
  
Lol. 16mo.  
  
TICKNOR AND FIELDS, Publishers.

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EXCURSIONS.  
  
HENRY D. THOREAU.  
  
Avrion oF “WALDEX!” AND ‘4 WEEE O THE CONCORD AND  
  
BOSTON: -  
  
TICKNOR AND FIELDS.  
1864.

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e  
  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
BY BW. EMERSON.  
  
Flexey Davin Tuonesv was the last male de-  
sochdant of a French ancestor who came to this coun-  
try from the Isle of Guernsey. His character exhibited  
‘cecasional traits drawn from this blood in singular com-  
bination with a very strong Sexon genius.  
  
He was born in Concord, Massachusetts, on the 12th  
of July, 1817. He was graduated at Harvard Collego  
in 1887, but without any literary distinction. Aw icon-  
cclast in literéture, he seldom thanked colleges for their  
service to him, holding them in small esteem, whilst yet  
his debt to them was important. After leaving the  
University, he joined his brother in teaching a private  
school, which he soon renounced. His father was a  
manufacturer of lead-pencils, and Henry applied him-  
self for a time to this craft, belibving he could make a  
better pencil than was then in use. After completing  
his experiments, he exhibited his work to chemists and  
artiste in Boston, and having obtained their certificates  
to its excellence and to its equality with the best Lon-  
don manufacture, he returned home contented. His  
fiends congratulated him that he had now opened his  
‘way to fortune. But he replied, that he should never

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8 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
make another pencil. Why should I? I would not  
do again what J have done once.” He resumed his  
endless walks aid miscellaneous studies, making every  
day some new acquaintance with Nature, though a8 yet  
never speaking of zodlogy or botany, since, though very  
studious of natural facts, he was incurious of technical  
‘and textual science.  
  
‘At this time, a strong, healthy youth, fresh from col  
lege, whilst all his companions were choosing their fro-  
fession, or eager to begin some Iuerative employment, it  
‘was inevitable thet his thoughts should be exercised“on  
theesame question, and it required rare decision to refuse  
all the accustomed paths, and keep his solitary freedom  
at the cost of disappointing the natural expectations of  
hhis family and friends: all the more difficult that he  
hhad a perfect probity, was exact in securing his own  
indepgmdence, and in holding every man to the like  
duty. But Thoreau never faltered. He was a bom  
protestant. He declined to give up his large ambition  
of knowledge ana action for any narrow eraft or profes  
sion, aiming at a much more comprehensive calling, the  
art of living well. If he slighted and defied the opin-  
fons of others, it was only that he was more intent to  
reconcile his practice-with hi8 own belief. Never idle  
or self-indulgent, he preferred, when he wanted money,  
earning it by some pieco of manual Iabor agreeable to  
him, a8 building a boat or a fence, planting, grafting,  
surveying, or other short work, to any long engage-  
ments. With his handy babits and few wants his skill  
4n wood-craft, and his powerful arithmetic, he was very  
‘competent to live in any part of the world. It would

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 9  
  
‘ost him less time to supply his wants than another.  
He was therefore secure of his leisure.  
  
‘A natural skill for mensuration, growing out of  
mathematical knowledge, and his habit of ascertaining  
the measures and distances of objects which interested  
him, the size of trees, the depth and extent of ponds  
and rivers, the height of mountains, and the air-line  
distance of his favorite summits, — this, and his inti  
mate knowledge of the territory about Concord, made  
hhim drift into the profession of Iand-surveyor. It had  
‘the advantage for him that it led him continually into  
new and secluded grounds, and helped his studies of  
‘Nature. His accuracy and skill in this work were  
readily appreciated, and be found all the employment  
he wanted.  
  
He could easily solve the problems of the surveyor,  
but he was daily beset with graver questions, which he  
‘manfully confronted. He interrogated every custom,  
  
1d wished to settle all his practice on an ideal founda-  
tion. He was a protestant & Zouérance, and few lives  
contain so many renunciations. He was bred to no  
profession; he never married ; he lived alone; he never  
‘went to church ; he never voted; he refused to pay a  
tax to the State; he ate no flesh, he drank no wine, be  
never knew the use of tobacco ; and, though a natural-  
iat, he used neither trap nor gun. He chose, wisely, no  
doubt, for himself, to be the bachelor of thought and  
Nature. He had no talent for wealth, and knew how  
to be poor without the least hint of squalor or incle-  
gance. Perhaps be fell into his way of living without  
forecasting it much, but approved it with later wisdom,

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10 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
«Tam often reminded,” he wrote in his journal, “that,  
if I had bestowed on me the wealth of Crassus, my  
‘aims must be still the same, and my means essentially  
‘the same.” He had no temptations to fight against, —  
ro appetites, no passions, no taste for elegant trifles. A  
fine house, dress, the manners and talk of highly culti-  
vated people were all thrown away on him. He much  
preferred a good Indian, and considered these refine-  
‘ments as impediments to conversation, wishing to meet  
his companion on the simplest terms. He declined invi-  
tations to dinnor-parties, because there each was in every  
one’s way, and he could not meet the individuals to any  
purpose. “They make their pride,” he said, “in mak-  
ing their disiner cost much ; I make my pride in making  
amy dinner cost little” When asked at table what dish  
he preferred, he answered, “The nearest.” He did not  
like the taste of wine, and never had a vieo in his life,  
He said, —“I have a faint recollection of pleasure  
derived from smoking dried lily-stems, before I was a  
man. I hed commonly a supply of these. T have  
never smoked anything more noxious.”  
  
He chose to be rich by making his wants few, and  
supplying them himself. In his travels, he used the  
railroad only to get over 80 much country as was unim-  
portant to the present purpose, walking hundreds of  
miles, avoiding taverns, buying a lodging in farmers’  
and fishermen's houses, as cheaper, and more agreeable  
to him, and because there he could better find the men  
‘and the information he wanted.  
  
‘There was somewhat military in his nature not to be  
subdued, always manly and able, but rarely tender, as

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. i  
  
   
  
if he did not fecl himself except in opposition. He  
‘wanted a fallacy to expose, a blunder to pillory, I may  
say required a little sense of victory, a roll of the drum,  
to.call his powers into full exercise, It cost him noth-  
ing to say No; indeed, he found it much easier than to  
say Yes. Tt seemed as if his first instinct on hearing a  
proposition was to controvert jt, so impatient was he  
of the limitations of our daily thought. This habit, of  
‘course, is a little chilling to the social affections ; and  
though the companion would in the end acquit him of  
‘any malice or untruth, yet it mars conversation Hence,  
xno equal companion stood in affectionate relations with  
fone s0 pure and guileless. “I love Henry,” said one  
of his friends, “but I cannot like him; and 4s for taking  
hhis arm, I should as soon think of taking the arm of gn  
elm-tree.”  
  
Yet, hermit and stoic as he was, he was really fond  
of sympathy, and threw himself heartily and childlike  
{nto the company of young people whom he loved, and  
whom he delighted to entertain, as he only could, with  
the varied and endless ancedotes of his experiences by  
ficld and river. And he was always ready to lead a  
hhuckleberry party or a search for chestnuts or grapes.  
‘Talking, one day, of a public discourse, Henry remarked,  
that whatever succeeded with the audience was bad. I  
said, “ Who would not like to write something which alll  
cean read, like ‘Robinson Crusoe’? and who does not  
seo with regret that his page is not solid with a  
materialistic treatment, which delights everybody ?”  
Henry objected, of course, and vaunted the better leo-  
tures which reached only a few persons. But, at sup-

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12 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
per, a young gitl, understanding that be was to lecture  
at the Lyceum, sharply aaked him, “ whether his lecture  
‘would be a nice, interesting story, such as she wished to  
hear, or whether it was one of those old philosophical  
things that she did not care about.” Henry turned to  
her, and bethought himself, and, I saw, was trying to  
believe that he had matter that might fit her and her  
brother, who were to sit up and go to the lecture, if it  
‘was a good one for them.  
  
He was « speaker and actor of the truth, — born  
such, —and was ever running into dramatic situations  
from this cause. In any circumstance, it interested all  
bystanders to know what part Henry would take, and  
what he would say; and he did not disappoint expec  
tation, but used an original judgment on each emer-  
gency. In 1845 he built himself a small framed house  
‘on the shores of Walden Pond, and lived there two  
years alone, a life of Inbor and study. This action was  
‘quite native and fit for him. No one who knew him  
‘would tax him with affectation. He was more unlike  
his neighbors in his thought than in his action, As soon  
fs he had exhausted the advantages of that solitude, he  
abandoned it. In 1847, not approving some uses to  
which the public expenditure was applied, he refused to  
pay his town tax, and was put in jail. A friend paid  
the tax for him, and he was released. ‘The like annoy-  
ance was threatened the next year. But, as his friends  
paid the tax, notwithstanding his protest, I believe he  
ceased to resist, No opposition or ridicule had any  
‘weight with him. He coldly and fully stated his opinion  
without affecting to believe that it was the opinion of

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 13  
  
the company. It was of no consequence, if every one  
present held the opposite opinion. On one occasion he  
‘went to the University Library to procure some books.  
‘The librarian refused to lend them. Mr. ‘Thoreau re-  
paired to the President, who stated to him the rules and  
usages, which permitted the loan of books to resident  
graduates, to clergymen who were alumni, and to some  
others resident within a circle of ten miles’ radius from  
the College. Mr. Thoreau explained to the President  
‘tat the railroad had destroyed the old scale of distances,  
—that the library was useless, yes, and President and  
College useless, on the terms of his rules,—that the  
‘one benefit he owed to the College was its library,—  
that, at this moment, not only his want of books was  
imperative, but be wanted a large number of books, and  
assured him that he, Thoreau, and not the librarian,  
‘was the proper custodian of these. In short, the Presic  
dent found the petitioner so formidable, and the ules  
getting to look 20 ridiculous, that he ended by giving  
him a privilege which in his hands proved unlimited  
thereafter.  
  
‘No truer American existed than Thoreau. His pref  
‘erence of his country and: condition was genuine, and  
his aversation from English and European manners  
and tastes almost reached contempt. He listened im-  
patiently to news or bon mots gleaned from London  
circles ; and though he tried to be civil, these anecdotes  
fatigued him. ‘The men were all imitating each other,  
and on a small mould, Why can they not live as far  
‘apart as possible, and each be aman by himself? What.-  
he sought was the most energetic nature; and he wished

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uw BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
to go to-Oregon, not to London. “In every part of  
Great Britain,” he wrote in his diary, “are discovered  
traces of the Romans, their funereal urns, their camps,  
their roads, their dwellings. But New England, at  
least, is not based on any Roman ruins. We have not  
to lay the foundations of our houses on the ashes of a  
former civilization.”  
  
But, idealist as he was, standing for abolition of sla-  
vory, abolition of tariff, almost for abolition of govern-  
ment, it is needless to say he found himself not only un~  
represented in actual politics, but almost equally opposed  
to every class of reformers. Yet he paid the tribute  
of hfs uniform respect to the Anti-Slavery Party. One  
‘man, whose personal acquaintance he hed formed, he  
honored with exceptional regard. Before the first  
friendly word had been spoken for Captain John  
Brown, after the arrest, he sent notices to most houses  
in Concord, that he would speak in a public hall on  
the condition and character of John Brown, on Sunday  
‘evening, and invited all people to come. ‘The Repub-  
ican Committee, the Abolitionist Committee, sent him  
word that it was premature and not advisable. He  
replied,—“I did not send to you for advice, but to  
announce’ that Tam to speak.” The hall was filled at  
an early hour by people of all parties, and his earnest  
eulogy of the hero was heard by all respectfully, by  
many with a sympathy that surprised themselves.  
  
Tt was said of Plotinus that he was ashamed of his  
body, and "tis very likely he had good reason for i,  
‘that his body was a bad servant, and he had not skill in  
dealing with the material world, as happens often to

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 15  
  
‘men of abstfact intellect, But Mr. ‘Thoreau was  
equipped with a most adapted and serviceable body.  
He was of short stature, firmly built, of light com-  
plexion, with strong, serious blue eyes, and a grave  
aspect, —his face covered in the Inte years with a be-  
coming beard. His senses were acute, his frame well-  
knit and hardy, his hands strong and skilful in the use  
of tools. And there was a wonderful fitness of body  
and mind. He could pace sixteen rods more accurately  
than another man could measure them with rod and  
chain. He could find his path in the woods at night,  
hie aaid, better by his fect than his eyes. He could esti  
mate the measure of a tree very well by his eyes; he  
could estimate the weight of a calf or a pig, ike a dealer.  
‘From a box containing a bushel or more of loose pen-  
cil, he could take up with his hands fast enough just a  
dozen pencils at every grasp. He was a good swimmer,  
runner, skater, boatman, and would probably outwalk.  
‘most countrymen in a day's journey. And the relation  
‘of body to mind was still finer than we have indicated.  
He said he wanted every stride his legs made. ‘The  
length of his walk uniformly made the length of his  
writing. If shut up in the house, he did not write at all.  
  
‘He had a strong common sense, like that which Rove  
Flammock, the weaver’s danghter, in Scott’s romance,  
commends in her father, as resembling a yandatick,  
which, whilst it measures dowlas and diaper, ean equally  
‘well measure tapestry and cloth of gold. He had always  
anew resource. When I was planting forest-rees, and,  
hhad procured half a peck of acorns, he said that only a  
‘snall portion of them would be sound, and proceeded

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16 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
to examine thiem, and select the sound ohes. But find-  
ing this took time, he said, “T think, if you put them all  
into water, the good ones will sink ;” which experiment  
wwe tried with success. He could plan a garden, or a  
hhouse, or a barn; would have been competent to lead a  
«Pacific Exploring Expedition”; could give judicious  
‘counsel in the gravest private or public affair.  
  
‘He lived for the day, not eumbered and mortified by  
hhis memory. If he brought you yesterday a new propo-  
sition, he would bring you to-day another not less revo-  
lutionary. A very industrious man, and setting, like  
all highly organized men, a high value on his time, he  
seemed the only man of leisure in town, always ready  
for any excursion that promised well, or for conversation  
prolonged into Inte hours. His trenchant sense was  
never stopped by his rules of daily prudence, but was  
always up to the new occasion. He liked and used the  
simplest food, yet, when some one urged a vegetable diet,  
‘Thoreau thought all diets a very small matter, saying  
that the man who shoots the buffalo lives better than  
‘the man who boards at the Graham House.” He said,  
—\* You can sleep near the railroad, and never be dis-  
turbed : Nature knows very well what sounds are worth  
attending to, and has made up her mind not to hear the  
railroad-whistle. But things respect the devout mind,  
‘and a mental eostasy was never interrupted.” He noted,  
what repeatedly befell him, that, after receiving from a  
distance a rare plant, he would presently find the same  
in his own haunts, And those pieces of luck which  
happen only to good players happened to him. One  
day, walking with a stranger, who inquired where In-

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‘BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 7  
  
dian arrow-heads could be found, he replied, Every--—  
where,” and, stooping forward, picked one on, the instant.  
from the ground. At Mount Washington, in ‘Tucker  
man’s Ravine, Thoreau had a bad fall, and sprained his  
foot. As he was in the act of getting up from his fall,  
hhe saw for the first time the leaves of the Arnica  
mollis.  
  
His robust common sense, armed with stout hands,  
‘keen perceptions, and strong will, eannot yet account  
for the superiority which shone in his simple and hid-  
den life. Imust add the cardinal fact, that there was  
an excellent wisdom in him, proper to a rare class of  
‘men, which showed him the material world as a means  
and symbol. This discovery, which sometimes yields  
to poots a certain casual and interrupted light, eerving  
or the ornament of their writing, was in him an un-  
sleeping insight ; and whatever faults or obstructions  
of temperament «night cloud it, he was not disobedient  
to the heavenly vision. In his youth, he said, one day,  
“The other world is all my art: my pencils will draw  
no other ; my jack-knife will cut nothing else ; I do not  
use it as a megne.” . This was the muse and genius that  
ruled his opinions, conversation, studies, work, and  
course of life. ‘Thip made him a searching judge of  
men, At first glance fe-measured his companion, and,  
though insensible to some fine traits of culture, could  
very well report his weight and calibre. And this  
made the impression of genius whlch his conversation  
‘often gave.  
  
‘He understood the matter in hand at a glance, and  
saw the limitations sind poverty of those he talked  
  
2

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18 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
with, so that nothing seemed concealed from such ter=  
ible eyes. I have repeatedly known young men of  
ity converted in a moment to the belief that this  
‘wafythe man they were in search of the man of men,  
who could tell them all they shoul do. His own deal-  
ing with them was never affectionate, but superior,  
didactic, — soorning their petty ways,— very slowly  
conceding, or not conceding at all, the promise of his  
society at their houses, or even at his own. “Would  
ho not walk with them?” «He did not know. ‘There  
‘was nothing 20 important to him as his walk; he had  
no walks to throw away on company.” Visits were  
offered him from respectful parties, but he declined  
them. Admiring friends offered to carry him at their  
fown cost to the-Yellow-Stone River,—to the West  
Indies, —to South America. But though nothing could  
be more grave or considered than his refusals, they  
remind one in quite new relations of that fop Bram-  
mel's reply to the gentleman who offered him his ear-  
riage in a shower, But where will you ride, then?” —  
and what accusing silences, and what searching and  
irresistible speeches, battering down all defences, his  
‘companions can remember!  
  
Mr. Thoreau dedicated his genius with such entire  
love to the fields, hills, and waters of his native town,  
that he made them known and interesting to all reading  
Americans, and.to people over the sea. ‘The river on  
‘whose banks he was born and died he knew from its  
springs to its confluence with the Merrimack. He had  
made summer and winter observations on it for many  
years, and at every hour’ of the day and the night.

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‘BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 19  
  
The result of the recent survey of the Water Com-  
‘missioners appointed by the State of Massachusetts he  
bad reached by his private experiments, several years  
earlier. Every fact which occurs in the bed, on’ the  
‘banks, or in the air over it; the fishes, and their spawn-  
‘ng and nests, their manners, their food ; the shad-flies  
which fl the air on a certain evening once a year, and  
which are snapped at by the fishes so ravenously that  
many of these dio of repletion; the conical heaps of  
small stones on the river-shallows, one of which heaps  
‘will sometimes overfill a cart,—these heaps the huge  
nests of small fishes; the birds which frequent the  
stream, heron, duck, sheldrake, loon, osprey ; the snake,  
musk-rat, otter, woodchuck, and fox, on the banks the  
turtle, frog, hyla, and cricket, which make the banks  
‘voeal, — were all known to him, and, as it were, towns-  
‘men and fellow-creatures ; 60 that he felt an absurdity  
cr violence in any narrative of one of these by itself  
apart, and still more of its dimensions on an inch-rule,  
or in the exhibition of its skeleton, or the specimen of  
squirrel or a bird in brandy. He liked to speak of  
‘the manners of the river, as itself a lawful creature,  
yet with exactness, and always to an observed fact.  
‘As he knew the river, so the ponds in this region.  
One of the weapons he used, more important than  
microscope or alcohol-recciver to other investigators,  
was a whim which grew on him by indulgence, yet  
appeared in gravest statement, namely, of extolling his  
‘own town and neighborhood as the most favored centre  
for natural observation, He remarked that the Flora  
‘of Massachusetts embraced almost all the important

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20 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.”  
  
plants of America,— most of the oaks, most of the  
willows, the best pines, the ash, the maple, the beech,  
the nuts. He retumed Kane's “ Arctic Voyage” to a  
frievd of whom he had borrowed it, with the remark,  
that most of the phenomena noted might be observed  
in Concord.” He seemed a little envious of the Pole,  
for the coincident sunrise and sunset, or five ininutes?  
day afer six months: a eplendid fact, which Annurs-  
nue had never afforded him. He found red snow in  
fone of his walks, and told me that he expected to find  
yyet the Victoria regia in Concord. He was the attor-  
ney of the indigenous plants, and owned to a preference  
‘of the weeds to the imported plants, as of the Indian  
to the civilized man, — and noticed, with pleasure, that  
the willow bean-poles of his neighbor had grown more  
than ‘his beans. “See these weeds,” he said, « which  
hhave been hoed at by a million farmers all spring and  
summer, and yet have prevailed, and just now como  
out triumphant over all lanes, pastures, fields, and gar-  
dens, such is their vigor. We have insulted them with  
low names, too, — a8 Pigweed, Wormwood, Chickweed,  
Shad-Blossom.” Ho says, “They have brave names,  
too, — Ambrosia, Stellaria, Amelanchia, Amaranth,  
ete.”  
  
T think his fancy for referring everything to the me-  
ridian of Concord did not grow out of any ignorance or  
depreciation of other longitudes or latitudes, but was  
rather a playful expression of his conviction of the  
indifferency of all places, and that the best place for  
‘each is where he stands. He expressed it once in this  
wise: —“T think nothing is to be hoped from you, if

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 21  
  
this bit of mould under your feet is not sweeter to you  
to eat than any other in this world, or in any world.”  
  
‘The other weapon with which he conquered all ob-  
stacles in science was patience. He knew how to sit  
iminovable, a parg of the rock he rested on, until tl  
bird, the reptile, the fish, which had retired from him,  
should come back, and resume its habits, nay, mfoved by  
curiosity, should come to him and watch him.  
  
Tt was a pleasure and a privilege to walk with him.  
‘He knew the country like a fex or a bird, and passed  
through it as freely by paths of his own. He knew  
‘every track in the snow or on the ground, and what  
creature had taken this path before him. One must  
‘submit abjectly to such a guide, and the reward was  
great, Under his arm he carried an old music-book  
to press plants; in his pocket, his diary and pencil, a  
spy-glass for binds, microscope, jack-knife, and twine.  
He wore straw hat, stout shoes, strong gray trousers.  
to brave shrub-oaks and smilax, and to climb a tree  
for a hawk’s or a squirrel’s nest. He waded into tho  
pool for the water-plants, and his strong legs were no  
insignificant part of his armor. On the day I speak of  
he looked for the Menyanthes, deteoted it across the  
‘wide pool, and, on examination of the florets, decided  
that it had been in flower five days. He drew out of  
his breast-pocket his diary, and read the names of all  
the plants that should bloom on this day, whereof he  
kept account ass banker when his notes fall due.  
The Cypripedium not due till to-morrow. He thought,  
that, if waked up from a trance, in this swamp, he  
could tell by tho plants what time of the year it was

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22 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
within two days. ‘Tho rodstart was flying about, and  
presently the fine grosbeaks, whose brilliant scarlet  
‘makes the rash gazer wipe hie eye, and whose fine  
‘lear note ‘Thoreau compared to that of a tanager which  
has got rid of its hoarseness. Presgatly he heard’ a  
rote which he called that of the night-warbler, a bird  
hhe had never identified, had been in search of twelve  
‘years, which always, when ho saw it, was in the act of  
diving down into a tree or bush, and which it was vain  
to seek ; the only bird that sings indifferently by night  
and by day. I told him he must beware of finding and  
booking it lest life should have nothing more to show  
him. “He said, “What you seek in vain for, half your  
life, one day you come full upon all the family at din-  
ner. You seek it like a dream, and as soon as you find  
it you become its prey.”  
  
‘His interest in the flower or the bird lay very deep  
in his mind, was connected with Nature,—and the  
meaning of Nature was never attempted to be defined  
by him. He would not offer a memoir of his observa-  
tions to the Natural History Society. “ Why should 1?  
‘To detach the description from its connections in my  
mind would make it no longer true or valuable to me :  
and they do not wish what belongs to it” His power  
of observation seemed to indicate additional senses. Ho  
saw as with microscope, heard as with ear-trumpet, and  
his memory was a photographic register of all he saw  
and heard. And yet none knew better than he that it  
‘is not the fact that imports, but the impression or effect  
‘of the fact on your mind. Every fact lay‘in glory in  
his mind, a type of the order and beauty of the whole.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 23  
  
His deiermination on Natural History was organic.  
He confessed that he sometimes felt like a hound or a  
panther, and, if born among Indians, would bave been  
‘8 fell hunter. Bat, restrained by his Massachusetts  
ceulture, he played out the game in this mild form of  
Dotany and ichthyology. His intimacy with animale  
suggested what Thomas Fuller records of Butler the  
apiologist, that “either he had told the bees things or  
‘the bees had told him.” Snakes coiled round his legs  
the fishes swam into his hand, and he took them out of  
‘the water; he pulled the woodchuck out of its hole by  
the tail, and took the foxes under his protection from  
‘the hunters. Our naturalist had perfect magnanimity  
hhe had no secrets: he would carry you to the heron’s  
haunt, or even to his most prized botanical swamp, —  
possibly knowing that you could never find it again, yet  
willing to take his risks.  
  
No college ever offered him a diploma, or a profes-  
sors chair; no academy made him its corresponding  
secretary, its discoverer, or even its member. Whether  
these Ieamed bodies feared the satire of his presence.  
Yet 0 much knowledge of Nature's secret and genius  
few others possessed, none in @ more large and religious  
synthesis. Kor not a particle of respect had he to the  
opinions of any man or body of men, but homage solely  
to the truth itself; and as he discovered everywhere  
among doctors some leaning of courtesy, it discredited,  
them. He grew to be revered and admired by his  
townsmen, who had at first known him only as an  
oddity. ‘The farmers who echployed him as a surveyar  
on discovered his rare accuracy and skill, his know]-

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a BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
edge of their lands, of trees, of birds, of Indiani remains,  
and the like, which enabled him to tell every farmer  
more than,he knew before of his own farm ; so that he  
began to feel as if Mr. Thoreau had bettor rights in  
his land than he. They felt, too, the superiority  
of character which addressed all men with a native  
authority.  
  
Taian vlc bound in Conor—arrow head, tone  
chisels, pestes, and fragments of pottery 5 and on the  
river-bank, large heaps of clam-shells and ashes mark  
spots which the savages frequented. ‘These, and every.  
circumstance touching the Indian, were important in his  
eyes. His visits to Maine were chiefly for love of tho  
Indian. He had the satisfaction of seoing the manu-  
facture of the bark-canoe, as well as of trying his hand  
in its management on the rapids. He was inguisitive  
bout the making of the stone arrow-head, and in his  
Jast days charged @ youth setting out for the Rocky  
‘Mountains to find an Indian who could tell him that:  
Tt was well worth a visit to California to learn it.”  
Occasionally, a small party of Penobscot Indians would  
visit Concord, and pitch their tents for a few weeks in  
summer on the riverbank, He failed not to make  
acquaintance with the best of thems though he well  
knew that asking questions of Indians is like eatechizing.  
Deavers and rabbits. In his last visit to Maine he  
had ‘great satisfaction from Joseph Polis, an intelligent  
Indian of Oldtown, who was his guide for somo weeks.  
  
‘He was equally interested in every natural fact. ‘Tho  
depth of his perception fel likeness of law through-  
out Nature, and I know not any genius who so swiftly

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 25  
  
inferred universal law from the single fact. Ho was no  
pedant of a department. His eye was open to beauty,  
‘and his ear to music. He found theee, not in rare con  
ditions, but wheresoever he went. He thought the best  
cof music was in single strains; and he found poetic sug-  
geetion in the humming of the telegraph-wire.  
  
His poetry might be baa or good; he no doubt wanted  
a lyric facility and technical skill; but he had the source  
of poetry in his spiritual perception. He was a good  
reader and critic, and his judgment on pootry was to the  
ground of it. He could not be deceived as to the pres-  
ence or absence of the poetic element in any compo-  
sition, and his thirst for this made him negligent and  
perhaps scornful of superficial graces. He would pase  
by many delicate rhythms, but he would have detected  
every live stanza or line in a volume, and knew very  
well where to find an equal poetic charm in prose. He  
‘was a0 enamored of the spiritual beauty that he held all.  
actual written poems fn very light esteem in the com-  
parison, Ho admired achylus and Pindar; but, when  
some one was commending them, he said that Aischy-  
lus and the Greeks, in describing Apollo and Ox@fftus,  
had given no song, or no good one. They ought not to  
have moved trees, but to have chanted to the gods such  
hymn as would have sung all their old ideas out of  
their heads, and new ones in” His own verses are  
olen rude and defective. ‘The gold does not yet run  
pure is droasy and crude. The thyme and marjoram  
fre not yet honey. But if he want Iyric fineness and  
technical merits, if he have not the poetic temperament,  
ho never lacks tho causal thought, showing that his

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26 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
genius was better than his talent, He knew the worth  
of the Imagination for the uplifting and consolation of  
human ‘life, and liked to throw every thought into a  
aymbol. The fact you tell is of no value, but only the  
impression. For this reason his presence was poetic,  
always piqued the curiosity to know more deeply the  
secrets of his mind. He had many reserves, an unwill-  
ingness to exhibit to profane eyes what was etill sacred  
in his own, and knew well how to throw a poetic  
‘veil over his experience. All readers of “Walden”  
will remember his mythical record of his disappoint-  
ments: —~ :  
  
“T long ago lost a hound, a bay horsé, and a turtle-  
dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travel-  
lers I have spoken concerning them, describing their  
tracks, and what calls they answered to. I have met  
one oF two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of  
the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a  
cloud; and they seemed as anxious to recover them as  
4f they had lost them themselves.”  
  
is riddles were worth the reading, and I confide,  
  
at any time I do not understand the expression,  
itis yet just. Such was the wealth of his truth that it  
‘was not worth his while to use words in vain, His  
‘poem entitled « Sympathy” reveals the tenderness un-  
der that triple steel of stoicism, and the intellectual sub-  
tilty it could animate. His classic poem on “Smoke”  
suggests Simonides, but is better than any poem of  
‘Simonides. His biography is in his verses. His habit~  
ual thought makes all his poetry a hymn to the Cause  
  
+ Walden,” p. 20,

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 2  
  
of causes, the Spirit which vivifies and controls his  
  
“ T hearing get, who had but ears,  
And sight, who had but eyes before  
T moments live, who lived but years,  
‘And trath discern, who knew but learning’ lore:”  
And still more in these religious lines  
“Now chiefly is my natal hour,  
‘And only now my prime of life;  
I will not doubt the love untold,  
Which not my worth or want hath bought,  
‘Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,  
‘And to this evening hath me brought”  
  
   
  
‘Whilst he used in his writings a certain petulance of  
remark in reference to churches or churchmen, he was a  
person of a rare, tender, and absolute religion, a person  
incapable of any profunation, by act or by thought. Of  
course, the same isolation which belonged to his original  
thinking and living detached him from the social relig-  
fous forms. ‘This is neither to be censured nor regretted.  
Aristotle long ago explained it, ywhen he said, “One  
‘who surpasses his fellow-citizens in virtue is no longer  
a part of the city. ‘Their law is not for him, since he  
is a law to himself’  
  
Thoreau was sincerity itself, and might fortify the  
convictions of prophets in the ethical laws by his holy  
living. Tt was an aifirmative experionce which refused  
to be set aside. A truth-speaker he, capable of the  
‘most deep and strict conversation; a physician to the

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28 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
wounds of any soul; @ friend, knowing not only the  
secret of friendship, but almost worshipped by those  
few persons who resorted to him as their confessor and  
prophet, and knew the deep value of his mind and great  
heart. “He thought that without religion or devotion of  
some kind nothing great was ever accomplished : and he  
thought that the bigoted sectarian had better bear this  
in mind.  
  
His virtues, of course, sometimes ran into extremes.  
Tt was easy to trace to the inexorable demand on all for  
‘exact truth that austerity which made this willing her-  
tit more solitary even than he wished. Himself of a  
perfect probity, he required not less of others. He had  
a disgust at crime, and no worldly sucoees could cover it.  
He detected paltering as readily in dignified and pros-  
perous persons as in beggars, and with equal scorn,  
Such dangerous frankness was in his dealing: that. his  
admirers called him “that terrible Thoreau,” a8 if he  
spoke when silent, and was still present when he had  
departed. I think the severity of his ideal interfered to  
deprive him of healthy sufficiency of human society.  
  
‘The habit of a realist to find things the reverse of  
‘heir appearance inclined him to pat every statement in  
a paradox. A certain habit of antagonism defaced his  
earlier writings, —a trick of rhetoric not quite out-  
‘grown in his later, of substitating for the obvious word.  
‘and thought its diametrical opposite. He praised wild  
‘monntains and winter forests for their domestic air, in  
‘snow and ice he would find sultriness, and commended  
the wilderness for resembling Rome and Paris. “It  
‘was 20 dry, that you might call it wet.”

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‘BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 29  
  
‘The tendency to magnify the moment, to read all the  
laws of Nature in the one object or one combination  
under your eye, is of course comic to those who do’ not  
share the philosopher's perception of identity. To him  
‘there was no such thing as size. ‘The pond was a small  
ocean; the Atlantic, a large Walden Pond. He re-  
ferred every minute fact to cosmical laws. Though he  
meant to be just, he seemed haunted by a certain  
chronic assumption that the science of the day pretend-  
‘ed completeness, and he had just found out that the  
savans had neglected to discriminate a particular botani-  
cal variety, had failed to describe the seeds or count the  
  
@epals. “That is to say,” wo replied, “the blockheads  
‘were not born in Concord; but who said they were ?  
It was their unspeakable misfortune to be born in Lon~  
don, or Paris, or. Rome; but, poor fellows, they did  
‘what they could, considering that they never saw Bate-  
man’s Pond, or Nine-Acre Comer, or Becky-Stow’s  
Swamp. Besides, what were you sent into the world  
for, but to add this observation ?”  
  
‘Had his genius been only contemplative, he bad been  
fitted to his life, but with his energy and practical abil-  
ity he scemed bom for great enterprise and for com-  
mand; and I 90 much regret the loss of his rare pow-  
ers of action, that T cannot help counting it a fault in  
hhim that he had no ambition. ‘Wanting this, instead of  
‘engineering for all America, he was the captain of a  
hhuckleberry party. Pounding beans is good to the end.  
of pounding empires one of these days; but if, at the  
end of ‘years, itis still only beans  
  
But these foibles, real or apparent, were fast vanish-

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30 ‘BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
ing in the incessant growth of a spirit so robust and  
vise, and which effaced its defeats with new triumphs.  
His study of Nature was a perpetual omament to him,  
‘and inspired his friends with curiosity to seo the world  
‘through his eyes, and to hear his adventures. ‘They  
possessed every kind of interest.  
  
He had many elegances of his own, whilst he scoffed  
‘at conventional elegance. ‘Thus, he could not bear to  
hhear the sound of his own steps, the grit of gravel; and  
therefore never willingly walked in the road, but in the  
‘grass, on mountains and in woods. His senses were  
‘cate, and ho remarked that by night every dwelling  
hhouse gives out bad air, like a slanghter-house. Hey  
liked the pure fragrance of melilot. He honored cer-  
tain planta with special regard, and, over all, the pond~  
Iily, — then, the gontian, and the Mikqnia scandens, and  
“life-everlasting,” and a bass-treo which he visited  
every year when it bloomed, in the middle of July. He  
‘thought the scent’ a more oracular inquisition than the  
sight —more oracular and trustwotthy. ‘The scent, of  
course, reveals what is concealed from the other senses.  
By it he detected earthiness. He delighted in echoes,  
‘and said they were almost the only kind of kindred  
‘voices that he heard. He loved Nature so well, was so  
happy in her solitude, that he became very jealous of  
cities, and the sad work which their refinements and  
artifices made with man and his dwelling. ‘The axe  
‘was always destroying his forest. “Thank God,” he  
said, “they camnot cut down the clouds!” All kinds  
‘of figures are drawn on the blue ground with this  
fibrous white paint.”

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 3h  
  
T subjoin a few sentences taken from his unpublished  
‘manuscripts, not only as records of his thought and feel-  
ing, but for their power of descriptios and literary  
‘excellence.  
  
“Some circumstantial evidence is very strong, 2s when,  
‘you find a trout in the milk.”  
  
“The chub is a soft fish, and tastes like boiled brown,  
paper salted.”  
  
“The youth gets together his materials to build  
bridge to the moon, or, perchance, a palace or temple  
on the earth, and at length the middleaged man con-  
‘dudes to built a wood-shed with them.”  
  
+ “The locust z-ing”  
  
“Devil'sneedles zigzagging along the Nut-Meadow  
brook.”  
  
“Sugar is not so sweet to the palate as sound to the  
healthy ear.”  
  
“T put on some hemlocg-boughs, and the rich salt  
crackling of their leaves was like mustard to the ear,  
the crackling of uncountable regiments, Dead trees  
love the fire.”  
  
“The bluebird carries the sky on hie back.”  
  
“The tanager flies through the,green foliage os if it  
would ignite the leaves.”  
  
“If I wish for a horse-hair for my compass-sight, I  
‘must go to the stable; but the hair-bird, with her sharp  
eyes, goes to the road.”  
  
“ Tmmmortal water, alive even to the superfices.”  
  
“Fire is the most tolerable third party.”  
  
“Nature made ferns for pure leaves, fo show what  
she could do in that line.”

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32 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.  
  
“No tree has 80 fair a bole and so handsome an in-  
step as the beech.”  
  
“How did these beantiful rainbow-tints get into the  
shell of the fresh-water clam, buried in the mud at the  
bottom of our dark river?”  
  
“Hard @ the times when the infant's shoes aro  
second-foot:  
  
“We are strictly confined to our men to whom wo  
give liberty.”  
  
Nothing is 60 much to be feared as fear. Atheism  
‘may comparatively be popular with God himself”  
  
“Of what significance the things you can forget? A.  
little thought is sexton to all the world.”  
  
«How can wo expect a harvest of thought who have  
not had a seed-time of character ?”  
  
“Only he can be trusted with gifts who can present a  
face of bronze to expectations.”  
  
Task to be melted. Yog can only ask of the metals  
that they be tender to the'fire that melts them. To  
‘nought else can they be tender.”  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘There is a flower known to botanists, one of the same  
genus with our summer plant called « Life-Everlasting.”  
‘8 Gnaphakium like that, which grows on the most inac-  
cossible cliffs of the Tyrolese mountains, where the  
hamois dare hardly venture, and which the hunter,  
tempted by ite beauty, and by his love, (for it is im-  
rmensely valued by the Swiss maidens,) climbs the cliffs  
to gather, and is sometimes found dead at the foot, with  
the flower in his hand. It is called by botanists the  
Gnaphalim lzontopodium, but by the Swiss Hdebweisse,

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. 33  
  
which signifies Noble Purity. Thoreau seemed to me  
living in the hope to gather this plant, which belonged  
to him of right. ‘The scale on which his studies pro-  
ceeded was 0 large as to require longevity, and we  
‘were the less prepared for his sudden disappearance.  
‘The country knows not yet, or in the least part, how  
‘great a son it has lost. It ecems an injury that he  
should leave in the midst his broken task, which none  
‘else can finish, —a kind of indignity to so noble a soul,  
that it should depart out of Nature before yet he has  
‘been really shown to his peers for what he is. But he,  
at least, is content. His soul was made for the noblest  
society ; he had in a short life exhausted the capsbili-  
ties of this world ; wherever there is knowledge, wher-  
ever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will  
find a home,

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EXCURSIONS.

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS\*  
(sie)  
  
Booxs of natural history make the most  
cheerful winter reading. I read in Audubon  
with a thrill of delight, when the snow covers  
the ground, of the magnolia, and the Florida  
keys, and their warm sea-breezes ; of the fence-  
rail, and the cotton-tree, and the migrations of  
the rico-bird; of the breaking up of winter in  
Labrador, and the melting of the snow on the  
forka of the Missouri; and owe an accession of  
health to these reminiscences of luxuriant nature.  
  
‘Within the cireuié of this plodding ie,  
‘There enter moments of an azure hue,  
Untarnished fair as isthe vilot  
Or anemone, when the spring strows thom  
‘By some meandering rivet, which mako  
‘The beat philosophy untrue that ima  
Bat to console man for his grievances.  
Thave remembered when the winter came,  
‘High in my chamber in the frosty nights,  
‘When in the ail light of the cheerful moon,  
\* Reports—on the Fishes, Repl, end Birds; the Herbacens Plans  
and Quarapeds; the Ince Injurou 10 Vegetation; ond the Tere  
‘Animal of Meswachuscte, Published agreeably to a3 Onler  
  
oF tho Legislature, by the Commissioners on the Zoilogical and Bo-  
lanieal Survey of the State.

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88 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
(On every twig and rail and jatting spout,  
‘The icy spears wore adding to their length  
  
Against the arrows of the coming sun,  
  
How in the shimmering noon of summer past  
  
Some unrecorded beam slanted across  
  
“Tho upland pastures where tho Jobnswort grew;  
  
(Or heard, amid the verdure of my mind,  
  
‘The bee's long smothered hum, on the blue flag  
Loitering amidst the mead or bis ill,  
  
‘Which now through all its course stands still and dumb  
Its own memorial, — purling at it play  
  
“Along the slopes, and through the meadows next,  
‘Until its youthful sound was hushed at last  
  
In the staid current of the lowland stream ;  
  
‘Or soon the furrows shine but late upturned,  
  
‘And where the feldfare followed in the rear,  
  
‘When all the fields around lay bound and hoar  
Beneath a thick integument of snow.  
  
So by God's cheap economy made rich  
  
‘To go upon my winter's task again.  
  
   
  
Tam singularly refreshed in winter when I  
hear of service-berries, poke-weed, juniper. Is  
not heaven made up of these cheap summer  
glories? ‘There is a singular health in those  
words, Labrador and East Main, which no de-  
sponding creed recognizes. How much more  
than Federal are these States. If there were no  
other vicissitudes than the seasons, our interest  
would never tire. Much mote is adoing than  
Congress wots of. What journal do the per-  
simmon and the buckeye keep, and the sharp-  
shined hawk? What is transpiring from sum-

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 39  
  
mef to winter in the Carolinas, and the Great  
Pine Forest, and the Valley of the Mohawk?  
‘The merely political aspect of the land is never  
very cheering; men are degraded when consid-  
ered as the members of a political organization.  
On this side all lands present only the eymptoms  
of decay. Isee but Bunker Hill and Sing-Sing,  
the District of Columbia and Sullivan's Island,  
with a few avenues connecting them. But pal-  
try are they all beside one blast of the east or  
the south wind which blows over’ them.  
  
Jn society yon will not find health, but in  
nature. Unless our feet at least stood in the  
midst of nature, all our faces would be pale and  
livid. Society is always diseased, and the best  
is the most eo. ‘There is no scent in it so whole-  
some as that of the pines, nor any fragrance 60  
penetrating and restorative as the life-everlasting  
in high pastures, I would keep some book of  
natural history always by me as a sort of elixir,  
the reading of which should restore the tone of  
the system. To the sick, indeed, nature is sick,  
but to the well, a fountain of health. To him  
who contemplates a trait of natural beauty no  
harm nor disappointment can come. The doc-  
trines of despair, of spiritual or political tyranny  
or servitude, were never taught by such as shared  
the serenity of nature. Surely good courage  
will not flag here on the Atlantic border, as

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40 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
Jong as we are flanked by the Fur Countries  
‘There is enough in that sound to cheer one  
‘under any circumstances. The spruce, the hem-  
lock, and the pine will not countenance despair.  
Methinks some creeds in vestries and churches  
do forget the hunter wrapped in fars by the  
Great Blave Lake, and that the Esquimaux  
sledges are drawn by dogs, and in the twilight  
of the northern night, the hunter does not give  
over to follow the seal and walrus on the ice.  
‘They are of sick and diseased imaginations who  
would toll the world’s knell so soon. Cannot  
these sedentary sects do better than prepare the  
shrouds and write the epitaphs of those other  
busy living men? ‘The practical faith of all men  
belies the preacher's consolation. What is any  
man’s discourse to me, if I am not sensible of  
something in it as steady and cheery as the  
creak of crickets? In it the woods must be re~  
lieved against the sky. Men tire me when Iam  
not constantly greeted and refreshed as by the  
flux of sparkling streams. Surely joy is the con-  
dition of life. ‘Think of the young fry that leap  
in ponds, the myriads of insects ushered into  
being on a summer evening, the incessant note  
of the hyla with which the woods ring in the  
spring, the nonchalance of the butterfly carrying  
accident and change painted ina thousand hues  
‘upon its wings, or the brook minnow stoutly

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 41.  
  
stemming the current, the lustre of whose scales  
‘worn bright by the attrition is reflected upon  
the bank.  
  
‘We fancy that this din of religion, literature,  
and philosophy, which is heard in pulpits, lyce-  
‘ums, and parlors, vibrates through the universe,  
and is as catholic a sound as the creaking of  
the earth’s axle; but if a man sleep soundly, he  
‘will forget it all between sunset and dawn. It  
is the three-inch swing of a pendulum in a cup-  
board, which the great pulse of nature vibrates  
dy and through each instant. When we lift our  
eyelids and open our ears, it disappears with  
smoke and rattle like the cars on 4 railroad.  
‘When I detect a beauty in any of the recesses  
of nature, I am reminded, by the serene and  
retired spirit in which it requires to be contem-  
plated, of the inexpressible privacy of a life,—  
how silent and unambitious it is. The beauty  
there is in mosses must be considered from the  
holiest, quietest nook. What an admirable train-  
ing is science for the more active warfare of life.  
Indeed, the unchallenged bravery, which these  
studies imply, is far more impressive than the  
‘trumpeted valor of the warrior. I am pleased  
to learn that Thales was up and stirring by  
night not unfrequently, as his astronomical dis-  
coveries prove. Linnmus, setting out for Lap-  
land, surveys his “comb” and “spare shirt,”

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42 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
“leathern breeches” and “gauze cap to keep off  
gnats,” with as auch complacency as Bonaparte  
a park of artillery for the Russian campaign.  
‘The quiet bravery of the man is admirable. His  
eye is to take in fish, flower, and bird, quadra-  
ped and biped. Science is always brave, for to  
now, is to know good; dovbt and danger quail  
before her eye. What the coward overlooks ip  
his hurry, she calmly scratinizes, breaking ground  
like a pioneer for the array of arts that follow in  
her train. But cowardice is unscientific; for  
‘there cannot be a science of ignorance... There  
may be a science of bravery, for that advances ;  
but a retfeat is rarely well conducted; if it  
then is it an orderly advance in the face of cir-  
cumstances.  
  
Bat to draw a little nearer to our promised  
topics. Entomology extends the limits of being  
in a new direction, co that I walk in nature with  
sense of greater space and freedom. It sug-  
gesta besides, that theeuniverse is not rough-  
hewn, but perfect in its details. Nature will  
  
\* bear the closest inspection; she invites us to lay  
our eye level with the smallest leaf, and take an  
. insect view of its plain, . She has no interstices  
every part is full of life. I explore, too, with  
pleasure, the sources of the myriad sounds which  
crowd the summer noon, and which seem the  
very grain and stuff of which eternity ie made.

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WATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 43  
  
‘Who does not remember the shrill roll-call of  
  
the harvest fly? There were ears for these  
  
sounds in Greece long ago, as Anacreon’s ode  
y will show.  
  
“We pronounce thee happy, Cicada,  
or onthe tops of the trees,  
Drinking alt dow,  
Like any king thou rngest,  
For thio are they all  
“Whatever thou acest inthe flds, a  
And whaterer the meods bea.  
Thou ar the fiend of the husbandmen,  
Tn no respect injuring any one;  
‘And thon art honored among men,  
Sweet prophet of summer.  
‘The Muss love theo,  
‘And Phebus bimself loves theo,  
‘And bas given thee ashi songs  
“Age docs not wrack thee,  
‘Thon skilful, earthborn, song loving,  
‘asaifering, Boodle one ;  
‘Almost thou art Mf the gods”  
  
   
  
In the autumn days, the creaking of crickets  
is heard at noon over all the land, and in  
summer they are heard chiefly at nightfall, sq  
then by their incessant chirp they usher in the  
evening of the year. Nor can all the vanities  
that vex the world alter one whit the measure  
that night has chosen. Every pulse-beat is in  
exact time with the cricket's chant and the tick-

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44 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
ings of the deathwatch in the wall, Alternate  
with these if you can.  
  
\* About two hundred and eighty birds either,  
reside permanently in the State, or spend the @  
summer only, or make us a passing visit. Those  
which spend the winter with us have obtained  
our warmest sympathy. ‘The nut-hatch and  
chicadee flitting in company through the dells  
of the wood, the one harshly scolding at the  
intrader, the other with a faint lisping note en-  
ticing him on; the jay screaming in the or-  
chard; the crow cawing in unison with the  
storm ; the partridge, like a russet link extended  
over from autumn to spring, preserving un-  
broken the chain of summers; the hawk with  
wartiorlike firmness abiding the blasts of win-  
ter; the robin’ and lark lurking by warm springs  
in the woods; the familiar snow-bird culling a  
few seeds in the garden, or a few crumbs in  
the yards and occasionalff the shrike, with heed-  
ess and unfrozen melody bringing back summer  
  
s.. robin and a white quail have ocasionally bees sean. Tt  
ia mentioned In Audubon ag remarkable that the nest of a robin  
‘oul be found onthe ground; but this bird seems to bo Jess partio-  
‘lar than most inthe choice of building spot. I have soan ita nest  
placed under the thatched roof of a deserted barn and in one i  
stance, where the adjacent country was nearly destitute of trues,  
‘together with two of tho phabe, upon the end of board in the loft  
‘of a sew-mil, Dut a few fet ffom the auw, which vibrated several  
Inches with the motion ofthe machinery.

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‘WWATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 45  
  
His steady sails he never fara  
At any time o year,  
  
‘And perching now on  
‘He whistles in his ear.  
  
   
  
inter’ curls,  
  
‘As the spring advances, and the ice is melting  
in the river, our earliest and straggling visitors  
make their appearance, Again does the old  
‘Teian poet sing, as well for New England as for  
Greece; in the  
RETURN OF PRIN.  
“Behold, how Spring appearing,  
‘The Graces send forth roses  
Behold, how the wave of the sea  
Is made smooth by the calm;  
Behold, how the duck dives  
Behold, how tho crane travel;  
‘And Titan shines constantly bright.  
  
‘Tho shadows of tho clouds are moving  
‘The works of man shin  
  
‘Toe oarth puts forth fruits  
  
‘Tho frat of the olive puta forth,  
  
‘The cup of Bacchus is erowned,  
  
‘Along the leaves, along the branches,  
‘Tee frit, bending them down, Bourshes.”  
  
‘The ducks alight at this season in the still  
water, in company with the gulls, which do  
not fail to improve an east wind to visit our  
meadows, and swim about by twos and threes,  
plaming themselves, and diving to peck at the  
root of the lily, and the cranberries which the

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46 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
frost has not loosened. The first flock of geese  
is seen beating to north, in long harrows and  
waving lines; the gingle of the song-sparrow  
salutes us from the shrubs and fences ; the plain-  
tive note of the lark comes clear and sweet from.  
the meadow; and the bluebird, like an azure ray,  
glances past us in our walk. The fish-hawk,  
too, is occasionally seen at this season sailing  
majestically over the water, and he who has  
once observed it will not soon forget the majesty  
of its fight. It sails the air like a ship of the  
line, worthy to struggle with the elements, fall-  
ing back from time to time like a ship on its  
beam ends, and holding its talons up as if ready  
for the arrows, in the attitude of the national  
bird. It is a great presence, as of the master of  
river and forest. Its eye would not quail before  
the owner of the soil, but make him feel like an  
intruder on its domains. And then its retreat,  
sailing so steadily away, is a kind of advance.  
Ihave by me one of a pair of ospreys, which  
have for some years fished in this vicinity, shot  
by a neighboring’ pond, measuring more than  
two feet in length, and six in the stretch of its  
wings. Nuttall mentions that “The ancients,  
particularly Aristotle, pretended that the ospreys  
taught their young to gaze at the sun, and those  
‘who were unable to do so were destroyed. Lin-  
neus even believed, on ancient authority, that

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e  
NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 47  
  
one of the feet of this bird had all the toes di-  
vided, while the other was partly webbed, 50  
that it could swim with one foot, and grasp a  
fish with the other” But that educated eye is  
now dim, and those talons are nerveless. Its  
shrill scream seems yet to linger in its throat,  
and the roar of the sea in its wings. ‘There is  
the tyranny of Jove in its claws, and his wrath  
in the erectile feathers of the head and neck. It  
reminds me of the Argonautic expedition, and ,  
‘would inspire the dullest to take flight over Par-  
nassus,  
  
‘The booming of tM® bitten, described by  
Goldsmith and Nuttall, is frequently heard in  
our fens, in the morning and evening, sounding  
like a pump, or the chopping of wood in a frosty  
moming in some distant farm-yard. ‘The man-  
ner in which this sound is produced I have not  
seen anywhere described. On one occasion, the  
bird bas been seen by one of my neighbors to  
thrust its bill into the water, and suck up as  
much as it could hold, then raising its head, it  
pumped it ont again with four gr five heaves of  
the neck, throwing it two orwthree feet, and  
making the sound each time.  
  
‘At Iength the summer's eternity is ushered in  
by the cackle of the flicker among the oaks on  
the hill-side, and a new dynasty begins with  
calm security.

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e  
48 NATURAL HISTORY oF MassacuUserTS.  
  
dn May and June the woodland quire is in  
fall tune, and given the immense spaces of hol- =  
low air, and tlis curious human ear, one does  
not see how the void could be better filled.  
  
Each eummer sound  
Isa summer round.  
  
‘As the season advances, and those birds which  
make us but a passing visit depart, the woods  
become silent again, and but few feathers ruffle  
the drowsy air. But the solitary rambler may  
still find @ response and expression for every  
mood in the depths of @p wood.  
  
Sometimes I hear the voery’s® clarion,  
  
(Or brazen tromp of the impatient jay,  
  
‘And in secluded woods the chicadeo  
  
Doles out her scanty notes, which sing the praise  
‘Of heroes, and sot forth the loveliness  
  
Of virtue evermore.  
  
‘The phebe still sings in harmony with the  
sultry weather by the brink of the pond, nor are  
the desultory hours of noon in the midst of the  
village without their minstrel  
  
   
  
‘This bird, which Isao well described by Nottall, bat is appar-  
  
   
  
‘tho sound of ite querulous and ching note as tits near the trav-  
teller through the underwood. . The cowbird's ogg is occasionally  
found in its net, as mentioned by Audubon.

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 49  
  
‘Upon the lofty elm-tree sprays  
‘Tho vireo rings the changes sweet,  
‘Daring the trivial summer days,  
  
Striving to lift our thoughts above the street.  
  
‘With the autumn begins in some measure a  
new spring. ‘The plover is heard whistling high  
in the air over the dry pastures, the finches flit  
from tree to tree, the bobolinks and flickers fly  
in flocks, and the goldfinch rides on the earliest  
Diast, like a winged hyla peeping amid the rastle  
of the leaves. The crows, too, begin now to  
congregate; you may stand and count them as  
they fly low and straggling over the landscape,  
singly or by twos and threes, at intervals of half  
a mile, until a hundred have passed.  
  
Thave seen it suggested somewhere that the  
crow was brought to this country by the white  
man, but I shall as soon believe that the white  
man planted these pines and hemlocks. He i  
no spaniel to follow our steps; but rather flits  
about the clearings like the dusky spirit of the  
Indian, reminding me oftener of Philip and  
Powhatan, than of Winthrop and Smith. He  
is a relic of the dark ages. By just so slight, by  
just so lasting a tenure does superstition hold  
‘the world éver; there is the rook in England,  
and the crow in New England.  
  
‘Thou dusky eptit of the wood,  
  
Bind of an ancient brood,  
4

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50 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
Flitting thy lonely way,  
‘A meteor in the summer's day,  
‘From wood to wood, from hill to ill,  
Low over forest, field, and rill,  
‘What wouldst thou say ?  
  
‘Why shouldst thou haunt the day?  
‘What makes thy melancholy float?  
‘What bravery inspires thy throat,  
‘And bears thee up abovo the clouds,  
  
‘Over desponding human crowds,  
Which far below  
Lay thy haunta low ?  
  
‘The late walker or sailor, in the October eve-  
nings, may hear the murmurings of the snipe,  
circling over the meadows, the most spirit-like  
sound in nature; and still later in the autumn,  
‘when the frosts have tinged the leaves, a solitary  
loon pays a visit to our retired ponds, where he  
may lurk undisturbed till the season of moulting  
is passed, making the woods ring with his wild  
laughter. This bird, the Great Northern Diver,  
well deserves its name; for when pursued with  
a boat, it will dive, and swim like a fish under  
water, for sixty rods or more, as fast as a boat  
can be paddled, and its pursuer, if he would dis  
cover his game again, must put his ear to the  
surface to hear where it comes mp. When it  
comes to the surface, it throws the water off  
with one shake of its wings, and calmly swims  
about until again disturbed.

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 51  
  
‘These are the sights and sounds which reacly  
  
\* our senses oftenest during the year. But some-  
  
times one hears a quite new note, which has for  
  
background other Carolinas and Mexicos than  
  
the books describe, and learns that his ornithol-  
‘ogy has done him no service.  
  
Tt appears from the Report that there are  
about forty quadrnpeds belonging to the State,  
and among these one is glad to hear of a few  
bears, wolves, lynxes, and wildcats,  
  
‘When our river overflows its banks in the  
spring, the wind from the meadows is laden  
with a strong scent of musk, and by its fresh-  
ness advertises me of an unexplored wildness.  
Those backwoods are not far off then. I am  
affected by the sight of the cabins of the musk-  
rat, made of mud and grass, and raised three or  
four. feet: along the river, as when I read of the  
barrows of Asia. ‘The musk-rat is the beaver  
of the settled States. Their number has even  
increased within a few years in this vicinity.  
Among the rivers which empty into the Merri-  
mack, the Concord is known to the boatmen as  
adead stream. The Indians are said to have  
called it Musketaquid, or Prairie River. Its cur  
rent being much more sluggish, and its water  
more muddy than the rest, it abounds more in fish  
and game of every kind. According to the His-  
tory of the town, “ ‘The fur-trade was here once

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52 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
ery important. As early as 1641, a company  
was formed in the colony, of which Major Wil-  
lard of Concord was superintendent, and had  
the exclusive right to trade with the Indians in  
fars and other articles; and for this right they  
were obliged to pay into the public treasury one  
‘twentieth of all the furs they obtained.” ‘There  
are trappers in our midst still, as well as on the  
streams of the far West, who night and morning  
go the ronnd of their traps, without fear of the  
\_ Indian. One of these takes from one hundred  
and fifty to two hundred musk-rats in a year,  
and even thirty-six have been shot by one man  
inaday. ‘Their fur, which is not nearly as val-  
uable as formerly, is in good condition in the  
winter and spring only; and upon the breaking  
up of the ice, when they are driven out of their  
holes by the water, the greatest number is shot  
from boats, either swimming or resting on their  
stools, or slight supports of grass and reeds, by  
the side of the stream, Though they exhibit  
considerable cunning’ at other times; they are  
easily taken in a trap, which has only to be  
placed in their holes, or wherever they frequent,  
‘without any bait being used, though it is some-  
times rubbed with their musk, In the winter  
the hunter cuts holes in the ice, and shoots them  
‘when they come to the surface. Their burrows  
are usually in the high banks of the river, with

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 53  
  
the entrance under water, and rising within to  
above the level of high water. Sometimes their  
nests, composed of dried meadow grass and  
flags, may be discovered where the bank is low  
and spongy, by the yielding of the ground under  
the feet. ‘They have from three to seven or  
eight young in the spring.  
  
Frequently, in the morning or evening, a long  
ripple is seen in the still water, where a musk-  
rat is crossing the stream, with only its nose  
above the surface, and sometimes a green bough  
in its mouth to build its house with. When it  
finds itself observed, it will dive and swim five  
or six rods under water, and at length conceal  
itself in its hole, or the weeds. It will remain  
under water for ten minutes at a time, and on  
one occasion has been seen, when undisturbed,  
to form an air-bubble under the ice, which con-  
tracted and expanded as it breathed at leisure.  
‘When it suspects danger on shore, it will stand  
erect like a squirrel, and survey its neighborhood  
for several minutes, without moving.  
  
In the fall, if a meadow intervene between  
their burrows and the stream, they erect cabins  
of mud and grass, three or four feet high, near  
its edge. These are not their breeding-places,  
though young are sometimes found in them in  
late freshets, but rather their hunting-lodges, to  
which they resort in the winter with their food,  
and for shelter. Their food consists chiefly of

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54 NATURAL WISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
flags and fresh-water muscles, the shells of the  
latter being left in Jarge quantities around their  
lodges in the spring.  
  
The Penobscot Indian wears the entire skin  
of a musk-rat, with the legs and tail dangling,  
and the head caught under his girdle, for a  
pouch, into which he puts his fishing tackle,  
and essences to scent his traps with.  
  
‘The bear, wolf, lynx, wildcat, deer, beaver, and  
marten, have disappeared; the otter is rarely if  
ever seen here at present; and the mink is less  
‘common than formerly. .  
  
Perhaps of all our untamed quadrupeds, the  
fox has obtained the widest and most famil-  
iar reputation, from the time of Pilpay and  
sop to the present day. His recent tracks  
still give variety to a winter's walk. I tread in  
the steps of the fox that has gone before me by  
some hours, or which perhaps I have started,  
with such a tiptoe of expectation, as if I were  
on the trail of the Spirit itself which resides in  
the wood, and expected soon to catch it in its  
lair, I am curious to know what has deter-  
mined its graceful curvatures, and how surely  
they were coincident with the fluctuations of  
some mind. I know which way a mind wended,  
what horizon it faced, by the setting of these  
tracks, and whether it moved slowly or rapidly,  
by their greater or less intervals and -distinct-  
ness; for the swiftest step leaves yet a lasting

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 55  
  
trace. Sometimes you will see the trails of  
many together, and where they have gambolled  
and gone through a hundred evolutions, which  
testify to a singular listlessness and leisure in  
nature.  
  
‘When I see a fox ran across the pond c.) the  
snow, with the carelessness of freedom, or at in-  
tetvals trace his course in the sunshine along  
the ridge of a hill, I give up to him sun and  
earth as to their true proprietor. He does not  
go in the sun, but it seems to follow him, and  
there is a visible sympathy between him and it.  
Sometimes, when the snow lies light, and but  
five or six inches deep, you may give chase and  
come up with one on foot. In such a case he  
will show a remarkable presence of mind, choos-  
ing only the safest direction, though he may lose  
ground by it. Notwithstanding his fright, he  
will take no step which is not beautiful. His  
pace is a sort of leopard canter, as if he were  
in nowise impeded by the snow, but were hus-  
banding his strength all the while. When the  
ground is uneven, the course is a series of grace-  
fal curves, conforming to the shape of the sur-  
face. He rans as though there were not a bone  
in his back. Oceasionally dropping his muzzle  
to the ground for a rod or two, and then  
his head aloft, when satisfied of hi .  
‘When he comes to a declivity, he will pat his

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56 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
forefeet together, and slide swiftly down it, shov-  
ing the snow before him. He treads so softly  
‘that you would hardly hear it from any near-  
ness, and yet with such expression that it would  
not be quite inandible at any distance.  
  
Of fishes, seventy-five genera and one hun-  
dred and seven species are described in the Re-  
port. The fisherman will be startled to learn  
that there are but about a dozen kinds in the  
ponds and streams of any inland town; and  
almost nothing is known of their habits. Only  
their names and residence make one love fishes.  
I would know even the number of their fin-rays,  
.and how many scales compose the lateral line.  
‘Lam the wiser in respect to all knowledges, and  
the better qualified for all fortunes, for knowing  
that there is a minnow in the brook. Methinks  
Thave need even of his sympathy, and to be his  
fellow in @ degree.  
  
Thaye experienced such simple delight in tho  
trivial matters of fishing and sporting, formerly,  
as might have inspired the muse of Homer or  
Shakspeare; and now, when I turn the pages  
and ponder the plates of the Angler’s Souvenir,  
Tam fain to exclaim,—  
  
“Can those things be,  
‘And overcome us like a summer's load 2”  
  
‘Next to nature, it seems as if man’s actions

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 57  
  
were the most natural, they so gently accord  
with her. The small seines of flax stretched  
‘across the shallow and transparent parts of our  
river, are no more intrusion than the cobweb in  
the sun, I stay my boat in midcunent, and  
Jook down in the sunny water to see the civil  
meshes of his nets, and wonder how the bluster-  
ing people of the town could have done this  
elvish work. The twine looks like a new river  
weed, and is to the river as a beautiful me-  
mento of man’s presence in nature, discovered  
as silently and delicately as a footprint in the  
sand.  
  
‘When the ice is covered with snow, I do not .  
suspect the wealth under my fect; that there is  
as good as a mine under me wherever I go.  
sHow many pickerel are poised on easy fin fath-  
coms below the loaded wain. ‘The revolution of  
the seasons must be a curious phenomenon to  
them. At length the sun and wind brush aside  
their curtain, and they see the heavens again.  
  
Early in the spring, after the ice has melted,  
is the time for spearing fish. Suddenly the  
wind shifts from northeast and east to west and  
south, and every icicle, which has tinkled on the  
meadow grass so long, trickles down its stem,  
and seeks its level unerringly with a million  
comrades. ‘The steam curls up from every roof  
and fence.

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58 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
Teo the civil sun drying earths tears,  
Her tears of joy, which only faster flow.  
  
In the brooks is heard the slight grating  
sound of small cakes of ice, floating with vari-  
‘ous speed, full of content and promise, and  
where the water gurgles under a natural bridge,  
you may hear these hasty rafts hold conver-  
sation in an undertone. Every rill is a chan-  
nel for the juices of the meadow. In the  
ponds the ice cracks with a merry and inspirit-  
ing din, and down the larger streams is whirled  
grating hoarsely, and crashing its way along,  
which was so lately a highway for the wood-  
man’s team and the fox, sometimes with the  
tracks of the skaters still fresh upon it, and  
the holes cut for pickerel. ‘Town committees  
anxiously inspect the bridges and causeways?  
as if by mere eye-force to intercede with the ice,  
and save the treasury.  
  
‘The river swelleth more and more,  
Like some sweet influence stealing o'er  
‘The passive town; and for a while  
Each tussuck makes a tiny isle,  
‘Where, on some friendly Ararat,  
Resteth the weary water-rat.  
  
No ripple shows Musketaquid,  
Her very current e'en is hid,  
  
‘As deepest souls do calmest rest,  
  
‘When thoughts are ewelling in the breast,

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 59  
  
‘And she that in the summer's drought  
‘Doth make a rippling and a rout,  
  
Sleeps from Nahshawtuck to the Cliff,  
Unrufed by a single skit.  
  
‘But by a thoasand distant bills  
  
‘The louder roar a thousand rill  
  
‘And many a spring which now is dumb,  
‘And many a stream with smothered hum,  
Doth swifter well and faster glide,  
‘Though buried deep beneath the tide,  
  
Our village shows a rural Venico,  
ts broad lagoons where yonder fen is  
As lovely af the, Bay of Naples  
  
Yon placid cove amid the maples;  
And in my neighbor's field of corn  
  
T recognize the Golden Hora.  
  
   
  
‘Here Nature taught from year to year,  
‘When only red men came to hear,  
‘Mothinks ‘twas in this school of art  
‘Venice and Naples learned their part ;  
‘Bat still their mistres, to my mi  
  
‘Her young disciples leaves behind.  
  
   
  
‘The fisherman now repairs and launches his  
boat. ‘The best time for spearing is at this sea-  
20n, before the weeds have begun to grow, and  
while the fishes lie in the shallow water, for in  
summer they prefer the cool depths, and in the  
autumn they are still more or less concealed by  
the grass. The first requisite is fuel for your  
crate; and for this purpose the roots of the pitch-  
pine are commonly used, found under decayed

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60 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
stamps, where the trees have been felled eight  
or ten years,  
  
‘With a crate, or jack, made of iron hoops, to  
contain your fire, and attached to the bow of  
your boat about three feet from the water, a  
fish-spear with seven tines, and fourteen feet  
long, a large basket, or barrow, to cary your  
fuel and bring back your fish, and a thick outer  
garment, you are equipped for a cruise. It  
should be a warm and still evening; and then  
with a fire crackling merrily at the prow, you  
may launch forth like a cucullo into the night.  
‘The dullest soul cannot go upon such an expe-  
dition without some of the spirit of adventure;  
as if he had stolen the boat of Charon and gone  
down the Styx on a midnight expedition into  
the realms of Pluto, And much speculation  
does this wandering star afford to the musing  
nightwalker, leading him on and on, j&ck-o’lan-  
tern-like, over the meadows ; or, if he is wiser,  
he amuses himself with imagining what of  
human life, far in the silent night, is flitting  
mothlike round its candle. The silent navi-  
gator shoves his craft gently over the water, with  
a smothered pride and sense of benefaction, as  
if he were the phosphor, or light-bringer, to these  
dusky realms, or some sister moon, blessing the  
spaces with her light. ‘The waters, for a rod or  
foo on eithgs hand and several feet in depth are

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 61  
  
lit up with more than noonday distinctness, and  
he enjoys the opportunity which so many have  
desired, for the roofs of a city are indeed raised,  
and he surveys the midnight economy of the  
fishes. ‘There they lie in every variety of pos-  
tnre; some on their backs, with their white bel-  
lies uppermost, some suspended in midwater,  
some sculling gently along with a dreamy mo-  
tion of the fins, and others quite active and wide  
awake,—a scene not unlike what the human  
city would present. Occasionally he will en-  
counter a turtle selecting the choicest morsels,  
or a musk-rat resting on a tussuck. He may  
exercise his dexterity, if he sees fit, on the more  
distant and active fish, or fork the nearer into  
his boat, as potatoes out of a pot, or even take  
the sound sleepers with his hands. But these ,  
last accomplishments he will soon learn to dis  
pense with, distinguishing the real object of his  
pursuit, and find compensation in the beauty  
and never-ending novelty of his position. ‘The  
pines growing down to the water's edge will  
show newly as in the glare of a conflagration ;  
and as he floats under the willows with his  
light, the song-sparrow will often wake on her  
perch, and sing that strain at midnight, which  
she had meditated for the morning. And when  
he has done, he may have to steer his way home  
through the dark by the north star, and he will

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62 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
feel himself some degrees nearer to it for having  
lost his way on the earth,  
  
‘The fishes commonly taken in fhis way are  
pickerel, suckers, perch, eels, pouts, breams, and  
shiners, —from thirty to sixty weight in a night,  
Some are hard to be reeognized in the unnat-  
ural light, especially the perch, which, his dark  
bands being exaggerated, acquires a ferocious  
aspect. The number of these transverse bands,  
which the Report states to be seven, is, however,  
very variable, for in some of our ponds they  
have nine and ten even.  
  
Tt appears that we have eight kinds of tor-  
toises, twelve snakes, —but one of which is  
‘venomous, —nine frogs and toads, nine sala-  
manders, and one lizard, for our neighbors.  
  
Tam particularly attracted by the motions of  
the serpent tribe. They make our hands and  
feet, the wings of the bird, and the fins of the  
fish seems very superfluous, as if nature had  
only indulged her fancy in making them. ‘The  
black snake will dart into a bush when pursued,  
and circle round and round with an easy and  
graceful motion, amid the thin and bare twigs,  
five or six feet from the ground, as a bird flits  
from bough to bough, or hang in festoons be-  
tween the forks. Elasticity and flexibleness in  
the simpler forms of animal life are equivalent

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 63  
  
to a complex system of limbs in the higher; and  
we have only to be as wise and wily as the ser-  
pent, to perform as difficult feats without the  
vulgar assistance of hands and feet.  
  
In May, the snapping turtle, Emysaurus ser-  
pentina, is frequently taken on the meadows and  
in the river. ‘The fisherman, taking sight over  
the calm surface, discovers its snout projecting  
above the water, at the distance of many rods,  
and easily secures his prey through its unwill-  
ingness to disturb the water by swimming has-  
tily away, for, gradually drawing its head under,  
it remains resting on some limb or clump of  
grass. Its eggs,.which are buried at a distance  
from the water, in some soft place, as a pigeon-  
bed, are frequently devoured by the skunk. It  
will catch fish by daylight, as a toad catches  
flies, and is said to emit a transparent fluid from  
its month to attract them.  
  
‘Nature has taken more care than the fondest  
parent for the education and refinement of her  
children. Consider the silent influence which  
flowers exert, no less upon the ditcher in the  
meadow than the lady in the bower. When I  
walk in the woods, I am reminded that a wise  
purveyor has been there before me; my most  
delicate experience is typified there. Iam struck  
with the pleasing friendships and unanimities of  
nature, as when the lichen on the trees takes the

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64 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
form of their leaves. In the most stupendous  
scenes you will see delicate and fragile features,  
as slight wreaths of vapor, dewlines, feathery  
sprays, which suggest a high refinement, a no-  
ble blood and breeding, as it were. It is not  
hard to account for elves and fairies; they rep-  
resent this light grace, this ethereal gentility.  
Bring a spray from the wood, or a crystal from  
the brook, and place it on your mantel, and  
your household omaments will seem plebeian  
beside its nobler fashion and bearing. It will  
wave superior there, as if used to a more refined  
and polished circle. It has a salute and a re-  
sponse to all your enthusiasm and heroism.  
  
In the winter, I stop short in the path to ad-  
mire how the trees grow up without forethought,  
regardless of the time and circumstances. They  
do not wait as man does, but now is the golden  
age of the sapling. Earth, air, sun, and rain,  
fare occasion enough; they were no better in  
primeval centuries. The “winter of their dis-  
content” never comes. Witness the buds of  
the native poplar standing gayly out to the frost  
on the sides of its bare switches. ‘They express  
a naked confidence. With cheerful heart. one  
could be a sojourner in the wilderness, if he were  
sure to find there the catkins of the willow or  
the alder. When I read of them in the accounts  
of northern adventurers, by Baffin’s Bay or Mac-

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 65  
  
kenzie’s river, I see how even there too T could  
dwell. ‘They are our little vegetable redeemers.  
  
” Methinks our virtue will hold out till they come  
again. ‘They are worthy to have had a greater  
‘than Minerva or Ceres for their inventor. Who  
‘was the benignant goddess that bestowed them  
on mankind?  
  
Nature is mythical and mystical always, and  
works with the license and extravagance of  
genius. She has her luxurious and florid style  
aswell as art, Having a pilgrim's eup to make,  
she gives to the whole; stem, bowl, handle, and  
nose, some fantastic shape, as if it were to be  
the car of some fabulous marine deity, a Ne-  
reus or Triton,  
  
In the winter, the botanist needs not confine  
himself to bis books and herbarium, and give  
over his out-door pursuits, but may study a new  
department of vegetable physiology, what may  
be called crystalline botany, then. The winter  
of 1837 was unusually favorable for this. In De-  
cember of that year, the Genius of vegetation  
seemed to hover by night over its summer  
haunts with unusual persistency. Such a hoar-  
frost, as is very uncommon here or anywhere,  
and whose full effects can never be witnessed  
after sunrise, occurred several times. As I went  
forth early on a still and frosty morning, the trees  
looked like airy creatures of darkness caught  
  
5

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66 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS,  
  
napping; on this side huddled together with  
their gray hairs streaming in a secluded valley,  
which the sun had not penetrated ; on that hur-  
ying off in Indian file along some watercourse,  
while the shrubs and grasses, like elves and  
fairies of the night, sought to hide their dimin-  
ished heads in the snow. ‘The river, viewed  
from the igh bank, appeared of a yellowish  
gréen color, though all the landscape was white.  
Every tree, shrub, and spire of grass, that could  
raise its head above the snow, was covered with  
a dense ice-foliage, answering, as it were, leaf  
for leaf to its summer dress. Even the fences  
had put forth leaves in the night. The centre,  
diverging, and more minute fibres were per-  
fectly distinct, and the edges regularly indented.  
‘These leaves were on the side of the twig or  
stubble opposite to the sun, meeting it for the  
most part at right angles, and there were others  
standing out at all possible angles upon these  
and upon one another, with no twig or stubble  
supporting them, When the first rays of the  
sun slanted over the scene, the grasses seemed  
hung with innumerable jewels, which jingled  
merrily as they were brushed by the foot of the  
‘traveller, and reflected all the hues of the rain-  
‘bow as he moved from side to side. It struck  
me that these ghost leaves, and the green ones  
‘whose forms they assume, were the creatures of

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 67  
  
‘but one law; that in obedience to the same law  
the vegetable juices swell gradually into the per-  
fect leaf, on the one hand, and the crystalline  
Particles troop to their standard in the same  
order, on the other. As if the material were  
indifferent, but the law one and invariable, and  
every plant in the spring but pushed up into  
and filled a permanent and eternal mould, which,  
summer and winter forever, is waiting to be filled.  
  
‘This foliate. structure is common to the coral  
and the plumage of birds, and to how large a  
part of animate and inanimate nature. The  
same independence of law on matter is observa-  
ble in many other instances, as in the natural  
rhymes, when some animal form, color, or odor,  
has its counterpart in some vegetable. As, ine  
deed, all rhymes imply an eternal melody, inde-  
pendent of any particular sense.  
  
As confirmation of the fact, that vegetation  
is but a kind of crystallization, every one may  
‘observe how, upon the edge of the melting frost  
on the window, the needle-shaped particles are  
bundled together so as to resemble fields wav-  
ing with grain, or shocks rising here and there  
from.the stubble; on one side the vegetation of  
the torrid zone, high-towering palms and wide-  
spread banyans, such as are seen in pictures of  
oriental scenery ; on the other, arctic pines stiff  
frozen, with downcast branches.

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68 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
‘Vegetation has been made the type of all  
growth; but as in erystals the law is more ob-  
vious, their material being more simple, and for  
the most part more transient and ficeting, would  
it not be as philosophical as convenient to con  
sider all growth, all filling up within the limits  
of nature, but a crystallization more or less rapid?  
  
On this occasion, in the side of the high bank  
of'the river, wherever the water or other cause  
had formed a cavity, its throat and outer edge,  
like the entrance to a citadel, bristled with a  
glistening ice-armor. In one place you might  
see minute ostrich-feathers, which seemed the  
waving plumes of the warriors filing into the  
fortress; in another, the glancing, fan-shaped  
banners of the Lilliputian host; and in another,  
the needle-shaped particles collected into bun-  
dles, resembling the plumes of the pine, might  
pass for a pl of spears. From the under  
side of the ice in the brooks, where there was a  
thicker ice below, depended a mass of crystal-  
lizatiow,, four or five inches deep, in the form of  
prisms, with their lower ends open, which, when  
the ice was laid on its smooth side, resembled  
the roofs and steeples of a Gothic city, or the  
vessels of a crowded haven under a press of  
canvas. ‘The very mud in the road, where the  
ice had melted, was crystallized with deep ree-  
tilinear fissures, and the crystalline masses in

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 69  
  
the sides of the ‘rats resembled exactly asbestos  
in the disposition of their needles. Around the  
roots of the stubble and flower-stalke, the frost  
‘was gathered into the form of irregular conical  
shells, or fairy rings. In some places the ice-  
crystals were lying upon granite rocks, directly  
over crystals of quartz, the frost-work of a longer  
night, crystals of a longer period, but to some  
eye unprejudiced by the short term of huntan  
life, melting as fast as the former.  
  
Jn the Report on the Invertebrate Animals,  
this singular fact is recorded, which teaches us  
to put a new value on time and space. “'The  
distribution of the marine shells is well worthy  
of notice as a geological fact. Cape Cod, the  
right arm of the Commonwealth, reaches out  
into the ocean, some fifty or sixty miles. It is  
nowhere many miles wide; but this narrow point  
of land has hitherto proved a barrier to the mi-  
grations of many species of Mollusca. Several  
genera and numerous species, which are separ-  
ated by the intervention of only a fow miles of  
land, are effectually prevented from mingling by  
the Cape, and do not pass from one side to the  
other. . . . . Of the one hundred and ninety-  
seven marine species, eighty-three do not pass to  
the south shore, and fifty are not found on the  
north shore of the Cape.”  
  
‘That common muscle, the Unio complanatus,

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70 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
or more properly fluviatilis, left in the spring by  
‘the musk-rat upon rocks and stumps, appears to  
have been an important article of food with the  
Indians. In one place, where they aré said to  
have feasted, they are found in large quantities,  
at an elevation of thirty feet above the river, fill-  
ing the soil to the depth of a foot, and mingled  
‘with ashes and Indian remains.  
  
‘The works we have placed at the head of our  
chapter, with as much license as the preacher  
selects his text, are such as imply more labor  
than enthusiasm. ‘The State wanted complete  
catalogues of its natural riches, with such addi-  
tional facts merely as would be directly useful.  
  
‘The reports on Fishes, Reptiles, Insects, and  
Invertebrate Animals, however, indicate labor  
and research, and have a value independent of  
the object of the legislature.  
  
‘Those on Herbaceous Plants and Birds can-  
not be of much value, as long as Bigelow and  
Nuttall are accessible. They serve but to indi-  
cate, with more or less exactness, what species  
are found in the State. We detect several errors  
ourselyes, and a more practised eye would no  
doubt expand the list.  
  
‘The Quadrupeds deserved a more final and  
instructive report than they have obtained.  
  
‘These volumes deal much in measurements  
nd minute descriptions, not interesting to the

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NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS. 71  
  
general reader, with only here and there a cole  
ored sentence to allure him, like those plants  
growing in dark forests, which bear only leaves  
without blossoms. But the ground was com-  
paratively unbroken, and we will not complain  
of the pioneer, if he raises no flowers with his  
first crop. Let us not underrate the value of a  
fact; it will one day flower in a truth. It is  
astonishing how few facts of importance are  
added in a century to the natural history of any  
animal. The natural history of man himself is  
still being gradually written. Men are knowing  
enough after their fashion. Every countryman  
and dairymaid knows that the coats of the fourth  
stomach of the calf will curdle milk, and what  
particular mushroom is a safe and nutritious  
diet. You cannot go into any field or wood,  
but it will seem as if every stone had been  
turned, and the bark on every tree ripped up.  
But, after all, it is much easier to discover than  
to see when the cover is off. It has been well  
said that “the attitude of inspection is prone.”  
‘Wisdom does not inspect, but behold. We  
must look a long time before we can see. Slow  
are the beginnings of philosophy. He has some-  
thing demoniacal in him, who can discern a law  
or couple two facts. We can imagine a time  
‘when, — Water rans down hill,” —may have  
been taught in the schools. The true man of

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72 NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACHUSETTS.  
  
science will know nature better by his finer or-  
ganization; he will smell, taste, see, hear, feel,  
better than other men. His will be a deeper  
and finer experience. We do not learn by infer-  
ence and deduction, and the application of math-  
ematies to philosophy, but by direct intercourse  
and sympathy. It is with science as with eth-  
ies, — we cannot know truth by contrivance and  
method; the Baconian is as false as any other,  
and with all the helps of machinery and the arts,  
‘the most scientific will still be the healthiest  
and friendliest man, and possess a more perfect  
Indian wisdom.

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A WALK TO WACHUSETT.  
[843]  
  
   
  
‘The noodles of the pine  
All to the west incline.  
  
   
  
Coxconn, July 19, 1842.  
Summer and winter our eyes had rested on  
  
the dim outline of the mountains in our hori-  
zon, to which distance and indistinctness lent  
a grandeur not their own, so that they served  
equally to interpret all the allusions of poets  
and travellers; whether with Homer, on a spring  
morning, we sat down on the many-peaked  
Olympus, or, with Virgil and bis compeers,  
roamed the Etrurian and Thessalian bills, or  
with Humboldt measured the more modern An-  
des and Teneriffe. Thus we spoke our mind  
to them, standing on the Concord cliffs. —  
  
‘With frontier strength yo stand your ground,  
  
With grand content ye circle round,  
  
‘Tumultuoos silence for all ound,  
  
Ye distant nurery of sills,  
  
‘Monadnock, and the Peterboro’ hills  
‘some vast fleet,

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a  
  
A WALK TO WACHUSETT.  
  
Sailing through rain and sleet,  
‘Through winter's cold and summer's heat;  
Sill holding on, upon your bigh emprise,  
Unil ye find a shore amid the skies  
[Not skulking close to land,  
  
‘cargo contraband,  
For they who sent a venture out by ye  
‘Have set the sun to 200  
‘Their honesty.  
Ships of the line, each one,  
Yo to the westward run,  
Always before the gale,  
Under a press of sail,  
‘With weight of metal all untold,  
‘Teeem to feel ye, in my firm seat here, \*  
Immeasurable depth of bold,  
And breadth of beam, and length of running gear.  
  
   
  
‘Methinks ye take luxurious pleasure”  
In your novel western leisure;  
  
So cool your brows, and freshly blue,  
  
‘As Time had nought for ye to do;  
For ye lie at your length,  
  
‘An unappropriatod strength,  
  
Unhewn primeval timber,  
  
For knees 20 stiff, for mast so limber  
‘The stock of which new earths are made,  
One day to be our western trade,  
  
Fit for the stanchions of a world  
  
‘Which through the seas of apace is hurled.  
  
‘While wo enjoy a lingering ray,  
‘Ye still o'ertop the westorn day,  
‘Reposing yonder, on God's croft,  
Liko solid stacks of hay.

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‘A WALK TO WACHUSETT. 1%  
  
Edged with silver, and with gold,  
  
‘The clouds hang o'er in damask fold,  
  
‘Ad with ch depth of amber ight  
  
‘Tho west is dight,  
  
‘Where still a fow rays slant,  
  
‘That even heaven seems extravagant,  
  
(On the earth's edge mouatains and trees  
Stand as they were on air graven,  
  
(Or as the vessels in a haven  
  
Await the morning breeze.  
  
Tfancy even’  
  
‘Through your defiles windeth the way to heaven  
And yonder stil in spite of history's page,  
Linger the golden and the silver ago ;  
Upon the laboring gale  
  
‘The news of future centuries is brought,  
‘And of new dynasties of thought,  
  
From your remotest vale.  
  
But special I remember thee,  
‘Wachusett, who like me  
  
Standest alone without society.  
  
‘Thy far blue eye,  
  
‘A remnant of the sky,  
  
‘Seen through the clearing or the gorge,  
(Or from the windows on the forge,  
‘Doth leaven all it passes by.  
  
Nothing is true,  
  
But stands tween me and you,  
  
‘Thou western pioneer,  
  
‘Who knowst not shame nor fear,  
  
By venturous spirit driven,  
  
‘Under the eaves of heaven,  
  
‘And can'st expand thee there,,  
  
‘And breathe enough of air?

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6 A WALK TO WacuUserT. $  
  
Upholding heaven, bolding down earth,  
‘Thy pastime from thy birth,  
  
Not steadied by the one, nor leaning on the other  
‘May I approve myself thy worthy brother  
  
At length, like Rasselas, and other inhabitants  
of happy valleys, we resolved to scale the blue  
wall which bound the western horizon, though  
not without misgivings, that thereafter no visi-  
ble fairy land would exist for us. But we will  
not leap at once to our journey’s end, though  
near, but imitate Homer, who conducts his  
reader over the plain, and along the resound-  
ing sea, though it be but to the tent of Achilles.  
In the spaces of thought are the reaches of land  
and water, where men go and come. ‘The land-  
scape lies far and fair within, and the deepest  
thinker is the farthest travelled.  
  
‘At a cool and early hour on a pleasant morn-  
ing in July, my companion and I passed rapidly  
through Acton and Stow, stopping to rest and  
refresh us on the bank of a small stream, a tribu-  
tary of the Assabet, in the latter town. As we  
traversed the cool woods of Acton, with stout  
staves in our hands, we were cheered by the  
song of the red-eye, the thrushes, the phabe,  
and the cuckoo; and as we passed through the  
open country, we inhaled the fresh scent of every  
field, and all nature lay passive, to be viewed  
and travelled. «Every rail, every farm-house,

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A WALK TO WACHUSETT. 7  
  
seon dimly in the twilight, every tinkling sound  
told of peace and purity, and we moved hap-  
pily along the dank roads, enjoying not such  
privacy as the day leaves when it withdraws,  
but such as it has not profaned. It was soli-  
tude with light; which is better than darkness.  
But anon, the sound of the mower’s rifle was  
heard in the fields, and this, too, mingled with  
the lowing kine.  
  
‘This part of our route lay through the coun-  
try of hops, which plant perhaps supplies the  
want of the vine in American scenery, and may  
remind the traveller of Italy, and the South of  
France, whether he traverses the country when  
the hop-fields, as then, present solid and regular  
masses of verdure, hanging in graceful festoons  
from pole to pole; the cool coverts where lurk  
‘the gales which refresh the wayfarer; or in Sep-  
tember, when the women and children, and the  
neighbors from far and near, are gathered to pick  
the hops into long troughs; or later still, when  
the poles stand piled in vast pyramids in the  
yards, or lie in heaps by the roadside.  
  
‘The culture of the hop, with the processes of  
picking, drying in the kiln, and packing for the  
market, as well as the uses to which it is ap-  
plied, eo analogous to the culture and uses of  
the grape, may afford a theme for future poets.  
  
‘The mower in the adjacent meadow could

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7B A WALK TO WACHUSETT.  
  
not tell us the name of the brook on whose  
banks we had rested, or whether it had any,  
but his younger companion, perhaps his brother,  
knew that it was Great Brook. ‘Though they  
stood very near together in the field, the things  
they knew were very far apast; nor did they  
suspect each other's reserved knowledge, till the  
stranger came by. In Bolton, while we rested  
on the rails of a cottage fence, the strains of  
music which issued from within, probably in  
compliment to us, sojourners, reminded us that  
thus far men were fed by the accustomed pleas-  
ures. So soon did we, wayfarers, begin to learn  
that man's life is rounded with the same few  
facts, the same simple relations everywhere, and.  
‘it is vain to travel to find it new. ‘The flowers  
grow more various ways than he. Bat coming  
s00n to higher land, which afforded a prospect of  
the mountains, we thought we had not travelled  
in vain, if it were only to hear a truer and wilder  
pronunciation of their names, from the lips of  
the inhabitants; not Way-tatic, Way-chusett, but,  
Wor-tatic, Wor-chusett. It made us ashamed  
of our tame and civil pronunciation, and we  
looked upon them as born and bred farther west  
than we. ‘Their tongues had a more generous  
accent than ours, as if breath was cheaper where  
‘they wagged. A countryman, who speaks but  
seldom, talks copiously, as it were, as his wife «

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A WALK TO WACHUSETT. 9  
  
sets cream and cheese before you without stint.  
Before noon we bad reached the highlands over-  
looking the valley of Lancaster, (affording the  
first fair and open prospect into ‘the west,) and  
there, on the top of a hill, in the shade of some  
oaks, near to where a spring bubbled out from  
a leadeh pipe, we rested during the heat of the  
day, reading Virgil, and enjoying the scenery.  
It was such a place as one feels to be on the  
outside of the earth, for from it we could, in  
some measure, see the form and structure of the  
globe. ‘There lay Wachusett, the object of our  
joumey, lowering upon us with unchanged pro-  
portions, though with a less ethereal aspect than  
had greeted our morning gaze, while further  
north, in successive order, slumbered its sister  
mountains along the horizon.  
  
‘We could get no further into the Aineid than  
  
—atque alte mania Rome,  
— and the wall of high Rome,  
  
before we were constrained to reflect by what  
myriad tests a work of genius has to be tried;  
‘that Virgil, away in Rome, two thousand years  
off, should have to unfold his meaning, the in-  
spiration of Italian vales, to the pilgrim on New  
England hills. This-life so raw and modern,  
that so civil and ancient; and yet we read Vir-  
gil, mainly to be reminded of the identity of  
human nature in all ages, and, by the poet's

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80 A WALK TO WacHUsETT.  
  
own account, we are both the children of a  
late age, and live equally under the reign of  
Supiter.  
“He shook honey from the leaves, and removed fre,  
‘And stayed the wine, everywhere flowing in rivers;  
‘That experience, by meditating, might invent various arta  
By degrees, and seek the blade of corn in furrows,  
And strike out hidden fie from the veins of the fint\*  
  
‘The old world stands serenely behind the  
new, as one mountain yonder towers behind  
another, more dim and distant. Rome imposes  
her story still upon this late generation. The  
very children in the school we had that morn-  
ing passed, had gone through her wars, and  
recited her alarms, ere they had heard of the  
wars of neighboring Lancaster. The roving  
eye still rests inevitably on her hills, and she  
still holds up the skirts of the sky on that side,  
and makes the past remote.  
  
‘The lay of the land hereabouts is well wor-  
thy the attention of the traveller. The hill on  
which we were resting made part of an exten-  
sive range, running from southwest to north-  
east, across the country, and separating the  
waters of the Nashua from those of the Con-  
cord, whose banks we had left in the morning ;  
and by bearing in mind this fact, we could ea-  
sily determine whither each brook was bound  
that crossed our path. Parallel to this, and fif-

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A WALK TO WACHUSETT. 81  
  
teen miles further west, beyond the deep and  
broad valley in which lie Groton, Shirley, Lan-  
caster, and Boylston, runs the Wachusett range,  
in the same general direction. ‘The descent into  
the valley on the Nashua side, is by far the  
most sudden; and a couple of ‘miles brought  
us to the southern branch of the Nashua, a shal-  
low but rapid stream, flowing between high and  
gravelly banks. But we soon learned that there  
were no gelide valles into which we had de-  
scepded, and missing the coolness of the morn-  
ing air, feared it had become the sun’s turn to  
try his power upon us.  
“<The sultry sun had gained the middle sky,  
‘And not a tree, and not an herb was nigh.”  
and with melancholy pleasure we echoed the  
melodious plaint of our fellow-traveller, Hassan,  
in the desert, —  
“Saad was tho hour, and Tackles was the day,  
‘When first from Sehiraa\* wall T bent my way.”  
  
‘The air lay lifeless between the hills, as in a  
seething caldron, with no leaf stirring, and in-  
stead of the fresh odor of grass and clover, with  
which we had before been regaled, the dry scent  
of every, herb seemed merely-medicinal. ” Yield-  
ing, therefore, to the heat, we strolled into the  
woods, and along the course of a rivulet, on  
  
whose banks we loitered, observing at our leis  
6

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82 A WALK TO WACHUSETT.  
  
ure the products of these new fields. He who  
traverses the woodland paths, at this season,  
will have occasion to remember the small droop-  
ing belllike flowers and slender red stem of the  
dogs-bane, and the coarser stem and berry of the  
poke, which afe both common in remoter and  
wilder scenes; and if “the sun casts such a re-  
fleeting heat from the sweet fern,” as makes him  
faint, when he is climbing the bare hills, as they  
complained who first penetrated into these parts,  
the cool fragrance of the swamp pink restores  
him again, when traversing the valleys between.  
  
‘As we went on out way late in the afternoon,  
we refreshed ourselves by bathing our feet in  
every rill that crossed the road, and anon, as  
we were able to walk in the shadows of the  
hills, recovered our morning elasticity. Passing  
through Sterling, we reached the. banks of the  
Stillwater, in the western part of the town, at  
evening, where is a small village collected. We  
fancied that there was already a certain western  
look about this place, a smell of pines and roar  
of water, recently confined by dams, belying its  
name, which were exceedingly grateful. When  
the first inroad has been made, a few acres lev-  
elled, and a few houses erected, the forest looks  
wilder than ever. Left to herself, nature is ale  
ways more or less civilized, and delights in  
@ certain refinement; but where the axe has

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. A WALK TO WACHUSETT.  
  
encroached upon the edge of the forest, the  
dead and unsightly limbs of the pine, which she  
had concealed with green banks of verdure, are  
exposed to sight. This village had, as yet, no  
post-office, nor any settled name. In the small  
villages which we entered, the villagers gazed  
after us, with a complacent, alnaost compassion  
ate look, as if we were just making our debut in  
the world at a late hour, Nevertheless,” did  
they seem to say, “come and study us, and learn  
men and manners.” So is each one’s world but  
aclearing in the forest, 60 much open and in  
closed ground. The landlord had not yet re-  
tumed from the field with his men, and the  
cows had yet to be milked. But we remembered:  
the inscription on the wall of the Swedish inn,  
“You will find at Trolhate excellent bread,  
meat, and wine, provided you bring them with  
you,” and were contented. But I must confess  
it did somewhat disturb our pleasure, in this  
withdrawn spot, to have our own village news-  
paper handed us by our host, as if the greatest  
charm the country offered to the traveller was  
the facility of communication with the town.  
Let it recline on its own everlasting hills, and  
not be looking out from their summits for some  
petty Boston or New York in the horizon. @  
  
At intervals we heard the murmuring of wa-  
ter, and the’ slumberous breathing of crickets

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a A WALK TO WACHUSETT.  
  
throughout the night; and left the inn the next  
+ morning in the gray twilight, after it had been  
hallowed by the night air, and when only the  
innocent cows were stirring, with a kind of re-  
gret. It was only four miles to the base of  
‘the mountain, and the scenery was already more  
picturesque. Our road lay along the course of  
the Stillwater, which was brawling at the bottom  
‘of a deep ravine,. filled with pines and rocks,  
tumbling fresh from the mountains, 80 soon,  
‘alas! to commence its career of usefulness. At  
first, a cloud hung between us and the summit,  
ut it was soon blown away. As we gathered  
‘the raspberries, which grew abundantly by the  
roadside, we fancied that that action was con-  
sistent with a lofty prudence, as if the traveller  
who ascends into a mountainous region should  
fortify himself by eating of such light ambrosial  
fruits as grow there; and, drinking of the springs  
which gush out from the mountain sides, as he  
gradually inbales the subtler and purer atmos-  
phere of those elevated places, thus propitiating  
‘the mountain gods, by a sacrifice of their own  
fruits. The gross products of the plains and  
valleys aro for such as dwell therein; but it  
seemed to us that the juices of this berry had  
elation to the thin air of the mountain-tops.  
In due time we began to ascend the moun-  
tain, passing, first, through a grand sugar maple-

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‘A WALK TO WACHUSErT. \_ 5  
  
wood, which bore the marks of the augur, then  
a denser forest, which gradually became dwarfed,  
till there were no trees whatever. We at length  
pitched our tent on the summit. It is but nine-  
teen hundred feet above the village of Princeton,  
and three thousand above the level of the sea;  
but by this slight elevation it is infinitely re-  
moved from the plain, and when we reached it,  
we felt a sense of remoteness, as if we had  
travelled into distant regions, to Arabia Petrea,  
or the farthest east. A robin upon a staff, was  
the highest object in sight. Swallows were  
flying about us, and the chewink and cuckoo  
were heard near at hand. The summit consists  
of a few acres, destitute of trees, covered with  
bare rocks, interspersed with blueberry bu8hes,  
raspberries, gooscberries, strawberries, moss, and  
a fine wiry grass. The common yellow lily, and  
dwarf-cornel, grow abundantly in the erevices  
of the rocks, ‘This clear space, which is gently  
rounded, is bounded a few feet lower by a thick  
shrubbery of oaks, with maples, aspens, beeches,  
cherries, and occasionally a mountain-ash’ inter  
mingled, among which we found the bright blue-  
berries of the Solomon's Seal, and the fruit of  
the pyrola, From the foundation of a wooden  
observatory, which was formerly erected on the  
highest point, forming a rude, hollow structure  
of stone, a dozen feet in diameter, and five or

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86 ‘A WALK T0 WAcHUsETT. i  
  
   
  
in height, we could see Monadnock, in  
simple grandeur, in the northwest, rising nearly  
a thousand feet higher, still the “far blue moun-  
tain,” though with an altered profile. The  
first day the weather was so hazy that it  
‘was in vain we endeavored to unravel the ob-  
seurity. It was like looking into the sky again,  
and the patches of forest here and there seemed.  
to flit like clouds over a lower heaven. As to  
‘voyagers of an aérial Polynesia, the earth seemed  
like a larger island in the ether; on every side,  
even as low as we, the sky shutting down, like  
an- unfathomable deep, around it, a blue Pacific  
island, where who knows what islanders in-  
habit? and as we sail near its shores we see the  
waving of trees, and hear the lowing of kine.  
  
We read Virgil and Wordsworth in our tent,  
with new pleasure there, while waiting for a  
clearer atmosphere, nor did the weather prevent  
our appreciating the simple truth and beauty of  
Peter Bell:  
  
And he had lain beside his asses,  
‘On lofty Cheviot bills”  
  
And he bad tradged through Yorkshire dales,  
‘Among the rocks and winding scars,  
‘Whore deep and low the hamlets lie  
Beneath their little patch of sky,  
“And litle lot of star”  
  
‘Who knows but this hill may one day be a

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A WALK TO WacaUSETT. 87  
  
Helvellyn, or even a Parnassus, and the Muses  
haunt here, and other Homers frequent the  
neighboring plains,  
[Not unconcemed Wachusett rears his head  
‘Above the fed, ao late fom nature woD,  
With patient brow reserved, as one who read  
‘New annals in the history of man.  
  
   
  
The blue-berries which the mountain afforded,  
added to the milk we had brought, made our  
fragal supper, while for entertainment the even-  
song of the wood-thrush rung along the ridge.  
Our eyes rested on no painted ceiling nor car-  
peted hall, but on skies of nature’s painting,  
and hills and forests of her embroidery. Be-  
fore sunset, we rambled along the ridge to the  
north, while a hawk soared still above us. It  
was a place where gods might wander, so sol-  
emn and solitary, and removed from all conta-  
gion with the plain. As the evening came on,  
the haze was condensed in vapor, and the land-  
scape became more distinctly visible, and nu-  
merous sheets of water were brought to light.  
  
Et jam summa procul villaram culmina fumant,  
‘Majoresque cadunt altis de montibus umbre.  
  
And now the tops of the villas smoke afar off  
‘And the shadows fall longer from the high mountains.  
  
As we stood on the stone tower while the sun  
‘was setting, we saw the shades of night creep

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88 A WALK TO Wacuuserr.  
  
gradually over the valleys of the east, and the  
inbabitants went into their houses, and shut  
their doors, while the moon silently rose up, and  
took possession of that part. And then the  
same scene was repeated on the weet side, as  
far as the Connecticut and the Green Moun-  
tains, and the sun’s rays fell on us two alone,  
of all New England men.  
  
It was the night but one before the full of the  
moon, so bright: that we conld see to read dis-  
tinetly by moonlight, and in the evening strolled  
over the summit without danger. ‘There was,  
by chance; a fire blazing on Monadnock that  
night, which lighted up the whole western hori-  
zon, and by making us aware of a community  
of mountains, made our position seem less soli-  
tary. But at length the wind drove us to the  
shelter of our tent, and we closed its door for  
the night, und fell asleep.  
  
Tt was thrilling to hear the wind roar over the  
rocks, at intervals when we waked, for it had  
grown quite cold and windy. The night was in  
its elements, simple even to majesty in that bleak  
place,—a bright moonlight and a piercing wind.  
It was at no time darker than twilight within  
‘the tent, and we could easily see the moon  
through its transparent roof as we lay ; for there  
was the moon still above us, with Jupiter and  
Satgm on either hand, looking down on Wachu-

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A WALK TO WACHUSETT. 89  
  
sett, and it was a satisfaction to know that they  
were our fellow-travellers still, as high and out  
of our reach as our own destiny. ‘Truly the stars  
‘were given fora consolation toman. We should  
not know but our life were fated to be always  
grovelling, but it is permitted to behold them, and  
surely they are deserving of a fair destiny. We  
see laws which never fail, of whose failure we  
never conceived; and their lamps burn all the  
night, too, as well as all day,— so rich and lavish  
is that nature which can afford this superfluity  
of light.  
  
‘The morning twilight began as.soon as the  
moon had set,and we arose and kindled our fire,  
whose blaze might have been seen for thirty  
miles around. As the daylight increased, it was  
remarkable how rapidly the wind went down.  
There was no dew on the summit, but coldness  
supplied its place. When the dawn had reached  
its prime, we enjoyed the view of a distinet hori-  
zon line, and could fancy ourselves at sea, and  
the distant hills the waves in the horizon, as seen  
from the deck of a vessel. ‘The cherry-birds flit-  
ted around us, the nuthatch and flicker were  
heard among the bushes, the titmouse perched  
within a few feet, and the song of the wood-  
thrush again rang along the ridge, At length  
we saw the sun rise up out of the sea, and shine  
‘on Massachusetts; and from this moment the at

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90 A WALK TO WACHUsErT.  
  
mosphere grew more and more transparent till  
tthe time of our departure, and we began to real-  
ize the extent of the view, and how the earth,  
in some degree, answered to the heavens in  
breadth, the white villages to the constellations  
in the sky. ‘There was little of the sublimity  
and grandeur which belong to mountain scenery,  
but an immense landscape to ponder on a sum-  
mer’s day. We could see how ample and roomy  
is nature. As far as the eye could reach, there  
‘was little life in the landscape; the few birds  
that fitted past did not crowd. ‘The travellers  
on the remote highways, which intersect the  
country on every side, had no fellow-travellers  
for miles, before or behind. On every side, the  
eye ranged over successive circles of towns, rise  
ing one above another, like the terraces of a  
vineyard, till they were lost in the horizon,  
‘Wachusett is, in fact, the observatory of the  
State. There lay Massachusetts, spread out be-  
fore us in its length and breadth, like a map.  
‘There was the level horizon, which told of the  
sea on the east and south, the well-known hills  
of New Hampshire on the north, and the misty  
summits of the Hoosac and Green Mountains,  
first made visible to us the evening before, blue  
and unsubstantial, like some bank of clouds  
which the morning wind would dissipate, on the  
northwest and west. ‘These last distant ranges,

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A WALK TO WACHUSETT. OL  
  
on which the eye rests unwearied, commence  
with an abrupt boulder in the north, beyond the  
Connécticut, and travel southward, with three oF  
four peaks dimly seen. But Monadnock, rear-  
ing its masculine front in the northwest, is the  
grandest feature. As we beheld it, we knew  
that it was the height of land between the two  
rivers, on this side the valley of the Merrimack,  
or that of the Connecticut, fluctuating with  
their blue seas’ of air,—these rival vales, al-  
ready teeming with Yankee men along their  
respective streams, born to what destiny who  
shall tell? Watatic, and the neighboring hills  
in this State and in New Hampshire, are a  
continuation of the same elevated range on  
which we were standing. But that New Hamp-  
shire bluff, — that promontory of a State,—low-  
ering day and night on this our State of Massa-  
chusetts, will longest haunt our dreanis.  
  
‘We could, at length, realize the place moun-  
tains occupy on the land, and how they come  
into the general scheme of the universe. When  
first we climb their summits and observe their  
lesser irregularities, we do not give credit to the  
comprehensive intelligence which shaped them;  
but when afterward we behold their outlines in  
‘the horizon, we confess that the hand which  
moulded their opposite slopes, making one to  
balance the other, worked round a deep centre,

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92 A WALK TO WACHDsETT.”  
  
‘and was privy to the plan of the universe. So  
is the least part of nature in its bearings refer-  
red to all space. ‘These lesser mountain tanges,  
as well as the Alleghanies, ran from northeast  
to southwest, and parallel with these mountain  
streams are the mote fluent rivers, answering to  
the general direction of the coast, the bank of  
‘the great ocean stream itself. Even the clouds,  
with their thin bars, fall into the same direction  
by preference, and such even is the course of  
the prevailing winds, and the migration of men  
and birds. A mountain-chain determines many  
things for the statesman and philosopher. The  
improvements of civilization rather creep along  
its sides than cross its summit. How often is it  
a barrier to prejudice and fanaticism? In pass-  
ing over these heights of land, throngh their thin  
atmosphere, the follies of the plain are refined  
and purified; and as many species of plants do  
not scale their summits, so many species of folly  
no doubt do not cross the Alleghanies; it is only  
the hardy mountain plant that creeps quite over  
the ridge, and descends into the valley beyond.  
‘We get a dim notion of the flight of birds,  
especially of such as fly high in the air, by  
having ascended a mountain, We can now see  
whet landmarks mountains are to their migra  
tions; how the Catskills and Highlands have  
hardly sunk to them, when Wachusett and

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A WALK To WACHUSETT. 93  
  
Monadsock open a passage to the northeast;  
how they are guided, too, in their course by the  
rivets and valleys; and who knows but by the  
stars, as well as the mountain ranges, and not  
by the petty landmarks which we use. The  
bird whose eye takes in the Green Mountains  
on the one side, and the ocean on the other, need  
not be at a loss to find its way.  
  
‘At noon we descended the mountain, and  
having retumed to the abodes of men, turned  
our faces to the east again; measuring our prog-  
ress, from time to time, by the mére ethereal  
hues which the mountain assumed. Passing  
swiftly through Stillwater and Sterling, as with  
a downward impetus, we found ourselves almost  
at home again in the green meadows of Lancas-  
ter, 80 like our own Concord, for both are wa-  
tered by two streams which unite near their  
centres, and have many other features in com-  
mon, There is an unexpected refinement about  
this scenery ; level prairies of great extent, inter-  
spersed with elms and hop-fields and groves of  
trees, give it almost a classic appearance. This,  
it will be remembered, was the scene of Mrs.  
Rowlandson’s capture, and of other events in the  
Indian wars, but from this July afternoon, and  
‘under that mild exterior, those times seemed as  
Femote as the irruption of the Goths. They  
were the dark age of New England. On be-

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cv A WALK 70 WACHUSETT.  
  
holding a picture of a New England village as  
it then appeared, with a fair open prospect, and  
a light on trees and river, as if it were broad  
noon, we find we had not thought the sun shone  
in those days, or that men lived in broad day-  
light then. We do not imagine the sun shining  
on hill and valley during Philip's war, nor on  
the war-path of Pangus, or Standish, or Church,  
or Lovell, with serene summer weather, but a  
dim twilight or night did those events transpire  
in. They must have fought in the shade of their  
own dusky deeds.  
  
‘At length, as we plodded along the dusty  
roads, our thoughts became as dusty as they;  
all thought indeed stopped, thinking broke down,  
or proceeded only passively in a sort of rhythmi-  
cal cadence of the confused material of thought,  
and we found ourselves mechanically‘repeating  
some familiar measure which timed with our  
tread; some verse of the Robin Hood ballads,  
for instance, which one can recommend to travel  
by.  
  
““Swearers aro swift, sayd Iytle Joho,  
‘As the wind blows over the bil;  
For ifit be nover so loud this night,  
‘To-morrow it may be still’  
And so it went up hill and down till a stone  
interrupted the line, when a new verse was  
\_ chosen.

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A WALK TO WACHUSETT. 95  
  
“ His shoote it was but loosely shot,  
‘Yet fowe not the arrowe in vai  
  
   
  
‘There is, however, this consolation to the  
most way-worn traveller, upon the dustiest road,  
‘that the path his feet describe is so perfectly  
symbolical of human life,—now climbing the  
hills, now descending into the vales. From the  
summits be beholds the heavens and the horizon,  
from the vales he looks up to the heights again,  
He is treading his old lessons still, and though he  
may be very weary and travel-worn, it is yet  
sincere experience.  
  
Leaving the Nashua, we changed our route a  
little, and arrived at Stillriver Village, in the  
western part of Harvard, just as the sun was set-  
ting. From this place, whieh lies to the north-  
ward, upon the western slope of the same range  
of hills on which we had spent the noon before,  
in the adjacent town, the prospect is beautiful,  
and the grandeur of the mountain outlines un-  
surpassed. There was such a repose and quiet  
here at this hour, as if the very hillsides were  
enjoying the scene, and we passed slowly along,  
Jooking back over the country we had traversed,  
and listening to the evening song of the robin,  
‘we could not help contrasting the equanimity of  
nature with the bustle and impatience of man.

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96 A WALK To WacHUsErT.  
  
‘His words and actions presume always a crisis,  
near at hand, but she is forever silent and unpre  
tending.  
  
‘And now that we have returned to the desul-  
tory life of the plain, let us endeavor to import  
a little of that mountain grandeur into it. We  
will remember within what walls we lie, and  
understand that this level life too has its summit,  
and why from the mountain-top the deepest val-  
leys have a tinge of blue; that there is elevation  
in every hour, as no part of the earth is s0 low  
‘that the heavens may not be seen from, and we  
have only'to stand on the summit of our hour to  
command an uninterrupted horizon, . ~~  
  
‘We rested that night at Harvard, and the next  
morning, while one bent his steps to the nearer  
village of Groton, the other took his separate and  
solitary way to the -peaceful meadows of Con-  
cord; but let him not forget to record the brave  
hospitality of a farmer and his wife, who gener-  
ously entertained him at their board, though the  
poor wayfarer could only congratulate the oue  
‘on the continuance of hayweather, and silently  
accept the kindness of the other. Refreshed by  
this instance of generosity, no less than by the  
substantial viands set before him, he pushed for-  
ward with new vigor, and reached the banks of  
‘the Concord before the sun had climbed many  
degrees into the heaven:

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THE LANDLORD.  
[ue4s.]  
  
. Uspen the one word, honsesare-lacladed the  
school-house, the alms-house, the jail, the tavern,  
  
‘the dwelling-house; and the meanest shed or  
cave in which men live contains the elements of  
all these.\_But nowhere on the earth étands the  
entire and perfect house. ‘The Parthenon, St  
Peters, the Gothic minster, the palace, the lspvel,  
are but imperfect executions of an imperfect  
idea. Who would dwell in them? Perhaps to  
‘the\_eye of the gods, the cottage is more holy  
than the Parthenon, for they look down with no  
especial favor upon the shrines formally ded-  
cated to them, and that. should be the most  
sacred roof which shelters most of humanity.  
Sarély, then, the gods who are most interested  
in the human race preside over the Tavern,  
where especially men congregate. Methinks I  
see the thousand shrines erected to Hospitality  
shining afar in all countries, as well Mahometan  
and Jewish, as Christian, khans, and caravans:  
ries, and inns, whither all pilgrims without dis-  
tinction resort.”  
  
   
  
1

Page-9254

98 THE LANDLORD.  
  
‘Likewise we look in vain, east or west over  
‘the eafth, to find the perfect man; bat each rep-  
  
resents \_only some particular excellence. The  
Landlord is a man of more open and general  
sympathies, who possesses a spirit of hospitality  
oat ic ite Gare toward, and feeds and shelters  
men from pure love of the creatures. To be  
sure, this profession is as often filled by imper-  
fect characters, and such as have sought it from  
unworthy motives, as any other, but so much  
the more should we prize the true and honest  
Landlord ‘when we meet with him.  
  
‘Who has not imagined to himself a country inn,  
‘whog the traveller shall really feel in,and at home,  
and at his public-house, who was before at his  
private house; whose host is indeed a host, and  
a lord of the land, a self-appointed brother of his  
race; called to his place, beside, by all the winds  
of heaven and his good" genius, as traly as the  
preacher is called to preach; a man of such uni-  
versal sympathies, and so broad and genial a  
human nature, that he would fain sacrifice the  
tender but narrow ties of private friendsbip, to a  
broad, sunshiny, fair-weather-and-foul friendship  
for bis race; who loves men, not as a philoso  
pher, with philanthropy, nor as an overseer of  
‘the poor, with charity, but by a necessity of his  
nature, as he loves dogs and horses; and stand~  
ing at his open door from imorning till night,

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‘THE LANDLORD. 99  
  
would fain see more and more of them come  
along the highway, and is never satiated. To  
him the sun and moon are but travellers, the one  
by day and the other by night; and they too  
patronize his house. ‘To his imagination all  
things travel save his sign-post and himself; and  
though you may be his neighbor for years, he  
will show you only the civilities of the road.  
Bat on the other hand, while nations and indi-  
viduals are alike selfish and exclusive, he loves  
all men equally; and if he treats his nearest  
neighbor as a stranger, since he has invited all  
nations to share his hospitality, the farthest trav-  
elled is in some measure kindred to him who  
takes him into the bosom of his family.  
  
He keeps a house of entertainment at the sign  
  
of\_the Black Horse or the Spread Eagle, and is  
known far\_and wide, and his fame fravels sith  
increasing radius every year. All the neigh-  
borhood is in his interest, and if the traveller ask  
how far toa tavern, he receives some such an-  
swer as this: “ Well, sir, there’s a house about  
three miles from here, where they haven't taken  
down their sign yet; but it’s only ten miles to  
Slocum’s, and that’s a capital house, both for  
man and beast.” At thiee miles he passes a  
cheerlgss barrack, standing desolate behind its  
sign-post, neither public nor private, and has  
glimpses of a discontented couple who have

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100 ‘THE LANDLORD.  
  
mistaken their calling. At ten miles see where  
the Tavern stands, — really an entertaining pros-  
pect, —so public and inviting that only the rain  
and snow do not enter. It is no gay pavilion,  
made of bright stuffs, and furnished with nuts  
and gingerbread, but as plain and sincere as a  
caravansary ; located in no Tarrytown, where  
you receive only the civilities of c  
far in the fields it exercises a prit  
ity, amid the‘fresh scent of new hay and rasp-  
berries, if it be summer time, and the tinkling of  
cow-bells from invisible pastures; for it is a land  
flowing with milk and honey, and the newest  
milk courses in a broad, deep stream across the  
premises,  
  
In these retired places the tavern is first of all  
‘a house —elsewhere, last of all, or never,— and  
warms and shelters its inhabitants. It is as sim-  
ple and sincere in its essentials as the caves in  
which the first men dwelt, but it is also as open  
  
and public. ‘The traveller steps across the thresh-  
old, and Jo! he too is master, for he only can be  
called Sea ‘of the house here who Theres  
with most propriety in it, ‘The Landlord stands  
d ick\_in\_nature, to my imagination, with  
his axe and spade felling trees and raising pota-  
toes with the vigor of a pioneer; with Prome-  
thean energy making nature yield her increase to  
supply the wants of so many ; and he is not so

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‘THE LANDLORD. 101  
  
exhausted, nor of s0 short a stride, but that he  
comes forward even to the highway to this wide  
hospitality and publicity. Surely, he has solved  
some of the problems of life. He comes in at  
his backdoor, holding a log fresh cut for the  
hearth-upon his shoulder with one hand, while  
he greets the newly arrived traveller with the  
other.  
  
Here at length we have free range, as not in  
palaces, nor cottages, nor temples, and intrude  
nowkesAIl-tae secrets of housekeeping are  
exhibited to the eyes of men, above and below,  
  
efore and behind. This is the necessary way  
to live, men have confessed, in these days, and  
shall he skulk and hide? And why should we  
have any serious disgust at kitchens? Perhaps  
they are the holiest recess of the house. ‘There  
is the hearth, after all, —and the settle, and the  
fagots, and the kettle, and the crickets. We  
have pleasant reminiscences of these. ‘They are  
the heart, the left ventricle, the very vital part of  
the house. Here the real and sincere life which  
we meet in the streets was actually fed and  
sheltered. Here burns the taper that cheers the  
lonely traveller by night, and from this hearth  
ascend the smokes that populate the valley to  
his eyes by day. On the whole, a man may not  
be so little ashamed of any other part of his  
house, for here is his sincerity and earnest, at

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102 ‘THE LANDLORD.  
  
least. It may not be here that the besoms are  
plied most, —it is not here that they need to be,  
for dust will not settle on the kitchen floor more  
than in nature,  
  
Hence it will not do for the Landlord to pos-  
  
‘sess too He must have health  
above idents of life, subject to  
  
no modern fashionable diseases ; but no taste,  
rather a vast relish or appetite. His sentiments  
on all subjects will be delivered as freely as the  
wind blows ; there is nothing private or individ-  
ual in them, though still original, but they are  
public, and of the hue of the heavens over his  
house, —a certain out-of-door obviousness and  
‘transparency not to be disputed. What he does,  
his manners are not to be complained of, though  
abstractly offensive, for it is what man does, and  
in him the race is exhibited. When he eats, he  
is liver and bowels, and the whole digestive  
apparatus to the company, and so all admit the  
thing is done, He must have no idiosynerasies,  
no particular bents or tendencies to this or that,  
but a general, uniform, and healthy development,  
such as his portly person indicates, offering him-  
self equally on all sides to men. He is not one  
of your peaked and inhospitable men of genius,  
with particular tastes, but, as we said before,  
has one uniform relish, and taste which never  
aspires higher than a tavern-sign, or the cut of

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‘THE LANDLORD. 103  
  
a weather-cock. The man of genius, like a dog  
with a bone, or the slave who has swallowed a  
diamond, or a patient with the gravel, sits afar  
and retired, off the road, hangs out no sign of  
refreshment for man and beast, but says, by all  
possible hints and signs, I wish to be alone—  
good-by — farewell. But the landlord can af-  
ford to live without privacy. He entertains no  
  
   
  
private thought, he cherishes no solitary hour,  
no\_Sabb; v ert  
  
the dignity of reason, — and talks, and ieads the  
newspaper. What he does not tell to one trav-  
eller, he tells to another. He never wants to be  
alone, but sleeps, wakes, eats, drinks, sociably,  
still remembering his race. He walks abroad  
through the thoughts of men, and the Iliad and  
Shakepeare are tame to him, who hears the rude  
but homely incidents of the road from every  
traveller. The mail might drive through his  
brain in the midst of his most lonely soliloquy,  
without disturbing his equanimity, provided it  
brought plenty of news and passengers, There  
ean be no pro-fanity where there is no fane be-  
hind, and the whole world may see quite round  
him. Percbance his lines have fallen to him in  
dustier places, and he has heroically sat down.  
where two roads meet, or at the Four Comers,  
or the Five Points, and his life is sublimely triv-  
ial for the good of men. The dust of travel

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104 ‘THE LANDLORD.  
  
blows ever in his eyes, and they preserve their  
clear, complacent look. ‘The hourlies and half  
hourlies, the dailies and weeklies, whirl on well-  
worn tracks, round and round his house, as if it  
were the goal in the stadium, and still he sits  
within in unruffled serenity, with no show of  
retreat. His neighbor dwells timidly behind a  
screen of poplars and willows, and a fence with  
sheaves of spears at regular intervals, or defended  
against the tender palms of visitors by sharp  
spikes, —but the traveller’s wheels rattle over  
the door-step of the tavern, and he cracks bis  
whip in the entry. He is truly glad to see you,  
and sincere as the ball’s-eye over his door. “The  
traveller seeks.to find, wherever he goes, some  
one who will stand in this broad and catholic re~  
ation to him, who will be an inhabitant of the  
land to him a stranger, and represent its human  
nature, as the rock stands for its inanimate na-  
ture ; and this is he. As his erib furnishes prov-  
ender for the traveller’s horse, and his larder  
provisions for his appetite, so his conversation  
furnishes the necessary aliment to his spirits,  
‘He\_knows very well what a man wants, for he  
is @ man himself, and as it were the farthest  
travelled, though he has never stirred from his  
door. He understands his\_needs and destiny.  
He would be well fed and lodged, there can be  
tio doubt, and have the transient sympathy of a

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‘THE LANDLORD. 105  
  
cheerful companion, and of a heart which always  
prophesics fair weather. And after all the great-  
‘est men, even, want much more the sympathy  
which every honest fellow can give, than that  
which the great only can impart. If he is not  
the most upright, let us allow him this praise,  
that he is the most downright of men, He has  
a hand to shake and to be shaken, and takes a  
sturdy and unquestionable interest in you, as if  
he had assumed the care of you, but if you will  
break your neck, he will even give you the best  
advice as to the method.  
  
The ets have not\_been ungrateful to  
their Taedlonde Mine Gost of the Tabard In,  
in the Prologue to the Canterbury ‘Tales, was  
an honor to his profession : —  
  
“A semely man our Hoste was, with all  
For to ban been an marshal in an halle.  
‘A largo man he was, with eyen stepe ;  
‘A fairer burgeis is ther non in Chepe :  
  
~ Bold of his epeche, and wise, and well ytaught,  
‘And of manhood him lacked righte naught,  
Eke thereto, was he right a mery man,  
‘And after souper plaien he began,  
And spake of mirthe amonges other thinges,  
‘Whan that we hadden made our reckoninges.”  
  
   
  
   
  
He is the true house-band, and centre of the  
company — of greater fellowship and practical  
social talent than any. He it is that proposes

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106 ‘THE LANDLORD.  
  
that each shall tell a tale to while away the  
time to Canterbury, and leads them himself,  
and concludes with his own tale: —  
  
“Now, by my faders soule that is ded,  
Bat ye be mery, smiteth of my hed:  
Hold up your hondes withouten more speche.”  
  
If we do not look up to the Landlord, we  
look round for him on all emergencies, for he  
is a man of infinite experience, who unites  
hands with wit. He is a more publie character  
than a statesman, —a publican, and not conse-  
quently a sinner; and surely, he, if any, should  
be exempted from taxation and military duty.  
  
‘Talking with our host is next\_best\_and in-  
structive to talking with one’s self It is a  
sizore\_consclous soliloquy ; as it were, to speak  
generally, and try what we would say provided  
we had an audience. He has indulgent and  
open ears, and does not require petty and par-  
ticular statements. “ Heigho!” exclaims the  
traveller. 'Themn’s my sentiments, thinks mine  
host, and stands ready for what may come  
next, expressing the purest symipathy by his  
demeanor. “ Hot as blazes !”. says the other,  
— “Hard weather, sir, — not much stirring  
nowadays,” says he. He is wiser than to con-  
tradict his guest in any case; he lets him go on,  
he lets him travel.

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‘TSE LANDLORD. 107  
  
‘The latest sitter leaves him standing far in  
the night, prepared to live right on, while suns  
rise and set, and his “ good night” has as brisk  
a sound as his “ good morning;” and the earliest  
riser finds him tasting his liquors in the bay ere  
flies begin to buzz, with a countenance fresh as  
the morning star over the sanded floor, — and  
not as one who had watched all night for trav-  
ellers. And yet, if beds be the subject of con-  
-versation, it will appear that no man has been  
a sounder sleeper in his time,  
  
Finally, as for his moral character, we do not  
hes (gurl mage ines baa no pial af lamer  
meanness in him, but represents just that de-  
gree of virtue which all men relish without be-  
ing obliged to respect. He is a good man, as  
his bitters are good, —an unquestionable good-  
ness, Not what is called a good man,— good  
to be considered, as a work of art in galleries  
and museums, — but a good fellow, that is,  
‘good to be associated with. Who ever thought  
of the religion of an innkeeper— whether he was  
joined to the Church, partook of the sacrament,  
said his prayers, feared God, or the like? No  
doubt he has had his experiences, has felt a  
change, and is a firm believer in the persever-  
ance of the saints. In this last, we suspect,  
does the peculiarity of his religion consist. But  
hhe keeps an inn, and not a conscience. How

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108 ‘THE LANDLORD.  
  
many fragrant charities and sincere social vir-  
tues are implied in this daily offering of him-  
self to the public. He cherishes good will to  
all, and gives the wayfarer as good and honest  
advige to direct him on his road as the priest.  
To conclude, the tavern will compare favor-  
ably with the church. The church is the place  
where prayers and sermons are delivered, but  
the tavern is where they are to take effect, and  
if the former are good, the latter cannot be bad.

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A WINTER WALK.  
(sis)  
  
‘Tue wind has gently murmured through the  
bisd;ar pulled SilK feathery somes againat  
the\_windows, and occasionally sighed like a  
summer zephyr lifting the leaves along, the live-  
long night. ‘The meadow-mouse has slept in  
his snug gallery in the sod, the owl has sat ina  
hollow tree in the depth of the swamp, the rab-  
bit, the squirrel, and the fox have all been  
housed, ‘The watch-dog has lain quiet on the  
hearth, and the cattle have stood silent in their \_  
stalls. The earth itself has slept, as it were its  
first, not its Tast sleep, save when some street-  
sign or wood-house door has faintly creaked  
upon its hinge, cheering forlorn nature at her  
midnight work,— the only sound awake twixt  
Venus and Mars, — advertising us of a remote  
inward warmth, a divine cheer and fellowship,  
‘where gout ire inet together, bol where it la vary  
bleak for men to stand. But while the earth  
has slumbered, all the air has been alive  
  
feathery flakes descending, as if some northemm

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gue  
  
110 A WINTER WALK.  
  
Ceres reigned, showering her silvery grain over  
all the fields,  
  
‘We sleep, and at length awake to the still  
reality of a \_winter\_morning. The snow lies  
‘warm as cotton or down upon the window-sill ;  
the broadened sash and frosted panes admit a  
dim and private light, which enhances the snug  
cheer within. The stillness of the morning  
impressive. The floor creaks under our feet as  
we move toward the window to look abroad  
through some clear space over the fields, We  
see the roofs stand under their snow burden.  
From the eaves and fences hang stalactites of  
snow, and in the yard stand stalagmites cover-  
ing some concealed core. ‘The trees and shrubs  
rear white arms to the sky on every side; and  
where were walls and fences, we see fantastic  
forms\_stretching in’ frolic gambolsaaross the  
dusky landscape, as\_if nature had strewn her  
fregh\_designs over the fields by night as models  
  
for man’s art.  
  
Silently we unlatch the door, letting the drift  
fall in, and step abroad to face the cutting air.  
Already the stars have lost some of their sparkle,  
and a dull, leaden mist skirts the horizon, A  
lurid brazen light in the east proclaims the ap-  
proach of day, while the western landscape is  
dim and spectral still, and clothed in a sombre  
‘Tartarian light, like the shadowy realms. ‘They

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A WINTER WALK. 1a  
  
are Infernal sounds only that you hear,—the  
crowing of cocks, the barking of dogs, the chop-  
ping of wood, the lowing of kine, all seem to  
come from Pluto’s barn-yard and beyond the  
Styx;—not for any melancholy they suggest,  
but their twilight bustle-is too solemn and mys-  
terious for earth. The recent of the fox  
or otter, in the yard, remind us that each hour  
of the night is crowded with events, and the  
primeval nature is still working and making  
tracks in the snow. Opening the gate, we tread  
briskly along the lone country road, crunching  
the dry and crisped snow under our feet, or  
aroused by the sharp clear creak of the wood-  
sled, just starting for the distant market, from  
the early farmer's door, where it has Iain the  
summer’ long, dreaming amid the chips and  
stubble; while far through the drifts and pow-  
dered windows we see the farmer’s early candle,  
like a paled star, emitting. a lonely beam, as if  
some severe virtue were at its matins there.  
‘And one by one the smokes begin to ascend  
from the chimneys amidst the trees and snows.  
  
‘The slugzish smoke curs up from some deep del,  
“The aifened air exploring inthe dawn,  
  
‘And making slow aoquaiutance withthe day ;  
Delaying now upon its heavenward course,  
  
In wreatbod literings dallying with itself,  
  
With as uncertain purpose and slow deed,

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12 A WINTER WALK.  
  
‘As ita halfwakened master by tho hearth,  
‘Whowe mind atl slumbering and sluggish thoughts  
Have not yet swept into the onward current  
OF the new day;—and now it treams afar,  
‘The while the chopper goes with step direct  
‘And mind intent toswing the early axe.  
Fint in the dusky dawn be sends abroad  
“is early scout, his emiseary, smoke,  
‘The earict, atest pilgrim from the 00  
‘To feel the frosty ar, inform the day;  
‘And while be crouches ail beside the hearth,  
‘Nor mosters courage to unbar the door,  
has gone dowa the glen with the light wind,  
‘And ofer the plain unfurod its venturous wreatb,  
Draped the treetops, loitored upon the hill  
‘And warmed the pinions of the early bird  
‘And now, perchance, high in the crispy ai,  
‘Has caught sight of the day o'er the earth's edge,  
‘And greets its mastor’s eye at hs low door,  
‘As some refulgent cloud inthe upper sky.  
  
‘We hear the sound of wood-chopping at the  
farmers’ doors, far over the frozen earth, the bay-  
ing of the house-dog, and the distant clarion of  
the cock. ‘Though the thin and frosty air con-  
veys only the finer particles of sound to our  
ears, with short and sweet vibrations, as the  
waves subside soonest on the purest and lightest  
liquids, in which gross substances sink to ‘the  
bottom. ‘They come clear and bell-like, and  
from a greater distance in the horizon, as if  
there were fewer impediments than in summer

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A WINTER WALK. 113  
  
to make them faint and ragged. “The ground is  
  
songrous, like seasoned wood, and even the or-  
dinary rural sounds are melodious, and the jing-  
  
ling of the ice on the trees is sweet and liquid,  
‘There \_is the least possible moisture in the at-  
mosphere, all being dried up, or congealed, and  
ie of mech extreme tonuliy and clanicity, chat  
‘it becomes a source of delight. The withdrawn  
and tense sky seems groined like the aisles of a  
cathedral, and the polished air sparkles as if  
there were crystals of ice floating in it. As they  
who have resided in Greenland tell us, that,  
when it freezes, “the sea smokes like buming  
turfland, and a fog or mist arises, called frost-  
smoke,” which “ cutting smoke frequently raises  
blisters on the face and hands, and is very per-  
nicious to the health.” But this pure stinging  
cold is an elixir to the lungs, and not so much a  
frozen mist, as a crystallized midsummer haze,  
refined and purified by cold. -  
  
The sun\_at length rises through the distant  
woods, as if with the faint clashing swinging  
sound of cymbals, melting the air with his  
beams, and with such rapid steps the morning  
travels, that already his rays are gilding the  
distant western mountains. Meanwhile we step  
hastily along through the powdery snow, warmed  
by an inward heat, enjoying an Indian summer  
sly fa the inorensoT glow oF Wought and foe  
  
a8

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14 A WINTER WALK.  
  
ing. Probably if our lives were more conformed  
to nature, we should not need to defend our-  
selves against her heats\_and colds, but find her  
Gur constant nurse and friend, as do plants and  
qnadmupeds. If our bodies were fed with pure  
and simple elements, and not with a stimulating  
and heating diet, they would afford no more  
pasture for cold than a leafless twig, but thrive  
like the trees, which find even winter genial to  
their expansion.  
  
‘The wonderful purity of nature at this 20n  
is a most pleasing fact. Every decayed stump  
  
and\_moss-growa stone and rail, and the dead  
  
leaves of autumn, are concealed by a clean nap-  
kin\_of snow. In the bare fields and tinkling  
  
woods, see what virtue survives. In the coldest  
and bleakest places, the warmest charities still  
maintain a foothold. A cold and searching  
wind drives away all contagion, and nothing  
ean withstand if but what has a virtue in it;  
and accordingly, whatever we meet with in cold  
and bleak places, as the tops of mountains, we  
respect for a sort of sturdy innocence, a Puritan  
toughness. All things beside seem to be called  
in for shelter, and what stays out must be part  
of the original frame of the universe, and of  
such valor as God himself. It is invigorating to  
breathe the cleansed air. Its greater fineness  
and purity are visible to the eye, and we would

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A WINTER WALK. 15  
  
fain stay out long and late, that the gales may  
sigh through us, too, as through the leafless trees,  
and fit us for the winter:—as if we hoped 50  
“to borrow some pure and steadfast virtue, which  
will stead us in all seasons.  
  
‘There is a slumbering subterranean fire in  
  
nature which never goes out, and which no cold  
can chill. It finally melts the great snow, and  
  
in January or July is only buried under a thicker  
of thinner covering. In the coldest day it flows  
sowewhere, and the snow melts around every  
tree. This field of winter rye, which sprouted  
‘Tate in the fall, and now speedily dissolves the  
snow, is where the fire is very thinly covered.  
‘We feel warmed by it.\_In the winter, warmth  
stands for all virtue, and we resort in thought to  
a trickling rill, with its bare stones shining in  
the sun, and to warm springs in the woods, with  
‘as much eagerness a rabbits and robins. The  
‘steam which rises from swamps and pools, is as  
dear\_and domestic as that of our own kettle.  
‘What fire could ever equal the sunshine of a  
winter's day, when the meadow mice come opt  
by the wallsides, and the chicadee lisps in the  
defiles of the wood? The warmth comes di-  
rectly from the sun, and is not radiated from the  
earth, as in summer; and when we feel his  
beams on our backs as we are treading some  
snowy dell, we are grateful as for a special kind-

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116 A WINTER WALK.  
  
ness, and bless the sun which has followed us  
into that by-place.  
  
This subterranean fire has its altar in each  
man’s breast, for in the coldest day, and on the  
bleakest hill, the traveller cherishes a warmer fire  
within the folds of his cloak than is kindled on  
any hearth, A healthy man, indeed, is the com-  
plement of the seasons, and in winter, summer  
is in his heart, ‘There is the south. Thither  
have all birds and insects migrated, and around  
the warm springs in his breast are gathered the  
robin and the lark.  
  
‘At length, having reached the edge of the  
woods, and shut out the gadding town, we enter  
within their covert as we go under the roof of a  
coifage, and cross its threshold, all ceiled and  
Sane ‘up with snow. ‘They are glad and warm  
still, and as genial and cheery in winter as in  
summer. As we stand in the midst of the pines,  
in the flickering and checkered light which sirag-  
gles but little way into their maze, we wonder  
if the towns Imve ever heard their simple story.  
It seems to us that no traveller has ever explored.  
‘them, and notwithstanding the wonders which  
science is elsewhere revealing every day, who  
would not like to hear their annals?’ Our hum-  
ble villages in the plain are their contribution.  
‘We borrow from the forést the boards which  
shelter, and the sticks which warm us. How

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\* ears  
  
A WINTER WALK, 7  
  
important is their evergreen to the winter, that ~  
portion of the summer which does not fade, the  
permanent year, the unwithered grass. Thus  
simply, and with little expense of altitude, is the  
surface of the earth diversified. What would  
human life be without forests, those natural  
cities? From the tops of mountains they ap-  
ear like smooth shaven lawns, yet whither shall  
‘we walk but in this taller grass?  
  
In this glade covered with bushes of a year's  
growth, see how the silvery dust lies on every  
seared leaf and twig, deposited in such infinite  
and luxurious forms as by their very variety  
atone for the absence of color. Observe the tiny  
tracks of mice around every stem, and the tr  
angular tracks of the rabbit. A pure elastic  
heaven hangs over all, as if the impurities of  
‘the summer sky, refined and shrunk by the  
chaste winter’s cold, had been winnowed from  
the heavens upon the earth.  
  
Nature confounds her summer distinctions at  
this Season. The heavens seem to be nearer the  
earth. ‘The clements are Tess reserved and dis-  
finct.\_\_Water turns to ice, rain to snow. The,  
  
doy is but a Beandinavian night. The winter  
  
is an arctic summer.  
  
   
  
fe that is in  
nature, the furred life which still survives the  
stinging nights, and, from amidst fields and

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118 A WINTER WALK.  
  
woods covered with frost and snow, sees the  
sun rise.  
  
“The foodlese wilds  
Pour forth their brown inhabitants.”  
  
‘The gray squirrel and rabbit are brisk and play-  
fal in the remote glens, even on the morning of  
the cold Friday. Here is our Lapland and Lab-  
rador, and for our Esquimaux and Knistenaux,  
Dog-ribbed Indians, Novazemblaites, and Spitz-  
bergeners, are there not the ice-cutter and wood-  
chopper, the fox, musk-rat, and mink?  
  
Still, in the midst of the arctic day, we may  
trace the summer to its retreats, and sympathize  
with some contemporary life. Stretched over the  
«brooks, in the midst of the frost-bound meadows,  
we may observe the submarine cottages of the  
caddice-worms, the larvae of the Plicipennes.  
‘Their small cylindrical cases built around them-  
selves, composed of flags, sticks, grass, and with-  
ered leaves, shells, and pebbles, in form and  
color like the wrécks which strew the bottom, —  
now drifting along over the pebbly bottom, now  
whirling in tiny eddies and dashing down steep  
falls, or sweeping rapidly along with the current,  
or else swaying to and fro at the end of some  
grass-blade or root. Anon they will leave their  
sunken habitations, and, crawling up the stems  
of plants. or to the surface, like gnats, as perfect

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A WINTER WALK. 119  
  
insects henceforth, flutter over the surface of  
the water, or sacrifice their short lives in the  
flame of our candles at evening. Down yonder  
little glen the shrubs are drooping under their  
Durden, and the red alder-berries contrast with  
the white ground. Here are the marks of a  
myriad feet which have already been abroad.  
‘The sun rises as proudly over such a glen, as  
over the valley of the Seine or the Tiber, and it  
seems the residence of a pure and self-subsistent  
‘valor, such as they never witnessed ; which never  
knew defeat nor fear. Here reign the simplicity  
‘and\_putity of a primitive age, and a health and  
  
hope far remote from towns and cities. Stand-  
ing quite alone, far in the forest, while the  
wind is shaking down snow from the trees,  
and leaving the only human tracks behind us,  
we find .our reflections of a richer variety  
than the life of cities. The chicadee and nut  
hatch are more inspiring society than statesmen  
and philosophers, and we shall return to these  
last, as to! more vulgar companions. In this  
lonely glen, with its brook draining the slopes,  
its creased ice and crystals of all hues, where  
the spruces and hemlocks stand up on either  
side, and the rush and sere wild oats in the  
rivulet itself, our lives are more serene and  
worthy to contemplate.  
  
‘As the day advances, the heat of the sun ig

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120 ‘A WINTER WALK.  
  
reflected by the hill-sides, and we hear @ faint  
but sweet music, where flows the rill released  
“from its fetters, and the icicles are melting on  
the trees; and the nuthatch and partridge are  
heard and seen. ‘The south wind melts the  
snow at noon, and the bare ground appears  
with its withered grass and leaves, and we are  
invigorated by the perfume which exhales from  
it, as by the scent of strong meats.  
  
Let us go into this deserted woodman’s hut,  
and\_see how he has passed the long winter  
nights and the short and stormy days. For  
here man bas lived under this south billside,  
and it seems a civilized.and public spot. We  
have such associations as when the traveller  
stands by the ruins of Palmyra or Heeatompolis.  
Singing birds and flowers perchance have begun  
to appear here, for flowers as well as weeds fol-  
low in the footsteps of man. These hemlocks  
whispered over his head, these hickory logs were  
his fuel, and these pitch-pine roots kindled his  
fire; yonder fuming rill in the hollow, whose  
thin and airy vapor still ascends as busily as  
ever, though he is far off now, was his well.  
‘These hemlock boughs, and the straw upon this  
raised platform, were his bed, and this broken  
dish held his drink. But he has not been here  
this season, for the phabes built their nest upon  
this shelf last summer. I find some embers left,

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A WINTER WALK, 121  
  
as if he had but just gone out, where he baked  
his pot of beans; and while at evening he smoked  
his pipe, whose stemless bowl lies in the ashes,  
chatted with his only companion, if perchance  
he had any, about the depth of the snow on the  
morrow, already falling fast and thick without,  
or disputed whether the last sound was the  
screech of an owl, or the creak of a bough, or  
imagination only; and through this broad chim.  
ney throat, in the late winter evening, ere he  
stretched himself upon the straw, he looked up  
to learn the progress of the storm, and, seeing  
the bright stars of Cassiopeia’s chair shining  
brightly down upon him, fell contentedly asleep.  
  
See\_how many traces from which we may  
learn the chopper’s history. From this stump  
we Tay guess the sharpness of his axe, and,  
from the slope of the stroke, on whic®side he  
stood, and whether he cut down the tree with-  
out going round, it or changing hands; and,  
from the flexure of the splinters, we may know  
which way it fell. This one chip contains in-  
scribed on it the whole history of the wood-  
chopper and of the world. On this scrap of  
paper, which held bis sugar or salt, perchance,  
or was the wadding of his gun, sitting on a log  
in the forest, with what interest we read the tat-  
tle of cities, of those larger huts, empty and to  
let, like this, in High Streets and Broadways,

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122 ‘A WINTER WALK.  
  
‘The eaves are dripping on the south side of this  
simple roof, while the titmouse lisps in the pine,  
and the genial warmth of the sun around the  
door is somewhat kind and human.  
  
After two seasons, this rude dwelling does not  
deform the scene, Already the birds resort to it,  
to build their nest, and ‘you may track fo its  
door the feet of many quadrupeds. Thus, for a  
long time, nature overlooks the encroachment  
and profanity of man. The wood still cheer-  
fally and unsuspiciously echoes the strokes of  
the axe that fells it, and while they are few and  
seldom, they enhance its wildness, and all the  
elements strive to naturalize the sound.  
  
Now our path begins to ascend gradually to  
the top of this high hill, from whose precipitous  
south side we can look over the broad country,  
of foreft and field and river, to the distant  
snowy mountains. See yonder thin column of  
smoke curling up through the woods from some  
invisible farm-house; the standard raised over  
some rural homestead. There must be a warmer  
and nore genial spot there below, as where we  
detect the vapor from a spring forming a cloud  
shore tie Eee What fine relations are etab-  
lished between the traveller who discovers, this  
airy column from some eminence in the forest,  
and him who sits below. Up goes the smoke  
as silently and naturally as the vapor exbales

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A WINTER WALK. 123  
  
from the leaves, and as busy disposing itself in  
‘wreathes as the hdusewife on the hearth below.  
It is a hieroglyphic of man’s life, and suggests  
‘more intimate and important things than the  
boiling of a pot. Where its fine column rises  
above the forest, like an ensign, some human  
life has planted itself,—and such is the begin-  
ning of Rome, the establishment of the arts, and  
‘the foundation of empires, whether on the prai-  
ries of America, or the steppes of Asia.  
  
And now we descend again to the brink of  
this woodland lake, which lies in a hollow of the  
hills, as if it were their expressed juice, and that  
of the leaves, which are annually steeped in it.  
‘Without outlet or inlet to the eye, it has still its  
history, in the lapse of its waves, in the rounded  
pebbles on its shore, and in the pines which  
grow down to its brink. It has not been idle,  
though sedentary, but, like Aba Musa, teaches  
that “sitting still at home is the heavenly way ;  
the going out is the way of the world.” Yet in  
its evaporation it travels as'far as any. In sum-  
mer it is the earth’s liquid eye; a mirror in the  
breast of nature, The sine of the wood are  
washed out in it. See how the woods form an  
amphitheatre about it, and it is an arena for all  
the genialness of natuye, All trees direct the  
traveller to its brink, all paths seek it out, birds  
fly to it, quadrupeds flee to it, and the very

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14 ‘A WINTER WALK.  
  
ground inclines toward it, It is natare’s saloon,  
where sht bas sat down to her toilet. Consider  
her silent economy and tidiness; how the sun  
‘comes with his evaporation to sweep the dust  
from its surface each morning, and a fresh sur-  
face is constantly welling up; and annually,  
after whatever impurities have accumulated  
herein, its liquid transparency appears again in  
the spring. In summer a hushed music seem’  
to sweep across ite surface.” But now a plain  
sheet of snow conceals it from our eyes, except  
where the wind has swept the ice bare, and the  
sere leaves are gliding from side to side, tacking  
and veering on their tiny voyages. Here is one  
just keeled up against a pebble on shore, a dry  
beech-leaf, rocking still, as if it would start  
again. A skilful engineer, methinks, might pro-  
ject its course since it fell from the parent stem.  
Here are all the elements for such a calculation.  
Its present position, the direction of the wind,  
the level of the pond, and how much more is  
given, In its scarred edges and veins is its log  
rolled up.  
‘We fancy ourselves in the inter  
  
table or sanded floor, and the woods rise abruptly  
from its edge, like the walls of a cottage. The  
lines set to catch pickerel through the ice look  
like a larger culinary preparation, and the men

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A WINTER WALK. 125  
  
stand about on the white ground like pieces of  
forest furniture. The actions of these men, at  
the distance of half a mile over the ice and  
snow, impress us as when we read the exploits  
of Alexander in history. They seem not un-  
worthy of the scenery, and as momentous as the  
conquest of kingdoms.  
  
Again we have wandered through the arches  
of the wood, until from its skirts we hear the  
digtant booming of ice from yonder bay of the  
river, as if it were moved by some other and  
subiler tide than oceans know. ‘To me it has a  
strange sound of home, thrilling as the voice of  
one’s distant and noble kindred. A. mild sum-  
mer sun shines over forest and lake, and though  
there is but one green leaf for many rods, yet  
nature enjoys a serene health. Every sound is  
franght with the same mysterious assurance of  
health, as well now the creaking of the boughs  
in January, a3 the soft sough of the wind in July.  
  
‘When Winter finges every bough  
‘With his fantastic wreath,  
  
And puts the seal of silenes now  
‘Upon the leaves beneath;  
  
‘When every stream in its penthouse  
Goes gurgling on its way,  
  
And in his gallery the mouse  
‘Nibbleth the meadow bay;  
  
‘Methinks the summer sills nigh,  
‘And lurketh underneath,

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126  
  
A WINTER WALK.  
  
‘As that same meadow-mouse doth lie  
‘Snug in that last yoar's heath.  
  
‘And if perchance the chicadeo  
Lisp a faint note anon,  
  
‘The snow is summer's canopy,  
‘Which she herself put on.  
  
Fair blossoms deck the cheerful trees,  
‘And dazzling fruits depend,  
  
‘Tho north wind sighs a summer breeze,  
‘The nipping frosts to fond,  
  
Bringing glad tidings unto me,  
‘The while I stand all ear,  
  
Of a sorene eternity, .  
‘Which need not winter fear.  
  
Out on the silent pond straightway  
‘The restless ico doth crack,  
  
‘And pond sprites merry gambols play  
‘Amid the deafening rack.  
  
   
  
Enger I hasten to the vale,  
Asif [heard brave news,  
How nature held high festival,  
  
‘Which it were hard to lose.  
  
   
  
‘As each now crack darts in a trice  
‘Across the gladsome lake.  
  
One with the cricket in the ground,  
‘And fagot on the hearth,  
  
Resounds the rare domestic sound  
‘Along the forest path.

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‘A WINTER WALK. 127  
  
Before night we will take a journey on  
slong Gi cous of this menudaiag ver au fl  
of novelty to one who sits by the cottage fire all  
\* the winter's day, as if it were over the polar ice,  
with Captain Parry or Franklin following the  
winding of the stream, now flowing amid hills,  
now spreading out into fair meadows, and form-  
ing a myriad coves and bays where the pine and  
hemlock overarch. The river flows in the rear  
of the towns, and we see all things from a new.  
and wilder side. ‘The fields and gardens come  
down to it with a frankness, and freedom from  
pretension, which they do not wear on the high-  
way. It is the outside and edge of the earth.  
Our eyes are not offended by violent contrasts.  
‘The last rail of the farmer’s fence is some sway-  
ing willow bodgh, which still preserves its fresh-  
ness, and here at length all fences stop, and we  
no longer cross any road. We may go far up  
within the country now by the most retired and  
level road, never climbing a hill, but by broad  
levels ascending to the upland meadows. It is  
a beautiful illustration of the law of ol  
the flow of a river; the path for a sick man, a  
highway down which an acorn cup may float  
secure with its freight. Its slight occasional  
falls, whose precipices would not diversify the  
landscape, are celebrated by mist and spray, and  
attract the taveller from far and net

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128 A WINTER WALK.  
  
the remote interior, its current conducts him by  
broad and easy steps, or by one gentle inclined  
plane, to the sea. Thus by an early and con-  
stant yielding to the inequalities of the ground,  
it secures itself the easiest passage.  
  
No\_domain of nature is quite closed to man  
at all times, and now we draw near to the em-  
pire of the fishes. Our fect glide ewiftly over  
unfathomed depths, where in summer our line  
tempted the pout and perch, and where the  
  
‘Potately\_pickerel lurked in the long corridors  
formed by the bulrusbes. ‘The deep, impenetra-  
ble marsh, where the heron waded, and bittern  
squatted, is made pervious to our swift shoes, as  
if a thousand railroads had been made into it,  
‘With one impulse we are carried to the cabin  
of the musk-rat, that earliest settler, and see  
him dart away under the transparent ice, like a  
farred fish, to his hole in the bank; and we glide  
rapidly over meadows where lately the mower  
whet his scythe,” through beds of frozen cran-  
berries mixed with meadow grass, We skate  
  
Rear to where the blackbird, the pewee, and the  
kkingbird hung their nests over the water, and the  
hornets builded from the maple in the swamp.  
‘How many gay warblers following the sun, have  
radiated from this nest of silver-birch and thistle-  
down. On the swamp’s outer edge was hung  
‘the sup@marine village, where no foot pene-

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A WINTER WALK. 129  
  
trated. In this hollow tree the wood-duck reared  
her brood, and slid away each day to forage in  
yonder fen.  
In winter, nature \_is\_a cabinet of curiosities,  
fed specimens, in their natural order  
and position. ‘The meadows and forests are a  
horfus\_siccus. The Teaves and grasses stand  
perfectly pressed by the air without screw or  
gam, and the birds’ nests are not hung on an  
artificial twig, but where they builded them.  
‘We go about dryshod to inspect the summer's  
work in the rank swamp, and see what a growth  
have got the alders, the willows, and the maples;  
testifying to how many warm suns, and fertiliz-  
ing dews and showers. See what strides their  
boughs took in the luxuriant summer, —and  
anon these dormant buds will carry them on-  
ward and upward another span into the heavens.  
Occasionally we wade through fields of snow,  
under whose depths the river is lost for many  
rods, to appear again to the right or left, where  
we least expected; still holding on its way  
underneath, with a faint, stertorous, rambling  
sound, as if, like the bear and marmot, it too  
had hibernated, and we had followed its faint  
suinmer-trail to where it earthed itself in snow  
and ice. At first we should have thought that  
rivers would be empty and dry in midwinter, or  
else frozen solid till the spring thawed them;  
®

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130 A WINTER WALK.  
  
but their volume is not diminished even, for  
only a superficial cold bridges their surface.  
‘The thousand springs which feed the lakes and  
streams are flowing still. The issues of a few  
surface springs only are closed, and they go to  
swell the deep reservoirs. Nature's wells are  
below the frost ‘The summer brooks are not  
filled \_with\_snow-water, nor does the mower  
wuench his thirst with that alone. ‘The streams  
are swollen when the snow melts in the spring,  
because nature’s work has been delayed, the  
water being turned into ice and snow, whose  
particles are less smooth and round, and do not  
find their level 0 soon.  
  
Far over the ice, between the hemlock woods  
and snow-clad hills, stands the pickerel fisher,  
his lines set in some retired cove, like a Fin-  
lander, with his arms thrust into the pouches  
of his dreadnought; with dull, snowy, fishy  
thoughts, himself a finless fish, separated a few  
inches from his race; dumb, erect, and made to  
be enveloped in clouds and snows, like the pines  
on shore. In these wild ecenes, men stand about  
in the scenery, or move deliberately and heavily,  
having sacrificed the sprightliness and vivacity  
of towns to the dumb sobriety of nature. He  
does not make the scenery less wild, more than  
the jays and musk-rats, but stands there as a  
part of it, as the natives are represented in the

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A WINTER WALK. 131  
  
voyages of early navigators, at Nootka Sound,  
and on the Northwest coast, with their furs  
about them, before they were tempted to loquac-  
ity by a scrap of iron. He belongs to the nat-  
ural family of man, and is planted deeper in  
nature and has more root than the inhabitants  
of towns. Go to him, ask what luck, and you  
‘will learn that he too is a worshipper of the un-  
seen. Hear with what sincere deference and  
waving’ gesture in his tone, he speaks of the  
lake pickerel, which he has never seen, his prim-  
itive and ideal race of pickerel. He is connected  
with the shore still, as by a fish-line, and yet re-  
members the season when he took fish through  
the ice on the pond, while the peas were up in  
his garden at home.  
  
But\_now, while we have loit  
fave Retherod agin, and a feu-steaggling snow.  
figkes are beginning to descend. Faster cad  
faster they fall,  
from sight. The snow falls on every wood a  
field, and no crevice is forgotten; by the river,  
and the pond, on the hill and in the valley.  
Quadrupeds are confined to their coverts, and  
the birds sit upon their perches this peaceful  
hour. There is not so much sound as in fair  
weather, but silently and gradually every slope,  
and the gray walls and fences, and the polished  
ice, and the sere leaves, which were not buried

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132 A WINTER WALK.  
  
before, are concealed, and the tracks of men and  
Deasts are last. With so little effort does nature  
reassert her role and blot out the traces of men.  
Hear how Homer has described the same. “The  
row-flakes fail thick and fast on a winter's day.  
ithe winds are lulled, and the snow falls inces-  
sant, covering the tops of the mountains, and  
the hills, and the plains where the lotus-tree  
grows, and the cultivated fields, and they are  
falling by the inlets and shores of the foaming  
sea, but are silently dissolved by the waves.”  
The snow levels all things, and infolds them  
deeper in the bosom of nature, as, in the slow  
summer, vegetation creeps up to the entablature  
of the temple, and the turrets of the castle, and  
helps her to prevail over art.  
  
‘The surly \_night-wind rustles through the  
wood, and warns us to retrace our steps, while  
the sun goes down behind the thickening storm,  
and birds seek their roosts, and cattle their stalls.  
  
   
  
“\ Drooping the lab'rer ox:  
Stands covered o'er with snow, and now demands  
‘The fruit of all his toil.”  
  
‘Though winter is represented in the almanac  
as\_an old man, facing the wind and sleet, and  
  
drawing his cloak about him, we rather think of  
  
him a8 a merry wood-chopper, and warm-blooded  
youth, as blithe as summer. The unexplored

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A WINTER WALK. . 138  
  
grandeur of the storm keeps up the spirits of  
the traveller. It does not trifle with us, but has.  
a sweet earnestness. In winter we lead a more  
inward life. Our\_hearts are warm and cheery,  
like cottages under drifts, whose windows and  
doors are half concealed, but from whose chim-  
neys the smoke cheerfully ascends. The im-  
prisoning drifts increase the sense of comfort  
which the house affords, and in the coldest days  
we are content to sit over the hearth and see  
the sky through the chimney top, enjoying the  
quiet and serene life that may be had in a warm.  
corner by the chimney side, or feeling our pulse  
by listening to the low of cattle in the street, or  
the sound of the flail in distant barns all the long  
afternoon. No doubt a skilful physician could  
determine our health by observing how these  
enjoy now, not an oriental, but a boreal leisure,  
around warm stoves and fireplaces, and watch  
the shadow of motes in the sunbeams.  
  
Sometimes our fate grows ton homely and  
familiarly serious ever \_to\_be cryel. Consider  
  
how for three months the human destiny is  
wrapped in fars, The good Hebrew Revelation  
takes\_no\_cognizance of ‘all this cheerful snow.  
Is there no religion for the temperate and frigid  
  
zones? We know of no scripture which records  
‘epure\_benignity of the gods on a New Eng-

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134 A WINTER WAL.  
  
land \_winter night, Their praises have never  
been sung, only their wrath deprecated. The  
best scripture, after all, records but a meagre  
faith. Its saints live reserved and austere. Let  
‘a brave devout man spend the year in the woods  
of Maine or Labrador, and see if the Hebrew  
Scriptures speak adequately to his condition and  
experience, from the setting in of winter to the  
breaking up of the ice.  
  
‘Now commences the long winter evening  
around the farmers hearth, when the thoughts  
of the indwellers travel far abroad, and men are  
by nature and necessity charitable and liberal  
to all creatures. Now is the happy resistance  
to cold, when the farmer reaps his reward,  
and thinks of his preparedness for winter,  
and, through the glittering panes, sees with  
equanimity “the mansion of the northern bear,”  
for now the storm is over,  
  
   
  
“Tho fall ethereal round,  
afinite worlds disclosing to the view,  
Shines out intonsely keen ; and all one cope  
(Of starry glitter glows from pole to pole.”

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THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES\*  
[1880.)  
  
Every man is entitled to come to Cattle-  
show, even a transcendentalist; and for my part  
Iam more interested in the men than in the  
cattle. Iwish to see once more those old famil-  
iar faces, whose names I do not know, which for  
me represent the Middlesex country, and come  
as near being indigenous to the soil as a white  
man can; the men who are not above their busi  
ness, whose coats are not too black, whose shoes  
do not shine very much, who never wear gloves  
to conceal their hands. It is true, there are  
some queer specimens of humanity attracted to  
our festival, but all are welcome. I am pretty  
sure to meet ortee more that weak-minded and  
whimsical fellow, generally weak-bodied too,  
who prefers a crooked stick for a cane; per-  
fectly useless, you would say, only bizarre, fit  
for a cabinet, like a petrified snake. A ram's  
horn would be as convenient, and is yet more  
curiously twisted. He brings that much in-  
dulged bit of the country with him, from some  
town’s end or other, and introduces it to Con-  
  
‘+ An Address read Yo tho Middlevex Agricultural Society, in Con-  
cord, September, 1860.

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136 THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES.  
  
cord groves, as if he had promised it so much  
sometime. So some, it seems to me, elect their .  
rulers for their crookedness.” But I think that a  
straight stick makes the best cane, and an up-  
right man the best ruler. Or why choose a man  
to do plain work who is distinguished for his  
oddity? However, I do not know bat you will  
think that they have committed this ‘mistake  
who invited me to speak to you to-day.  
  
In my capacity of surveyor, I have often  
talked with some of you, my employers, at your  
dinner-tables, after having gone round and round  
and behind your farming, and ascertained exactly  
what its limits were. Moreover, taking a sur-  
veyor’s and a naturalist’s liberty, I have been in  
the habit of going across your lots much oftener  
than is usual, as many of you, perhaps to your  
sorrow, are aware. Yet many of you, to my  
relief, have seemed not to be aware of it; and  
when I came across you in sometout-of-the-way  
nook of your farms, have inquired, with an air  
of surprise, if I were not lost, since you had  
never seen me in that part of the town or county  
before; when, if the trath were known, and it  
had not been for betraying my secret, I might  
with more propriety have inquired if you were  
not lost, since I had never seen you there before.  
I have several times shown the proprietor the  
shortest way out of his woodlot,

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‘THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES. 137  
  
‘Therefore, it would seem that I have some  
title to speak to you to-day; and considering  
what that title is, and the occasion that has  
called us together, I need offer no apology if I  
invite your attention, for the few moments that  
aro allotted me, to a purely scientific aubject.  
  
At those dinner-tables referred to, I have often  
been asked, as many of you-have been, if I  
could tell how it happened, that when a pine  
wood was cut down an oak one commonly  
sprang up, and vice versa, To which I have  
answered, and now answer, that I can tell, —  
that it is no mystery to me, As I am not aware  
that this has been clearly shown by any one, I  
shall lay the more stress on this point. Let me  
ead yon back into your wood-lots again.  
  
‘When, hereabouts, a single forest tree or a  
forest springs up naturally where none of its  
kind grew before, I do not hesitate to say,  
though in some quarters still it may sound par-  
adoxical, that it came from a seed. Of the va-  
rious ways by which trees are known to be prop-  
agated, — by transplanting, cuttings, and the like,  
—this is the only supposable one under these  
circamstances. No such tree has ever been  
known to spring from anything else. If any  
one asserts that it sprang from something else,  
or from nothing, the burden of proof lies with  
him.

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138° THE SUCCESSION OF FoREsT TREES.  
  
It remains, then, only to show how the seed is  
transported from where it grows, to where it is  
planted. ‘This is done chiefly by the agency of  
‘the wind, water, and animals. The lighter seeds,  
as those of pines and maples, are transported  
chiefly by wind and water; the heavier, as acorns  
and nats, by animals.  
  
In all the pinés, a very thin membrane, in ap-  
pearance much like an insect’s wing, grows over  
and around the seed, and independent of it,  
while the latter is being developed within its  
dase. Indeed this is often perfectly developed,  
‘though the seed is abortive; nature being, you  
would say, more sure to provide the means of  
transporting the seed, than to provide the seed  
to be transported. In other words, a beautifal  
thin sack is woven around the seed, with a han-  
die to it such as the wind can take hold of, and @  
it is then committed to the wind, expressly that  
it may transport the seed and extend the range  
of the species; and this it does, as effectually, as  
when seeds are sent by mail in a different kind  
of sack from the patent-office. There is a pat-  
ent-office at the seat of government of the uni-  
verse, whose managers are as much interested  
in the dispersion of anybody at Wash-  
ington cam be, and their operations are infinitely  
more extensive and regular.  
  
‘There is then no necessity for supposing that

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the pines have sprang up from nothing, and I  
am aware thgt I am not at all peculiar in assert-  
ing that they come from seeds, though the mode  
of their propagation by nature has been but little  
attended to. They are very extensively raised  
  
from the seed in Europe, and are beginning to  
be here,  
  
‘When you eut down an oak wood, a pine  
wood will not at once spring up there unless  
‘there are, or have been, quite recently, seed-bear-  
ing pines near enough for the seeds to be blown  
from them. But, adjacent to a forest of piries,  
if you prevent other crops from growing there,  
you will surely have an extension of your pine  
forest, provided the soil is suitable.  
  
‘As for the heavy seeds and nuts which are not  
furnished with wings, the notion is still a very  
common one that, when the trees which bear  
‘these spring up where none of their kind were  
noticed before, they have come from seeds or  
other principles spontaneously generated there  
in an unusual manner, or which have lain dor-  
mant in the soil for centuries, or perhaps been  
called into activity by the heat of a burning. I  
do not believe these assertions, and I will state  
some of the ways in which, according to my  
observation, such forests are planted and raised.  
  
Every one of these seeds, too, will be found  
to be winged or legged in another fashion.

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Surely it is not wonderful that cherry-trees of  
all kinds are widely dispersed, singe their fruit  
is well known to be the favorite food of various  
birds. Many kinds are called bird-cherries, and  
they appropriate many more kinds, which are  
not eo called. Eating cherries is a bird-like  
employment, and unless we disperse the seeds  
occasionally, as they do, I shall think that the  
birds have the best right to them. See how art-  
fully the seed of a cherry is placed in order that  
a bird may be compelled to transport it —in the  
very midst of a tempting pericarp, so that the  
creature that would devour this must commonly  
take the stone also into its mouth or bill. If  
you ever ate a cherry, and did not make two  
bites of it, you must have perceived it—right  
in the centre of the luscious morsel, a large  
earthy residuum left on the tongue. We thus  
take into our mouths cherry stones as big as  
peas, a dozen at once, for Nature can persuade  
us to do almost anything when she would com-  
pass her ends, Some wild men and children  
instinctively swallow these, as the birds do when  
in a hurry, it being the shortest way to get rid  
of them. Thus, though these seeds are not pro-  
vided with vegetable wings, Nature has impelled  
the thrush tribe to take them into their bills and  
fly away with them; and they are winged in  
another sense, and more effectually than the

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seeds of pines, for these are carried even against  
the wind. ‘The consequence is, that cherry-trees  
grow not only here but there. ‘The same is true  
of a great many other seeds.  
  
But to come to the observation which sug-  
gested these remarks. As I have said, I sus-  
pect that I can fhrow some light on the fact,  
that when hereabouts a dense pine wood is cut  
down, oaks and other hard woods may at once  
take its place. I have got only to show that  
the acorns and nuts, provided they are grown in  
the neighborhood, are regularly planted in such  
woods; for I assert that if an oak-tree has not  
grown within ten miles, and man has not car-  
ried acorns thither, then an oak wood will not  
spring up at once, when a pine wood is cut  
down.  
  
Apparently, there were only pines there be-  
fore. They are cut off, and after a year or two  
you see oaks and other hard woods springing  
up there, with scarcely a pine amid them, and  
the wonder commonly is, how the seed could  
have lain in the ground so long without decay-  
ing. Bat the trath is, that it has not lain in the  
ground so long, but is regularly planted each  
year by various quadrupeds and birds.  
  
In this neighborhood, where oaks and pines  
are about equally dispersed, if you look through  
the thickest pine wood, even the seemingly

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unmixed pitch-pine ones, you will commonly  
detect many little oaks, birches, and other  
hard woods, sprang from seeds carried into  
‘the thicket by squirrels and other animals,  
and also blown thither, but which are over-  
shadowed and choked by the pines. ‘The denser  
the evergreen wood, the mote likely it is to  
be well planted with these seeds, because the  
planters incline to resort with their forage to the  
closest covert. They also carry it into birch and  
other woods. This planting is carried on an-  
nually, and the oldest seedlings annually die;  
but when the pines are cleared off, the oaks,  
having got just the start they want, and now  
secured favorable conditions, immediately spring  
up to trees,  
  
‘The shade of a dense pine wood, is more  
unfavorable to the springing up of pines of the  
same species than of oaks within it, though the  
former may come up abundantly when the pines  
are cut, if there chance to be sound seed in the  
ground.  
  
But when you cut off a lot of hard wood,  
very often the little pines mixed with it have  
a similar start, for the squirrels have carried off  
the nuts to the pines, and not to the nore open  
wood, and they commonly make pretty clean  
work of it; and moreover, if the wood was old,  
the sprouts will be feeble or entirely fail; to say

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nothing about the soil being, in a measure, ex-  
hausted for this kind of crop.  
  
If a pine wood is surrounded by a white oak  
one chiefly, white oaks may be expected to sue-  
ceed when the pines are cut. If it is surrounded  
instead by an edging of shrub-oaks, then you  
will probably have a dense shrub-oak thicket.  
  
Thave no time to go into details, but will say,  
in a word, that while the wind is conveying the  
seeds of pines into hard woods and open lands,  
the squirrels and other animals are conveying  
the seeds of oaks and walnuts into the pine  
woods, and thus a rotation of crops is kept up.  
  
I affirmed this confidently many years ago,  
and an occasional examination of dense pine  
woods confirmed me in my opinion. It has  
Jong been known to observers that squirrels  
bury nuts in the ground, but I am not aware  
that any one has thus accounted for the regular  
succession of forests.  
  
On the 2th of September, in 1857, as I was  
paddling down the Assabet, in this town, I saw  
a red squirrel ran along the bank under some  
herbage, with something large in its mouth.  
It stopped near the foot of a hemlock, within  
a couple of rods of me, and, hastily pawing a  
  
qbole with its forefeet, dropped its booty into  
it, covered it up, and retreated part way up the  
trunk of the tree. As I approach®d the shore

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to examine the deposit, the squirrel, descending  
part way, betrayed no little anxiety about its  
treasure, and made two or three motions to  
recover it before it finally retreated. Digging  
there, I found two green pig-nats joined to-  
gether, with the thick husks on, buried about  
an inch and a half under the “reddish soil  
of decayed hemlock leaves,— just the right  
depth to plant it, In short, this squirrel wa:  
then engaged in accomplishing two objects, to  
wit, laying up a store of winter food for itself,  
and planting a hickory wood for all creation,  
If the squirrel was killed, or neglected its de-  
posit, a hickory would spring up. The nearest  
hickory tree was twenty rods distant. ‘These  
nuts were there still just fourteen days later, but  
‘were gone when I looked again, November 21,  
or six weeks later still.  
  
Ihave since examined more carefully several  
dense woods, which are said to be, and are ap-  
parently exclusively pine, and always with the  
same result, For instance, I walked the same  
day to a small, but very dense and handsome  
white-pine grove, about fifteen rods- square, in  
the east part pf this town. The trees are large  
for Concord, being from ten to twenty inches in  
diameter, and as exclusively pine as any¥vbod  
that Iknow. Indeed, I selected this wood be:  
cause I th®ught it the least likely to contain

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anything else. It stands on an open plain or  
pasture, except that it adjoins another small  
pine wood, which has a few little oaks in it,  
on the southeast side. On every other side, it  
wa’ at least thirty rods from the nearest woods.  
‘Standing on the edge of ghis grove and looking  
through it, for it is quite level and free from  
‘underwood, for the most part bare, red-carpeted  
ground, you would have said that there was not  
a hard wood tree in it, young or old. But on  
looking carefully along over its floor I discov-  
ered, though it was not till my eye had got used  
to the search, that, alternating with thin ferns,  
and small blueberry bushes, there was, not mere-  
ly here and there, but as often as every five @et  
and with a degree of regularity, a little oak,  
from three to twelve inches high, and in one  
place I found-a green acora dropped by the  
base of a pine.  
  
Teonfess, I was surprised to find my theory s0  
perfectly proved in this ca; oe One of the prin-  
cipal agents in this planfing, the red squirrels,  
wwgre all the while curiously inspecting me, while  
I was inspecting their plantation. Some of the  
little oaks had been browsed by cows, which re-  
sorted to thig wood for shade.  
  
‘After seven or eight years, the hard woods  
evidently find such a locality unfavorable to  
their growth, the pines being allowed to stand.  
  
Fa :

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‘As an evidence of this, I observed a diseased  
red-maple twenty-five fect long, which had been  
recently prostrated, though it was still covered  
with green leaves, the only maple in any posi-  
tion in the wood.  
  
But although theségaks almost invariably die  
if the pines'are not cut down, it is probable that  
they do better for a few years under their shelter  
‘than they would anywhere else.  
  
‘The very extensive and thorough experiments  
of the English, have at length led them to adopt  
method of raising oaks almost precisely like  
this, which somewhat earlier had been adopted  
by nature and -her squirrels here; they have  
  
iply rediscovered the value of pines as nurses  
for oaks. ‘The English ‘experimenters seem  
early and generally, to have found out the  
importance of using trees of some kind, as  
nurie-plants for the young oaks. I'quote from  
‘Loudon what le describes as “the ultimatum  
on the subject of plagting.and sheltering oaks,”  
—an abstract of # practice adopted by the  
government officers in the national forests” of  
England, prepared by Alexander Milne.  
  
At first some oaks bad been planted by them-  
selves, and others ‘mixed with Scotch pines;  
“but in all’ cases,” says Mr. Milne, “where  
oaks were planjed actually among the pines,  
‘ahd surrounded by them, [though the soil might

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be inferior] the°oaks were found to be much  
the best” “For ‘several years past, the plan  
pursued has been to plant the inclosures with  
Scotch pines only, [a tree very similar to our  
piteh-pine,] and when the. pines have got to the  
height of five or six feet, then ‘to put in good  
strong oak plants of’ about four or five years’  
growth among the pines,—not cutting away  
any pines at first, unless they happen to be so  
strong and thick as to overshadow the oaks.  
In about two years, it becomes necessary to  
shred the branches of the pines, to give light  
and air to the oaks, and in about two or three  
more years to’begin gradually to remove the  
pines altogether, taking’ out a certain number  
each year, so that, at the end of twenty or twen-  
ty-five years, not a single Scotch pine shall be  
eft; although, for the first ten or twelve years, the  
plantation may have appeared to coitain noth-  
ing else but pine. ‘The advantage of this mode  
of planting has been found to be that the pines  
dry and ameliorate the soil, destroying the coarse  
grass and brambles which frequently choke and  
injore oaks ; and that no mending over is neces-  
sary, as scarcely an oak so,planted is found to  
fail.”  
  
‘Thus mach the English planters have discov-  
ered by patient experiment, and, for aught I  
know, they have taken out a patent for it; but

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they appear not to have discovered that it  
waa discovered before, and that they are merely  
adopting the method of Nature, which she long  
ago made patent to all. She is all the while  
planting the oaks amid the pines without our  
knowledge, and at last, instead of government  
officers, we send a party of wood-choppers to  
cut down the pines, and so rescue an oak forest  
‘at which we wonder as if it had dropped from  
the skies.  
  
‘As I walk amid hickories, even in August, I  
hear the sound of green pig-nuts falling from  
time to time, cut off by the chickaree over my  
head. In the fall, I notice on the ground, either  
within or in the neighborhood of oak woods, on  
all sides of the town, stout oak twigs three or  
four inches long, bearing half-a-dozen empty  
acor-cups, which twigs have been gnawed off  
by squirrels, on both sides of the nuts, in order  
to make them more portable, ‘The jays scream  
and the red squirrels scold while you are clubbing  
and shaking the chestnut trees, for they are there  
on the same etrand, and two of a trade never  
agree. I frequently see a red or gray squirrel  
cast down a greengchestnut bur, as Iam going  
through the woods, and I used to think, some-  
times, that they were cast at me. In fact, they  
are so busy about it, in the midst of the chest-  
nut season, that you, cannot stand long in the

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‘THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES. 149  
  
woods without hearing one fall. A sportsman  
told me that he had, the day before; — that we  
in the middle of October, — seen a green chest-  
nut bur dropt on our great river meadow, fifty  
rods from the nearest wood, and much further  
from the nearest chestnut-tree, and he could  
not tell how it came there. Occasionally,  
when chestnutting in midwinter, I find thirty  
or forty nuts in a pile, left in its gallery, just  
under the leaves, by the common wood-mouse  
(mus leucopus).  
  
But especially, in the winter, the extent to  
which this transportation and planting of nuts  
is carried on is made apparent by the snow. In  
almost every wood, you will see where the red  
‘or gray squirrels have pawed down through the  
snow in a hundred places, sometimes two feet  
deep, and almost always directly to a nut or a  
pine-cone, as directly as if they had started from  
it and bored upward,—which you and I could  
not have done. It would be difficult for us to  
find one before the snow falls. Commonly, no  
doubt, they had deposited them there in the fall.  
You wonder if they remember the localities, or  
discover them by the scent. The red squirrel  
commonly has its winter abode in the earth  
under a thicket of evergreens, frequently under  
a small clamp of evergreens in the midst of a  
deciduous wood. If there are any nut-trees,

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which still retain their nuts, standing at a dis-  
tance without the wood, their paths often lead  
directly to and from them. We, therefore, need.  
not suppose an oak standing here and there in  
the wood in order to seed it, but if a few stand  
within twenty or thirty rods. of Jt, itis sufficient.  
  
I think that I may venture to say that every  
white-pine cone that falls to the earth naturally  
in this town, before opening and losing its seeds,  
and almost every pitch-pine one that falls at all,  
is cut off by a squirrel, and they begin to pluck  
them long before they are ripe, so that when the  
crop of white-pine cones is a small one, as it  
commonly is, they cut off thus almost every one  
of these before it fairly ripens, I think, more-  
over, that-their design, if I may so speak, in cut-  
ting them off green, is, partly, to. prevent their  
opening and losing their seeds, for these are the  
ones for which they dig through the snow, and  
the only white-pine ‘cones which contain any-  
thing then. I have counted in one heap, within  
a diameter of four feet, the cores of 239 pitch-  
pine cones which had been cut off and stripped  
by the red squirrel the previous’ winter.  
  
‘The nuts thus left on the surface, or buried  
just beneath it, are placed in the most favorable  
circumstances for germinating. I have some-  
times wondered how those which merely fell on  
the surface of the earth got planted ; but, by the

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‘THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES. 151.  
  
end of Decémiber, I find the chestnut of the same,  
year partially mixed with the mould, as it were,  
under the decaying and mouldy leaves, where  
there is all the moisture and manure they want,  
for the mits fall first. In a plentiful year, a large  
proportion of the nuts are thus covered loosely  
an inch deep, and are, of course, somewhat, con-  
cealed from squirrels. One winter, when the  
crop had been abundant, I got, with the aid of  
a rake, many. quarts of these nuts as late as the  
tentli of January, and though some bought at the  
store the same day were more than half of them  
mouldy, I did not find a single mouldy one among  
these which I picked from under the wet and  
mouldy leaves, where they had been snowed on  
once or twice. | Nature knows how to pack them  
  
“best... They were still plump and tender. Ap-  
parently, they do not heat there, though wet. In  
the spring they were all sprouting.  
  
‘Loudon says that “ when the nut [of the com-  
mon walnut of Europe] is to be preserved  
through the winter for the purpose of planting  
in the following spring, it should be laid in a rot-  
heap, as soon as gathered, with @e husk onj  
and the heap should be turned over frequently  
in the course of the winter.”  
  
Here, again, he is stealing Nature’s “thunder.”  
How can a poor mortal do otherwise? for it is  
she that finds fingers to steal with, and the treas-

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ure to be stolen. In the planting of the seeds of  
mot trees, the best gardeners do no more than  
follow Nature, though they may not know it.  
Generally, both large and small ones are most  
sure to germinate, and succeed best, when only  
beaten into the earth with the back of a spade,  
and then covered with leaves or straw. These  
results to which planters have arrived, remind us  
of the experience of Kane and his companions  
at the North, who, when learning to live in that  
climate, were surptised to find themselves stead-  
ily adopting the customs of the natives, simply  
becoming Esquimaux. So, when we experiment  
in planting forests, we find ourselves at last do-  
ing as Nature does. Would it not be well to  
consult with Nature in the outset? for she is the  
most extensive and experienced planter of us all,  
not excepting the Dukes of Athol.  
  
In short, they who have not attended particu:  
larly to this subject are but little aware to what  
an extent quadrapeds and birds are employed,  
especially in the fall, in collecting, and so dissem-  
inating and planting the seeds of trees. It is  
the almost cBnstant emplayment of the squirrels  
at that season and you rarely meet with one  
that has not a nut in its mouth, or is not just  
going to get one. One squirrel-hunter of this  
town told me that he knew of a walnnt-trée  
which bore particularly good nuts, but that on

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THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES. 153  
  
going to gather them one fall, he found that he  
had been anticipated by a family of a dozen red  
squirrels. He took out of the tree, which was  
hollow, one bushel and three pecks by measure-  
ment, without the husks, and they supplied him  
and his family for the winter. It would be easy  
to multiply-instances of this kind. How com-  
monly in the fall you see the cheek-pouches of  
the striped squirrel distended by a qugntity of  
nuts! This epecies gets its scientific name Ta-  
‘mias, or the steward, from its habit of storing up  
nuts and other seeds. Look under a nut-tree a  
month after the nuts have fallen, and see what  
Proportion of sound nuts to the abortive-ones  
and shells you will find ordinarily. ‘They have  
been already eaten, or dispersed far and wide.  
The ground looks like a platform before a gro-  
cery, where the gossips of the village sit to crack  
nats and less savory jokes. You have come,  
you would say, after the feast was over, and are  
presented with the shells only.  
  
Occasionally, when threading the woods in  
the fall, you will hear a sound as if some one  
had ‘broken a twig, and, looking up, see a jay  
pecking at an acorn, or you will see a flock of  
them at once about it, in the top of an oak, and  
hear them break them off. They then fly to a  
suitable limb, and placing the acorn under one  
foot, hammer away at it busily, making @ sound

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like a woodpecker’s tapping, looking round from.  
time to time to see if any foe is approaching,  
and soon reach the meat, and nibble at it, hold-  
ing up their heads to swallow, while they hold  
the remainder yery firinly with their claws. Nev-  
ertheless, it often drops to the ground before the  
Dird has done with it. Tcan confirm what Wm.  
Bartram wrote to Wilson, the Ornithologist, that  
« The jay is one of the most useful agents in the  
economy of nature, for disseminating forest trees  
and other nuciferous and hard-seeded vegetables  
on which they feed. Their chief employment  
during the autumnal season is foraging to sup-  
ply their winter stores. In performing this ne-  
cessary duty they drop abundance of seed in their  
flight over, fields, hedges, and by fences, where  
they alight to deposit them in the post-holes, &c.  
It is remarkable what numbers of young trees rise  
up in fields and pastures after a wet winter and  
spring. These birds alone are capable, in a few  
years’ time, to replant all the cleared lands.”  
  
I have noticed that squirrels also frequently  
drop their nuts in open land, which will still  
further account for the oaks and walnuts which  
spring up in pastures, for, depend on it, every  
new tree comes from a seed. When I examine  
the little oaks, one or two years old, in such  
places, I invariably find the empty acorn from  
which they sprang.

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‘THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES. 155  
  
‘So far from the seed having lain dormant in  
the soil since oaks grew there before, as many  
believe, it is well known that it is difficult to  
preserve the vitality of acorns long enough to  
transport them to Europe; and it is recom-  
mended in Loudon’s Arbogetum, as the safest  
course, to sprout them in pots on the voyage.  
‘The same authority states that “very few acorns  
of any species will germinate after having been  
kept a year,” that beechmast, “only retains its  
vital properties one year,” and the black-walnut,  
“seldom more than six months after it has  
pened.” I have frequently found that in Novem-  
ber, almost every acorn left on the ground had  
sqpputed or decayed. What with frost, drouth,  
moisture, and worms, the greater part are soon  
destroyed. Yet: it is stated by one botanical  
writer that “acorns that have lain for centuries,  
on being ploughed up, have soon vegetated.”  
  
Mr. George B. Emerson, in his valuable Report  
on the Trees and Shrubs of this State, says of the  
pines: “The tenacity of life of the seeds is re-  
markable. They will remain for many years un-  
changed inthe ground, protected by the coolness  
and deep shade of the forest above them. But  
when the forest is removed, and the warmth of  
the sun admitted, they immediately vegetate.”  
Since he does not tell us on what observation  
his remark is founded, I must doubt its truth.

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156 THK SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES.  
  
Besides, the experience of nurserymen makes it  
the more questionable.  
  
‘The stories of wheat raised from seed buried  
with an ancient Egyptian, and of raspberries  
raised from seed found in the stomach of a man  
in England, who is@upposed to have died six-  
teen or seventeen hundred years ago, are gen-  
erally discredited, simply because the evidence is  
not conclusive.  
  
Several men of science, Dr. Carpenter among  
them, have used the statement that beach-plums  
sprang up in sand which was dug up forty miles  
inland in Maine, to prove that the seed had lain  
there a very long time, and some have inferred  
‘that the coast has receded so far. But it seegyp  
to me necessary to their argument to stiow, first,  
that beach-plums grow only ona beach. They  
are not uncommon here, which is about balf that  
distance from the shore ; and I remember a dense  
patch a few miles north of us, twenty-five miles  
inland, from which the fruit was annually car-  
tied to market. How much further inland they  
grow, I know not. Dr. Chas. T. Jackson speaks  
of finding “beach-plums” (perhaps they were  
this kind) more than one hundred miles inland  
in Maine,  
  
It chances that similar objections lie against  
all the more notorious instances of the kind on  
record.

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‘THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES. 157  
  
‘Yet Iam prepared to believe that some seeds,  
especially small ones, may retain their vitality  
for centuries under favorable circumstances. In  
the spring of 1859, the old Hunt House, so  
called, in this town, whose chimney bore the  
date 1703, was taken dows. This stood on  
land which belonged to John Winthrop, the first  
Governor of Massachusetts, and a part of the  
house was evidently much older than the above  
date, and belonged to the Winthrop family.  
For many years, I have ransacked this neigh-  
borhood for plants, and I consider myself famil-  
iar with its productions. Thinking of the seeds  
which are said to be sometimes dug up at an  
unusual depth in the earth, and thus to repro-  
duce long extinct plants, it occurred to me last  
fall that some new or rare plants might have  
sprung up in the cellar of this house, which had  
beeti covered from the light so long. Searching  
there on the 22d of September, I found, among  
other rank weeds, a species of nettle (Urtica  
urens), which I had not found before ; dill, which  
Thad not seen grogjg spontaneously ; the Je-  
rusalem oak (Ch jum botrys), which I had  
seen wild in but one place; black nightshade  
(Solanum, nigrum), which is quite rare here-  
abouts, and common tobacco, which, though  
it was often cultivated, here in the last century,  
has for fifty years been an unknown plant in

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158 THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES,  
  
this town, and a few months before this not  
even I had heard that one man in the north  
part of the town, was cultivating a few plants  
for his own use. I have no doubt that some or  
all of these plants sprang from seeds which had  
long been buried under or about that house, and  
that that tobacco is an additional evidence that  
‘the plant was. formerly cultivated here. The  
cellar has been filled up this year, and four of  
those ‘plants, including the tobacco, are now  
again extinct in that locality.  
  
It is true, Ihave shown that the animals con-  
sume a great part of the seeds of trees, and 50,  
at least, effectually prevent their becoming trees;  
but in all these cases, as I have said, the con-  
sumer is compelled to be at the same tinie the  
disperser and planter, and this is the tax which  
he pays to nature. I think it is Linneus, who  
says, that while the swine is rooting for acorns,  
he is planting acorns.  
  
Though I do not believe thiat a plant will  
spring up where no seed has been, I have great  
faith in a seed—a, to me, e” mysterious ori-  
gin for it. Convince me- that you have a seed  
there, and Iam prepared to expect wonders. I  
shall even believe that the millennium is at  
hand, and that the reign of justice is about to  
commence, when the Pajent Office, or Govern-  
ment, begins to distribute, and the people to  
plant the seeds of these things.

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‘THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES. 159  
  
In the spring of 1857, I planted six seeds sent  
to me from the Patent Office, and labelled, I  
think, Poitrine. jaune grosse;” large yellow  
squash. ‘Two came up, and one bore a squash  
which weighed 123; pounds, the other boré four,  
weighing. together 186; pounds. ‘Who would  
have’ believed that there was 310 pounds of  
Poitrine jaune grosse in that corner of my gar-  
den? These seeds were the bait I used to  
catch it, my ferrets which I sent into its burrow,  
my brace of terriers which unearthed it. A  
little mysterious hoeing and manuring was all  
the abra cadabra presto-change, that 1 used, and  
lo! true to the label, they found for me 310  
pounds of poitrine jaune grosse there, where it  
never was known to be, nor was before. These  
talismen had perchance sprung from America at  
first, and returned to it with unabated: force.  
The big squash took a premium at your fair  
that fall, and I understood that the man who  
bought it, intended to sell the seeds for ten cents  
apiece. (Were they not cheap at that?) But\*  
Thave more hounds of the same breed. I learn  
that one which I despatched to a distant town,  
true to its instinct, points to the large yellow  
squash there, too, where no hound ever found it  
before, as its ancestors did here and in France.  
  
Other seeds I have which will find other  
things in that comer of my garden, in like  
  
e

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160 THE SUCCESSION OF FOREST TREES.  
  
fashion, almost any fruit you wish, every year  
for ages, until the crop more than fills the whole  
garden. You have but little more to do, than  
throw ap your cap for entertainment these  
American days. Perfect alchemists I keep,  
who can transmute substances without end;  
and thus the corner of my garden is an inex-  
hanstible treasure-chest. Here you can dig, not  
gold, but the value which gold merely repre-  
sents; and there is no Signor Blitz about it  
‘Yet farmers’ sons will stare by the hour to see a  
juggler draw ribbons from his throat, though he  
tells them it is all deception. Surely, men love  
. darkness rather than light,

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WALKING.  
[n862,)  
  
I wisn to speak a word for Nature, for abso-  
Tute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with  
a freedom and culture merely civil, —to regard.  
man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of  
Nature, rather than a member of society. I  
wish to make an extreme statement, if so I may  
make an emphatic one, for there are enough  
champions of civilization : the minister and the  
school-committee, and every one of you will  
take care of that.  
  
I have met with but one or two persons in  
the course of my life who understood the art of  
‘Walking, that is, of taking walks, — who had a  
genius, s0 to speak, for sauntering : which word  
is beautifully derived “from idle people who  
roved about the country, in the Middle Ages,  
and asked charity, under pretence of going @ la  
Sainte Terre,” to the Holy Land, till the chil-  
dren exclaimed, “There goes a Sainte- Terver,”  
a Saunterer,—a Holy-Lander. ‘They who  
never go to the Holy Land in their walks, as  
  
n

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162 WALKING.  
  
they pretend, are indeed mere idlers and vaga-  
bonds; but they who do go there are saunterers  
in the good sense, such as I mean. Some,  
however, would derive the word from sans terré,  
without land or a home, which, therefore, in the  
good sense, will mean, having no particular  
home, but equally at home everywhere. For  
this is the secret of successful sauntering.. He  
who sits still in a house all the time may be the  
greatest. vagrant of all; but the saunterer, in the  
good sense, is no more-vagrant' than the mean-  
dering river, which is all the while sedilonsly  
seeking, the. shortest course to the sea. But I  
prefer the first, which, indeed, is the most. prob-  
able: derivation.: For every walk’ is a-sort.of  
crusade, preached by some Peter the Hermit in  
us, to go forth and reconquer this Holy Land  
from the bands of the Infidels,  
  
It is true, we are but fainthearted crusaders,  
even the walkers, nowadays, who undertake no  
persevering, never-enditig. enterprises. » Our. ex-  
peditions are but tours, and come round again  
at evening tothe old hearth-side from which we  
set out, Half the walk is but retracing our  
steps. We should go forth on the shortest  
walk, perchance, in the spirit of undying adven-  
ture, never to return,— prepared to send back  
our embalmed hearts only as relics to our deso-  
Jate kingdoms. If you are ready to leave father

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‘WALKING. 163  
  
and mother, and brother and sister, and wife  
and child and friends, and never see them again,  
—if you have paid your debts, and made your  
will, and settled all your affairs, and are a free  
man, then you are ready for a walk.  
  
‘To come. down to my own experience, my  
companion and J, for I sometimes have a com-  
panion, take pleasure in fancying ourselves  
knights of new, or rather an old, order, — not  
Equestrians or Chevaliers, not Ritters or riders,  
but Walkers, a still more ancient and honorable  
class, I trust. ‘The chivalric and heroic spirit  
which once belonged to the Rider seems now to  
reside in, or perchance to have subsided into,  
‘the Walker, —not the Knight, but Walker Er-  
rant. He is a sort of fourth estate, outside of  
  
“Church and State and People.  
  
‘We have felt that we almost alone hereabouts  
practised this noble art; though, to tell the truth,  
at least, i{ their own assertions are to be received,  
most of my townsmen would fain walk some-  
times, as I do; but'they cannot. ~ No wealth can  
buy the requisite leisure, freedom, and indepen-  
dence, which are the capital in this profession. It  
comes. only by the grace of God. It requires a  
  
® direct: dispensation from Heaven to become a  
walker. You must be born into the famil  
the Walkers. Ambulator nascitur, non jit. Some  
of my townsmen, it is true, can remember and

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164 ‘WALKING.  
  
have described to me some walks which they  
took ten years ago, in which they were s0 blessed  
as to lose themselves for half an hour in the  
whods; but I know very well that they have  
confined themselves to the highway ever since,  
whatever pretensions they may make to belong  
to this select class. No doubt they were cle-  
vated for a moment as by the reminiscence of a  
previous state of existence, when even they were  
foresters and outlaws.  
“When be came to grene wode,  
  
Tn a mery moraynge,  
‘Thore he herde the notes small  
  
(OF byrdes mery ayngynge.  
It in ferre gone, sayd Robyn,  
‘That I was last bere ;  
‘Me lysto a Iytell for to shote  
‘At the donne dere.”  
  
I think that I cannot preserve my health and  
spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least, —  
and it is commonly more than that, — sauntering  
through the woods and over the hills and fields,  
absolutely free from all worldly engagements.  
‘You may safely say, A penny for your thought,  
ora thousand pounds. When sometimes I am  
reminded that the mechanics and shopkeepers  
stay in their shops not only all the forenoon, but  
all the afternoon too, sitting with crossed legs,  
80 many of them, — as if thé legs were made to

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e  
WALKING. 165  
  
sit upon, and not to stand or walk upon,—I  
think that they deserve some credit for not hav-  
ing all committed suicide long ago.  
  
I, who cannot stay in my chamber for a single  
day without acquiring some rast; and when  
sometimes I have stolen forth for a walk at the  
eleventh hour of four o'clock in the afternoon,  
too late to redeem the day, when the shades of  
night were already beginning to be mingled with  
the daylight, have felt as if I bad committed  
some sin to be atoned for, —I confess that I am  
astonished at the power of endurance, to say  
nothing of the moral insensibility, of my neigh-  
bors who confine themselves to shops and offices  
the whole day for weeks and months, ay, and  
years almost together. I know not what man-  
ner of staff they are of, —sitting there now at  
three o'clock in the afternoon, as if it were three  
o'clock in the morning. Bonaparte may talk of  
the three-o'clock-in-the-morning courage, but .it  
is nothing to the courage which can sit down  
cheerfully at this hour in the afternoon over  
against one’s self whom you have known all  
the morning, to starve out a garrison to whom  
you are bound by such strong ties of sympathy.  
Twonder that about this time, or say between  
four and five o'clock in the afternoon, too late  
for the morning papers and too early for the  
evening ones, there js not a general explosion

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e  
166 WALKING.  
  
heard up and down the:street, scattering a legion  
of antiquated and house-bred notions and whims  
to the four winds for an airing,—and so the  
evil cure itself.  
  
How womankind, who are confined to the  
house still more than men, stand it I do not  
know; but I have ground to suspect that most  
of them'do not stand it at all. - When, early in  
a summer afternoon, we have been shaking the  
dust of the village from the skirts of our gar-  
ments, making haste past those houses with  
purely Doric of Gothic fronts, which have euch  
fan air of repose about them, my companion  
whispers that probably about these times their  
‘occupants are all gone to bed. Then it is that I  
appreciate the beauty and the glory of architec-  
ture, which itself never turns in, but forever  
stands out and erect, keeping watch over the  
slumberers.  
  
-No doubt temperament, and, above all, age,  
have a good deal to do with it, As a man  
grows older, yis ability to sit still and follow in-  
door occupations increases. He grows vesper-  
tinal in his habits as the evening of life ap-  
proaches, till at last he comes forth only just  
before down, and gets all the walk that he  
requires in half an hour.  
  
Bat the walking of which I speak has nothing  
in it akin to taking exercise, as it is called, as

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WALKING. 167  
  
the sick take medicine at stated hours, — as the  
swinging of dumb-bells or chairs; but is iteelf  
the enterprise and adventure of the day. If you  
would get exercise, go in search of the springs  
of life, ‘Think of a man’s swinging dumb-bells  
for his health, when those springs are bubbling  
up in far-off pastures unsought by him!  
  
Moreover, you must walk like a camel, which  
is said to be the only beast which ruminates  
when walking. When a traveller asked Words-  
worth’s servant to show him her master’s study,  
she answered, “ Here is his library, but his study  
is out of doors.”  
  
Living much out.of doors, in the sun and  
wind, will no doubt produce a certain roughness  
of character,—will cause a thicker cuticle to  
grow over some of the finer qualities of our na-  
ture, as on the face and hands, or as severe man-  
al Inbor robs the hands of some of their deli-  
cacy of touch. So staying in the house, on the  
other hand, may produce a softness and smooth-  
ness, not to ‘say thinness of skin, accompanied  
by an increased sensibility to certain impressions.  
Perhaps we should be more susceptible to some  
influences important to our intellectual and  
moral growth, if the sun had shone and the  
wind blown on us a little les#; and no doubt it  
is a nice matter to propo wr ightly the thick  
and thin skin. But methinks That is a scurf that

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168 WALKING.  
  
‘will fall off fast enough, —that the natural rem-  
edy is to be found in the proportion which the  
night bears to the day, the winter to the sum-  
mey, thought to experience. There will be so  
much the more air‘and sunshine in our thoughts.  
The callous palms of the laborer are conversant  
with finer tissues of self-respect and heroism,  
whose touch thrills the heart, than the languid  
fingers of idleness. ‘That is mere sentimentality  
that fies abed by day and thinks itself white, far  
from the tan and callus of experience.  
  
‘When we walk, we naturally go to the fields  
and woods: what would become of us, if we  
walked only in a garden ora mall? Even some  
secfs of philosophers have felt the necessity of  
importing the woods to themselves, since they  
did not go to the woods. “They planted groves  
and walks of Platanes,” where they took subdi-  
ales ambulationes in porticos open to the air.  
Of course it is of no use to direct our steps to  
the woods, if they do not carry us thither. I  
am alarmed when it happens that I have walked  
‘a mile into the woods bodily, without getting  
there in spirit. In my afternoon walk I would  
fain forget all my morning occupations and my  
obligations to society. But it sometimes hap-  
pens that I cannbt easily shake off the village.  
‘The thought of ggme work will ran in my head,  
and Tom not wife my body is, —I am out of

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‘WALKING. 169  
  
my senses. In my walks I would fain return to  
my senses. What business have I in the woods,  
if Lam thinking of something out of the woods ?  
I suspect myself, and cannot help a shudder,  
when I find myself so implicated even in what  
are called good works, —for this may sometimes  
lappen.  
  
My vicinity affords many good walks; and  
though for s0 many years I have walked almost  
every day, and sometimes for several days to-  
gether, I have not yet exhausted them. An ab-  
solutely new prospect is a great happiness, and  
Ican still get this any afternoon Two or three  
hours’ walking will carry me to as strange a  
country as I expect ever to see. A single farm-  
house which I had not seen before is sometimes  
‘as good as the dominions of the King of Daho-  
mey. There is in fact a sort of harmony dis-  
coverable between the capabilities of the land-  
scape within a circle of ten miles’ radins, or the  
limits of an afternoon walk, and the threescore  
years and ten of buman life. It will never be-  
come quite familiar to you.  
  
Nowadays almost all man’s improvements, so  
called, as the building of houses, and the. cut-  
‘ting down of the forest and of all large trees,  
simply deform the landscape, and make it more  
and mére tame and cheap. A people who  
would begin by burning the fences and let the

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170 ‘WALKING.  
  
forest stand! I saw the fences half consumed,  
their ends lost in the middle of the prairie, and  
some worldly miser with a surveyor looking  
after his bounds, while heaven had taken place  
around him, and he did not see the angels going  
to and fro, but was looking for an old post-hole  
in the midst of paradise. I looked again, and  
saw him standing in the middle of a boggy,  
stygian fen, surrounded by devils, and he had  
found his bounds without a doubt, three little  
stones, where a stake had been driven, and look-  
ing nearer, I saw that the Prince of Darkness  
‘was his survepor.  
  
T can easily walk ten, fifteen, twenty, any  
number of miles, commencing at my own door,  
without going by any house, without crossing a  
road except where the fox and the mink do: first  
along by the river, and then the brook, and then  
the meadow and the wood-side, ‘There are  
square miles in my vicinity which have no in-  
habitant. From many a hill I can see civili-  
zation and the abodes of man afar. ‘The farm-  
ers and their works are scarcely more obvious  
than woodchucks and their burrows. Man and  
his affairs, church and state and school, trade  
and commerce, and manufactures and agricule  
ture, even polities, the most alarming of them  
all,—I am pleased to see how little space they  
oceupy in the landscape. Politics is but a nar-

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WALKING. a  
  
row field, and that still narrower highway yon-  
der leads to it. I sometimes direct the traveller  
thither. If you would go to the political world,  
follow the great road, — follow that market-man,  
keep his dust in your eyes, and it will lead you  
straight to it; for it, too, has its place merely,  
and does not occupy all space. I pass from it  
as from a bean-field into the forest, and it is for-  
gotten. In one half-hour I can walk off ta some  
portion of the earth’s surface where a man does  
not stand from one year’s end to another, and  
there, consequently, politics are not, for they are  
but as the cigar-emoke of a man.  
  
‘The village is the place to which the roads  
tend, a sort of expansion of the highway, as a  
lake of ariver. It is the body of which roads  
are the arms and legs, —a trivial or quadrivial  
place, the thoroughfare and ordinary of travel-  
lers. ‘The word is from the Latin villa, which,  
together with via, a way, or more anciently ved  
and vella, Varro derives from veko, to carry, be-  
case the villa is the place to and from which  
things are carried. They who got their living  
by teaming were said vellaturam facere, Hence,  
too, apparently, the Latin word vitis and our  
‘vile ; also villain. This suggests what kind of  
degeneracy villagers are liable to. They are  
wayworn by the travel that goes by and over  
them, without travelling themselves.

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12 WALKING.  
  
‘Some do not walk at all; others walk in the  
highways; a few walk across lots. Roads are  
made for horses and men of business. I do not  
travel in them much, comparatively, because I  
am not in a hurry to get to any tavern or grocery  
or livery-stable or depot to which they lead. I  
‘am a good horse to travel, but not from choice  
roadster. The landscape-painter uses the fig-  
ures of men to mark a road. He would not  
make that use of my figure. 1 walk out into a  
‘Nature such as the old prophets and poets, Menu,  
‘Moses, Homer, Chaucer, walked in. You may  
name it America, but it is not America: neither  
Americus Vespucius, nor Columbus, nor the rest  
were the discoverers of it. ‘There is a truer ac-  
count of it in mythology than in any history of  
America, so called, that I have seen.  
  
‘However, there are a few old roads that may  
be trodden with profit, as if they led somewhere  
now that they are nearly discontinued. There  
is the Old Marlborough Road, which does not  
go to Marlborough now, methinks, unless ¢hat  
is Marlborough where it carries me. I am the  
bolder to speak of it’ here, because I presume  
that there are one or two such roads in every town  
  
{THE OLD MARLBOROLOM ROAD,  
Where they once dug for money,  
  
But never found any ;  
‘Where sometimes Martial Miles

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‘WALKING. 173  
  
Singly files,  
‘And Elijah Wood,  
I far for no good  
‘No otter man,  
Save Elisha Dugan —  
© man of wild habit,  
Partidges and rabbits,  
Who hast no cares  
Only to set snares,  
‘Who liv't all alone,  
Cove to the bone,  
‘And wher lie is sweetest  
Constantly atest  
‘When the spring stira my blood  
With tho instinct to travel,  
Teean get enough gravel  
On tho Old Mariborough Road.  
‘Nobody repairs it  
For nobody weary it;  
tis a living way,  
‘As the Christians say.  
Not many there be  
‘Who enter therein,  
Only the guests of the  
Trshman Quin.  
What is it, what  
Bat a direction out there,  
‘And the bare possibility  
OF going somewhere ?  
‘Great guide-boards of stone,  
But travellers none:  
Cenotaphs af the towns  
‘Named on their crowns.  
Tis worth going to seo  
‘Where you might be.

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74 WALKING.  
  
‘What king  
Did the thing,  
Tam atill wondering;  
‘Set up how or when,  
By what selectmen,  
Gourgas or Lee,  
(Clark or Darby ?  
‘They ‘re a great endeavor  
‘To be something forever  
Blank tablets of stone,  
‘Where a traveller might groan,  
‘And in one sentence  
Grave all that is known ;  
‘Which another might read,  
In his extreme need.  
know one or two  
Lines that would do,  
Literature that might stand  
All over the land,  
‘Which a man could remember  
Till next December,  
‘And read again i the spring,  
‘After the thawing,  
  
If with fancy unfurled  
  
‘You leave your abode,  
‘You may go round the world  
By the Old Marlborough Road.  
  
At present, in this vicinity, the best part of  
the land is not private property; the landscape  
is not owned, and the walker enjoys compara-  
tive freedom. But possibly the day will come  
when it will be partitioned off into so-called  
pleasure-grounds, in which a few will take a

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WALKING. 175  
  
narrow and exclusive pleasure only,—when fen-  
ces shall be multiplied, and man-traps and other  
engities invented to confine men to the public  
road, and walking over the surface of God's  
earth shall be construed to mean trespassing on  
some gentleman's grounds. To enjoy a thing ex-  
clusively is commonly to exclude yourself from  
the true enjoyment of it, Let us improve our  
opportunities, then, before the evil days come.  
  
‘What is it that makes it s0 hard sometimes to  
determine whither we will walk? I believe that  
there isa subtile magnetism in Nature, which, if  
we unconsciously yield to it, will direct us aright.  
It is not indifferent to us which way we walk.  
‘There is a right way; but we are very liable  
from heedlessness and stupidity to take the  
wrong one. We would fain take that walk,  
never yet taken by us through this actual world,  
which is perfectly symbolical of the path which  
swe love to travel in the interior and ideal world;  
and sometimes, no doubt, we find it difficult to  
choose our direction, because it does not yet  
exist distinetly in our idea.  
  
‘When I go out of the house for a walk, un-  
certain as yet whither I will bend my steps, and  
submit myself to iny instinct to decide for me,  
I find, strange and whimsical as it may seem,  
that I finally and inevitably settle southwest,

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178 WALKING.  
  
toward some particular wood or meadow or de-  
serted pasture or hill in that direction. My nee~  
dle is slow to settle,— varies a few degrees, and  
does not always point due southwest, it is true,  
and it has good authority for this variation, but  
it always settles between west and south-sonth-  
west, ‘The future lies that way to me, and the  
earth seems more unexhausted and richer on that  
side. The outline which would bound my walks  
would be, not a circle, but a parabola, or rather  
like one of those cometary orbits which have  
been thought to be non-returning curves, in this  
case opening westward, in which my house oc-  
cupies the place of the sun. Iturn round and  
round irresolute sometimes for a quarter of an  
hour, until I decide, for a thousandth time, that  
Iwill walk into the southwest or west. East-  
ward I go only by force; but westward I go  
free. Thither no business leads me. It is hard  
for me to believe that I shall find fair landscapes  
or sufficient wildness and freedom behind the  
eastern horizon, Iam not excited by the pros-  
pect of a walk thither; but I believe that the  
forest which I see in the western horizon streteh-  
es uninterruptedly toward the setting sun, and  
there are no towns nor cities in it of enough  
consequence to disturb me. Let me live where  
I will, on this side is the city, on that the wilder-  
+ ness, and ever T am leaving the city more and

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‘WALKING, 17  
  
more, and withdrawing into the wilderness. 1  
should not lay so much stress on this fact, if  
I did not believe that something like this is  
the prevailing tendency of my countrymen. I  
must walk toward Oregon, and not toward Eu-  
rope. And that way the nation is moving, and 1  
may say that mankind progress from east to west.  
‘Within a few years we have witnessed the phe-  
nomenon of a southeastward migration, in the  
settlement of Australia; but this affects us as  
a retrograde movement, and, judging from the  
moral and physical character of the first: genera-  
tion of Australians, has not yet proved a success  
fal experiment. ‘The eastern Tartars think that  
there is nothing west beyond Thibet, “The  
world ends there,” say they, “beyond there is  
nothing but a shoreless sea.” It is unmitigated  
East where they live.  
  
‘We go eastward to realize history and study  
the works of art and literature, retracing the  
steps of the race; we go westward as into the  
fature, with a spirit of enterprise and adventure.  
‘The Atlantic is a Lethean stream, in our pa  
sage over which we have had an opportunity to  
forget the Old World and its institutions. If we  
do not succeed this time, there is perhaps one  
more chance for the race left before it arrives on  
the banks of the Styx; and that is in the Lethe  
of the Pacific, which is three times as wide.  
  
2

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178 ‘WALKING.  
  
I know not how significant it is, or how far it  
is an evidence of singularity, that an individual  
should thus consent in his pettiest walk with the  
general movement of the race; but I know that  
something akin to the migratory instinct in birds  
and quadrupeds,—which, in some instances, is  
known to have affected the squirrel tribe, impel-  
Jing them to a general and mysterious movement,  
in which they were seen, say some, crossing the  
broadest rivers, each on its particular chip, with  
its tail raised for a sail, and bridging narrower  
streams with their dead,—that something like  
the furor which affects the domestic cattle in the  
spring, and which is referred to a worm in their  
tails, —affects both nations and individuals,  
either perennially or from time to time, Not  
a flock of wild geese cackles over our town, but  
it to some extent unsettles the value of real  
estate here, and, if-I were a broker, I should  
probably take that disturbance into account.  
  
   
  
Than longen folk to gon on pilgrimages,  
‘And palmeres for to seken strange strondes:  
  
   
  
Every sunset which I witness inspires me  
with the desire to go to a West as distant and  
as fair as that into which the sun goes down.  
He appears to migrate westward daily, and  
tempt us to follow him. He is the Great  
‘Western Pioneer whom the nations follow.

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WALKING. 179  
  
‘We dream all night of those mountain-ridges  
in the horizon, though they may be of vapor  
only, which were last gilded by his rays. The  
island of Atlantis, and the islands and gardens  
of the Hesperides, a sort’ of terrestrial par-  
adise, appear to have been the Great West of  
the ancieyts, enveloped in mystery and poetry.  
‘Who has not seen in imagination, when look-  
ing into the sunset sky, the gardens of the Hes-  
perides, and the foundation of all those fables?  
  
Columbus felt the westward tendency more  
strongly than any before. He obeyed it, and  
found a New World for Castile and Leon. The  
herd of men in those days scented-fresh pastures  
from afar.  
  
“And now the aun had stretched out all the bill,  
‘And now was dropped into the western bay ;  
‘At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue ;  
‘Tomorrow to fresh woods and pastures new.”  
  
‘Where on the globe can there be found an  
area of equal extent with that occupied by  
‘the bulk of our States, so fertile and so rich  
and varied in its productions, and at the same  
time so habitable by the European, as this  
is? Michaux, who knew but part of them,  
says that “the species of large trees are much  
more numerous in North America than in Eu-  
in the United States there are more than

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180 WALKING.  
  
one hundred and forty species that exceed thirty  
feet in height; in France there are but thirty  
that attain this size.” Later botanists more  
than confirm his observations. Humboldt came  
to America to realize his youthful dreams of  
a tropical vegetation, and he beheld it in its  
greatest perfection in the primitive forests of  
the Amazon, the most gigantic wilderness on  
the earth, which he has so eloquently described  
The geographer Guyot, himself a European,  
goes farther,—farther than I am ready to fol-  
low him; yet not when he says;—As the  
plant is made for the animal, as the vegetable  
world is made for the animal world, America  
is made for the man of the Old World. . .  
‘The man of the Old World sets out upon hi  
way. Leaving the highlands of Asia, he de-  
scends from station to station towards Europe.  
Each of his steps is marked by a new ci  
zation superior to the preceding, by a greater  
power of development. Arrived at the Atlantic,  
he pauses on the shore of this unknown ocean,  
the bounds of which he knows not, and turns  
upon his footprints for an instant.” When he  
has exhausted the rich soil of Europe, and  
vigorated himself, “ then recommences his ad-  
venturous career westward as in the earliest  
ages.” So far Guyot.  
  
‘Prom this westem impulse coming in contact

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‘WALKING. 181  
  
with the barrier of the Atlantic sprang the com-  
merce and enterprise of modern times. Tho  
younger Michaux, in his “ ‘Travels West of the  
‘Alleghanies in 1802,” says that the common  
inquiry in the newly settled West was, “« From  
what part of the world have you come?’ As  
if these vast and fertile regions would naturally  
be the place of meeting and common country  
of all the inhabitants of the globe.”  
  
To use an obsolete Latin word, I might say,  
Ex Oriente lux; ex Occidente rnux. From the  
East light; from the West fruit.  
  
Sir Francis Head, an English traveller and  
Governor-General of Canada, tells us that  
“in both the northern and southern hemi-  
spheres of the New World, Nature has not only  
outlined her works on a larger scale, but has  
painted the whole picture with brighter and  
more costly colors than she used in delineating  
and in beautifying the Old World. .... The  
heavens of America appear infinitely higher, the  
sky is bluer, the air is fresher, the cold is intenser,  
the mon looks larger, the stars are brighter,  
the thunder is louder, the lightning is vivider,  
the wind is stronger, the rain is heavier, the  
mountains are higher, the rivers longer, the for-  
esfs bigger, the plains broader.” ‘This statement  
will do at least to set against Buffon’s account  
of this part of the world and its productions.

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182 WALKING.  
  
Linus said long ago, “Nescio que facies  
lata, glabra plantis Americanis: I know not  
what there is of joyous and smooth in the  
aspect of American plants;” and I think that  
in this country there are no, or at most very  
few, Africane bestie, African beasts, as the  
Romans called them, and that in this respect  
also it is peculiarly fitted for the habitation  
of man. We are told that within three miles  
of the centre of the East-Indian city of Singa-  
pore, some of the inhabitants are annually car-  
ried off by tigers; but the traveller can lie down  
in the woods at night almost anywhere in North  
America without fear of wild beasts.  
  
These are encouraging testimonies. If the  
moon looks larger here than in Europe, prob-  
ably the sun looks larger also. If the heavens  
of America appear infinitely higher, and the  
stars brightér, I trast that these facts are sym-  
bolical of the height to which the philosophy  
and poetry and religion of her inhabitants may  
one day soar. At length, perchance, the imma-  
terial heaven will appear as much high® to the  
American mind, and the intimations that star it  
as much brighter. For I believe that climate  
does thus react on man,—as there is something  
in the mountain-air that feeds the spirit aid  
inspires. ‘Will not man grow to greater perfec~  
tion intellectually as well as physically under

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‘WALKING. 183  
  
these influences? Or is it unimportant how  
many foggy days there are in his life? I  
trust that we shall be more imaginative, that  
our thoughts will be clearer, fresher, and more  
ethereal, as our sky,— our understanding more  
comprehensive and broader, like our plains, —  
our intellect generally on a grander scale, like  
our thunder and lightning, our rivers and moun-  
tains and forests, — and our hearts shall even  
correspond in breadth and depth and grandeur  
to our inland seas. Perchance there will ap-  
pear to the traveller something, he knows not  
what, of lala and glabra, of joyous and se-  
rene, in our very faces. Else to what end does  
the world go on, and why was America dis-  
covered ?  
  
‘To Americans I hardly need to say,—  
  
   
  
Westward the star of empire takes its way?  
  
As a true patriot, I should be ashamed to think  
that Adam in paradise was more favorably sit-  
uated on the whole than the backwoodsman in  
this country.  
  
Our sympathies in Massachusetts are not  
confined to New England; though ‘ge may be  
estranged from the South, we sympathize with  
the West. There is the home of the younger  
sons, as among the Scandinavians they took to  
the sea for their inheritance. It is too late to

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184 ‘WALKING.  
  
be studying Hebrew; it is more important to  
understand even the slang of to-day.  
  
Some months ago I went to see a pano-  
rama of the Rhine. It was like a dream of  
the Middle Ages. I floated down its historic  
stream in something more than imagination,  
under bridges built by the Romans, and re-  
paired by later-heroes, past citivs and castles  
‘whose very names were music to my ears, and  
each of which was the subject of a legend.  
‘There were Ehrenbreitstein and Rolandseck  
and Coblentz, which I knew only in history.  
‘They were ruins that interested me chiefly.  
‘There seemed to come up from its waters  
and its vine-clad hills and valleys a hushed  
music as of Crusaders departing for the Holy  
Land, I floated along under the spell of en-  
chantment, as if I had been transported to an  
heroic age, and breathed an atmosphere of  
chivalry.  
  
Soon after, Lwent to see a panorama of the  
‘Mississippi, and as I worked my way up the  
river in the light of to-day, and saw the steam-  
boats wooding up, counted the rising cities,  
gazed on the fresh ruins of Nauvoo, beheld  
the Indiaff moving west across the stream,  
and, as before I had looked up the Moselle  
now looked up the Ohio and the Missouri,  
and heard the legends of Dubuque and of

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WALKING. ‘ 185  
  
‘Wenona’s Clif, —still thinking more of the  
fature than of the past or present, —I saw that  
this was a Rhine stream of a, different kind;  
that the foundations of castles were yet to be  
laid, and the famous bridges were yet to be  
thrown over the river; and I felt that this was  
the heroic age itself, though we know it not, for  
the hero is commonly the simplest and obscurest  
of men,  
  
‘The West of which I speak is but another  
name for the Wild; and what I have been pre-  
paring to say is, that in Wildness is the preser-  
vation of the World. Every tree sends its fibres  
forth in search of the Wild. The cities import  
it at any price. Men plough and sail for it.  
From the forest and wilderness come the tonics  
and barks which brace mankind. Our ancestors  
were savages. The story of Romulus and Re-  
mus being suckled by a wolf is not a meaning-  
less fable. ‘The founders of every State which  
has risen to eminence have drawn their nourish-  
ment and vigor from a similar wild source. It  
‘was because the children of the Empire were  
not suckled by the wolf that they were con-  
quered and displaced by the children of the  
Northern forests who were,  
  
I believe in the forest, and in the meadow,  
and in the night in which the com grows. We

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186 WALKING.  
  
require an infusion of hemlock-spruce or arbor-  
vite in our tea. ‘There is a difference between  
eating and drinking for strength and from mere  
gluttony. The Hottentots eagerly devour the  
marrow of the koodoo and other antelopes raw,  
as a matter of course. Some of our Northern  
Indians eat raw the marrow of the Arctic rein-  
deer, as well as various other parts, including  
the summits of the antlers, as long as they are  
soft. And herein, perchance, they have stolen a  
march on the cooks of Paris. ‘They get. what  
usually goes to feed the fire. This is probably  
better than stall-fed beef and slanghter-house  
pork to make a man of. Give me a wildness  
whose glance no civilization can endure, — as  
if we lived on the marrow of koodoos devoured  
raw.  
  
‘There are some intervals which border the  
strain of the wood-thrush, to which I would  
migrate, — wild lands where no settler has squat-  
ted; to which, methinks, I am already accli-  
mated.  
  
‘The African hunter Cummings tells us that  
the skin of the eland, as well as that of most  
other antelopes just killed, emits the most de-  
Jicious perfume of trees and grass. I would  
have every man s0 much like a wild antelope,  
so much a part and parcel of Nature, that his  
very person should thus sweetly advertise our

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WALKING. 187  
  
senses of his presence, and remind us of those  
parts of Nature which he most haunts. 1 feel  
no disposition to be satirical, when the trapper’s  
coat emits the odor of musquash even ; it is a  
sweeter scent to me than that which commonly  
exhales from the merchant’s or the scholar’s gar-  
ments. When I go into their wardrobes and  
handle their vestments, I am reminded of no  
grassy plains and flowery meads which they  
have frequented, but of dusty merchants’ ex-  
changes and libraries rather.  
  
‘A tanned skin is something more than re-  
spectable, and perhaps olive is a fitter color  
than white for a man,—a denizen of the  
woods, “The pale white man!” I do not  
wonder that the African pitied him. Darwin  
the naturalist says, “A white man bathing by  
the side of Tahitian was like a plant bleached  
by the gardener’s art, compared with a fine, dark  
green one, growing vigorously in the open fields.”  
  
Ben Jonson exclaims, —  
  
“How near to good is what is fair!”  
So I would say,—  
How near to good is what i wild!  
  
‘Life consists with wildness. ‘The most alive is  
the wildest. Not yet subdued to man, its pres-  
ence refreshes him, One who pressed forward  
incessantly and never rested from his labors,

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18 WALKING.  
  
who grew fast and made infinite demands on  
life, would always find himself in a new country  
or wilderness, and surrounded by the raw mate-  
rial of life. He would be climbing over the  
prostrate stems of primitive forest-trees.  
  
Hope and the future for me are not in lawns  
and cultivated fields, not in towns and cities,  
but in the impervious and quaking swamps.  
‘When, formerly, I have analyzed my partiality  
for some farm which I had contemplated pur-  
chasing, I have frequently found that I was  
attracted solely by a few equare rods of imper-  
meable and unfathomable bog, —a natural sink  
in one comer of it. ‘That was the jewel which  
dazzled me. I derive more of my subsistence  
from the swamps which eurround my native  
town than from the cultivated gardens in the  
village. There are no richer parterres to my  
eyes than the dense beds of dwarf andromeda  
(Cassandra calyculata) which cover these ten-  
der places on the earth’s surface. Botany can-  
not go farther than tell me the names of the  
shrubs which grow there, —the high-blaeberry,  
panicled andromeda, lamb-kill, azalea, and tho-  
dora, — all standing in the quaking sphagnum.  
I often think that I should like to have my  
house front on this mass of dull red bushes,  
omitting other flower plots and borders, trans-  
planted spruce and trim box, even gravelled

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WALKING. 189  
  
walks, —to have this fertile spot under my  
windows, not a few imported barrow-fulls of  
soil only to cover the sand which was thrown  
out in digging the cellar. Why not put my  
house, my parlor, behind this plot, instead of  
behind that meagre assemblage of curiosities,  
that poor apology for a Nature and Art, which  
Teall my front-yard? It is an effort to clear up  
and make a decent appearance when the car  
penter and mason have departed, though done  
as much for the passer-by as the dweller within,  
‘The most tasteful front-yard fence was never an  
agreeable object of study to me; the most elab-  
orate ornaments, acorn-tops, or what not, soon  
wearied and disgusted me. Bring your sills up  
to the very edge of the swamp, then, (though it  
may not be the best place for a dry cellar,) so  
that there be no access on that side to citizens.  
Front-yards are not made to walk in, but, at most,  
through, and you could go in the back way.  
  
‘Yes, though you may think me perverse, if it  
were proposed to me to dwell in the neighbor-  
hood of the most beautifull garden that ever bu-  
man art contrived, or else of a Dismal swamp, I  
should certainly decide for the swamp. How  
vain, then, have been all your labors, citizens,  
for me!  
  
My spirits infallibly rise in proportion to the  
outward dreariness. Give me the ocean, the

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190 WALKING.  
  
desert or the wilderness! In the desert, pure  
air and solitude compensate for want of moist-  
ure and fertility. ‘The traveller Burton says of  
it, Your morale improves; you become frank.  
and cordial, hospitable and single-minded. . . . «  
In the desert, spiritnous liquors excite only dis-  
gust. There is a keen enjoyment in a mere  
animal existence.” They who have been trav-  
elling long on the steppes of Tartary say,—  
“On reéntering cultivated lands, the agitation,  
perplexity, and turmoil of civilization oppressed  
and suffocated us; the air seemed to fail us,  
and We felt every moment as if about to die  
of asphyxia.” When I would recreate myself,  
T seek the darkest wood, the thickest and most  
interminable, and, to the citizen, most dismal  
swamp. Tenter a swamp asa sacred place, —  
‘a sanctum sanctorum. There is the strength, the  
marrow of Nature. ‘The wild-wood covers the  
virgin mould, —and the same soil is good for  
~ men and for trees. A man’s health requires as  
many acres of meadow to his prospect as his  
farm does loads of muck. There are the strong  
meats on which he feeds. A town is saved, not  
more by the righteous men in it than by the  
woods and swamps that surround it. A town-  
ship where one primitive forest waves above,  
while another primitive forest rots below, —  
such a town is fitted to raise not only com

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‘WALKING. 191,  
  
‘and potatoes, but poets and philosophers for  
the coming ages. In such a soil grew Homer  
and Confucius and the rest; and out of such a  
wilderness comes the Reformer eating locusts  
and wild honey.  
  
To preserve wild animals implies generally  
the creation of a forest for them to dwell in or  
resort to. So it is with man. A hundred years  
ago they sold bark in our streets peeled from  
our own woods. In the very aspect of those  
primitive and rugged trees, there was, methinks,  
‘@ tanning principle which hardened and consol-  
idated the fibres of men’s thoughts. Ah! already  
I shudder for these comparatively degenerate  
days of my native village, when you cannot col-  
lect a load of bark of good thickness, —and we  
no longer produce tar and turpentine.  
  
‘The civilized nations— Greece, Rome, Eng-  
land —have been sustained by the primitive for-  
ests which anciently rotted where they stand.  
‘They survive as long as the soil is not exhausted.  
Alas for human culture! little is to be expected  
of a nation, when the vegetable mould is exhaust-  
ed, and it is compelled to make manure of the  
bones of its fathers. ‘There the poet sustains  
himself merely by his own superfluous fat, and  
the philosopher comes down on his marrow-bones.  
  
It is said to be the task of the American “to  
work the virgin soil,” and that “ agriculture here

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192 WALKING.  
  
already assumes proportions unknown every-  
where else.” I think that the farmer displaces  
the Indian even because he redeems the meadow,  
and so makes himself stronger and in some re~  
spects more natural. I was surveying for a man  
the other day a single straight line one hundred  
and thirty-two rods long, through a swamp, at  
whose entrance might have been written the  
words which Dante read over the entrance to  
the infernal regions, —“ Leave all hope, ye that  
enter,” —that is, of ever getting out again; where  
at one time I saw my employer actually up to  
his neck and swimming for his life in his prop-  
erty, though it was still winter. He had an-  
other similar swamp which I could not survey  
at all, becanse it was completely under water,  
and nevertheless, with regard to a third swamp,  
which I did survey from a distance, he remarked  
to me, true to his instincts, that he would not  
part with it for any consideration, on account:  
of the mud which it contained. And that man  
intends to put a girdling ditch round the whole  
in the course of forty months, and so redeem it  
by the magic of his spade, I refer to him only  
as the type of a class.  
  
‘The weapons with which we have gained  
‘our most important victories, which should be  
handed down as heirlooms from father to son,  
are not the sword and the lance, but the bush-

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‘WALKING. 193  
  
whack, the turf-catter, the spade, and the bog-hoe,  
rusted with the blood of many a meadow, and  
begrimed with the dust of many a hard-fought  
field. ‘The very winds blew the Indian’s corn-  
ficld into the meadow, and pointed out the way  
which he had not the skill to follow. He had  
no better implement with which to intrench  
bimself in the land than a clam-shell. But the  
farmer is armed with plough and spade.  
  
In Literature it is only the wild that attracts  
us. Dulness is but another name for tameness.  
It is the uncivilized free and wild thinking in  
“Hamlet” and the “ Iliad,” in all the Scriptures  
and Mythologies, not learned in the schools, that  
delights us. As the wild duck is more swift and  
beautiful than the tame, so is the wild— the  
mallard — thought, which ’mid falling dews  
‘wings its way above the fens. A truly good  
book is something as natural, and as unexpect-  
edly and unaccountably fair and perfect, as a  
wild flower discovered on the prairies of the  
‘West or in the jungles of the East. Genius  
is a light which makes the darkness visible, like  
the lightning’s flash, which perchance shatter#®  
the temple of knowledge itself, —and not a  
taper lighted at the hearth-stone of the race,  
which pales before the light of common day.  
  
English literatue, from the days of the min-  
  
stzels to the Lake Poets, — Chaucer and Spen-  
18

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194 WALKING.  
  
ser and Milton, and even Shakspeare, included,  
—breathes no quite fresh and in this sense wild  
strain. It is an essentially tame and civilized  
literature, reflecting Greece and Rome. Her  
wilderness is a green wood,— her wild man a  
Robin Hood. There is plenty of genial love of  
‘Nature, but not so much of Nature herself. Her  
chronicles inform us when her wild animals, but  
not when the wild man in her, became extinct.  
  
+ The science of Humboldt is one thing, poetry  
is another thing. ‘The poet to-day, notwith-  
standing all the discoveries of science, and the  
accumulated learning of mankind, enjoys no  
advantage over Homer.  
  
‘Where is the literature which gives expres-  
sion to Nature? He would be a poet who  
could impress the winds and streams into his  
service, to speak for him; who nailed words to  
their primitive: senses, as farmers drive down  
stakes in the spring, which the frost has heaved ;  
‘who derived his words as often as he used them,  
— transplanted them to his page with earth ad-  
  
9 tering to their roots; whose words were so true  
and fresh and natural that they would appear to  
expand like the buds at the approach of spring,  
though they lay half-smothered between two  
musty leaves in a library,—ay, to bloom and  
bear fruit there, after their kind, annually, for  
  
the faithful reader, in sympathy with surround-  
ing Nature. |

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‘WALKING. 195  
  
>t know of any poetry to quote which  
ly expresses this yearning for the Wild.  
ted from this side, the best poetry is  
do not know where to find in any lit-  
ineient or modern, any account which  
me of that Nature with which-even I  
ainted. You will perceive that I de-  
rething which no Angustan nor Eliza-  
‘e, which no culture, in short, can give.  
y comes nearer to it than anything.  
+h more fertile a Nature, at least, has  
nythology its root in than English lit-  
‘Mythology is the crop which the Old  
w uuu vote before its soil was exhausted, before  
the fancy and imagination were affected with  
plight; and which it still bears, wherever its  
Pristine vigor is unabated. All other literatures  
. endure only as the elms which overshadow our  
houses; but this is like the great dragon-tree of  
the Western Isles, as old as mankind, and,  
whether that does or not, will endure as long;  
for the decay of other literatures makes the soil  
in which it thrives.  
  
‘The West is preparing to add its fagles to  
those of the East. The valleys of the Ganges,  
the Nile, and the Rhjne, having yielded their  
crop, it remains to be seen what the valleys of  
the AdfMzon, the Plate, the Orinoco, the St. Law-  
rence, and the Mississippi will produce. Per-  
  
°T Lh LLU

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196 WALKING:  
  
chance, when, in the course of ages, American  
liberty has become a fiction of the past,—as it  
is to some extent a fiction of the present, — the  
poets of the world will be inspired by American  
mythology.  
  
"The wildest dreams of wild men, even, are  
not the less true, though they may not recom-  
mend themselves to the sense which is most  
common among Englishmen and Americans to-,  
day. It is not every truth that recommends  
itself to the common sense. Nature has a place  
for the wild clematis as well as for the cabbage.  
Some expressions of truth are reminiscent, —  
others merely sensible, as the phrase is, — others  
prophetic. Some forms of disease, even, may  
prophesy forms of health. ‘The geologist has  
discovered that the figures of serpents, griffins,  
flying dragons, and other fanciful embellis!  
ments of heraldry, have their prototypes in the  
forms of fossil species which were extinct be-  
fore man was created, and hence “indicate a  
faint and shadowy knowledge of previous state  
of organic existence.” The Hindoos dreamed  
that ghe earth rested on an elephant, and the  
elephant on a tortoise, and the tortoise on a ser-  
pent; and though. it may be an unimportant  
coincidence, it will not be out of place here to  
state, that a fossil tortoise has lately @en dis-  
covered in Asia large enough to support an ele-  
  
«

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WALKING. 197  
  
phant. I confess that I am partial to these wild  
fancies, which transcend the order of time and  
development. They are the sublimest recrea-  
tion of the intellect. ‘The partridge loves peas,  
but not those that go with her into the pot.  
  
In short, all good things are wild and free.  
‘There is something in a strain of music, whether  
produced by an instrument or by the human  
voice, — take the sound of a bugle in a summer  
night, for instance, —which by its wildness, to  
speak without satire, reminds me of the cries  
emitted by wild beasts in their native forests,  
Itis so much of their wildness as I can under-  
stand. Give me for my friends and neighbors  
wild men, not tame ones. ‘The wildness of the  
savage is but a faint symbol of the awful ferity  
with which good men and lovers meet.  
  
T love even to see the domestic animals re-  
assert their native rights,—any evidence that  
they have not wholly lost their original wild  
habits and vigor; as when my neighbor's cow  
breaks out of her pasture early in the spring  
and boldly swims the river, a cold, gray tide,  
twenty-five or thirty rods wide, swollen by the  
melted snow. It is the buffalo crossing the Mis-  
sissippi. ‘This exploit confers some dignity on  
‘the herd in my eyes, —already dignified. ‘The  
seeds of instinct are preserved under the thick  
hides of cattle and horses, like seeds in the bow-  
els of the earth, ait indefinite period.

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198 WALKING.  
  
Any sportiveness in cattle is unexpected. I  
saw one day a herd of a dozen bullocks and  
‘cows running about and frisking in unwieldly  
sport, like huge rats, even like kittens. They  
shook their heads, raised their tails, and rashed  
up and down ahill, and I perceived by their  
homs, as well as by their activity, their relation  
to the deer tvibe. But, alas! a sudden loud  
Whoa! would have damped their ardor at once,  
reduced them from venison to beef, and stiffened  
their sides and sinews like the locomotive, Who  
but the Evil One has cried,“ Whoa!” to man-  
kind? Indeed, the life of cattle, like that of  
many men, is but a sort of locomotiveness ; they  
move a side at a time, and man, by his machin-  
ery, is meeting the horse and the ox half-way.  
‘Whatever part the whip has touched is thence-  
forth palsied. Who would ever think of a side  
of any of the supple cat tribe, as we speak of a  
side of beef?  
  
T rejoice that horses and steers have to be  
broken before they can be made the slaves of  
men, and that men themselves have some wild  
oats still left: to sow before they become submis  
sive members of society, Undoubtedly, all men  
are not equally fit subjects for civilization; and  
because the majority, like dogs and sheep, are  
tame by inherited disposition, this is no reason  
why the others should have their natures broken

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WALKING. 199  
  
‘that they may be reduced to the same level,  
Men are in the main alike, but they were made  
several in order that they.miglit be various. If  
a low use is to be served, one man will do nearly  
or quite as well as another if a high one, indi-  
vidual excellence is to be regarded. Any man  
can stop a hole to keep the wind away, but no  
other man could serve so rare a use as the au-  
thor of this illustration did. Confucius says, —  
“The skins of the tiger and the leopard, when  
they are tanned, are as the skins of the dog and  
the sheep tanned.” But it is not the part of a  
true culture to tame tigers, any more than it is to  
make sheep ferocious; and tanning their skins  
for shoes is not the best use to which they can  
be put .  
  
‘When looking over a list of men’s names in  
a foreign language, as of military officers, or of  
authors who have written on a particular subject,  
Tam reminded once more that there is nothing  
inaname, The name Menschikoff, for instance,  
has nothing in it to my ears more human than  
a whisker, and it may belong to arat. As the  
names of the Poles and Russians are to us, so  
are ours to them. It is as if they had been named  
by the child’s rigmarole, — Iery wiery ichery van,  
tittle-tol-tan. I see in my mind a herd of wild  
creatures swarming over the earth, and to each

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200 ‘WALKING.  
  
the herdsman has affixed some barbarous sound  
in his own dialect. ‘The names of men are of  
course as cheap and meaningless as Bose and  
Tray, the names of dogs.  
  
‘Methinks it would be some advantage to phi-  
losophy, if men were named merely in the gross,  
as they are known. It would be necessary only  
to know the genus and perhaps the race or va-  
riety, to know the individual. We are not pre-  
pared to believe that every private soldier in a  
Roman army had a name of his own, — because  
we have not supposed that he had a character  
of his own, At present our only true names are  
nicknames, I knew a boy who, from his pecu-  
liar energy, was called “Buster” by his play-  
mates, and this rightly supplanted his Christian  
name. Some travellers tell us that an Indian  
had no name given him at first, but earned it,  
and his name was his fame; and among some  
tribes he acquired a new name with every new  
exploit. It is pitiful when a man bears a name  
for convenience merely, who has earned neither  
name nor fame.  
  
I will not allow mere names to make distine-  
tions for me, but still see men in herds for all  
them. A familiar name cannot make a man  
less strange to me. It may be given to a savage  
‘who retains in secret his own wild title earned  
in the woods. We have a wild savage in us,

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WALKING. 201  
  
‘and a savage name is perchance somewhere re-  
corded as ours. I see that my neighbor, who  
bears the familiar epithet William, or Edwin,  
takes it off with his jacket. It does not adhere  
to him when asleep or in anger, or aroused by  
any passion or inspiration. I seem to hear pro-  
nounced by some of his kin at such a time his  
original wild name in some. jaw-breaking or else  
melodious tongue.  
  
   
  
   
  
Here is this vast, savage, howling mother of  
ours, Nature, lying all around, with such beauty,  
and such affection for her children, as the leop-  
ard; and yet we are so early weaned from her  
breast to society, to that culture whjch is exclu-  
sively an interaction of man on man,—a sort  
of breeding in and in, which produces at most a  
merely English nobility, a civilization destined  
to have a speedy limit.  
  
In society, in the best institutions of men, it is  
easy to detect a certain precosity. When we  
should still be growing children, we are already  
little men, Give me a cilture which imports  
much muck from the meadows, and deepens the  
soil, — not that which trusts to heating manures,  
and improved implements and modes of culture  
only!  
  
Many a poor sore-eyed student that I have  
heard of would grow faster, both intellectually

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202 WALKING.  
  
and physically, if, instead of sitting up so very  
late, he honestly slumbered a foo!’s allowance.  
  
‘There may be’an excess even of informing  
light. Niépee, a Frenchman, discovered actin-  
ism,” that power in the sun’s rays which pro-  
duces a chemical effect, — that granite rocks, and  
stone structures, and statues of metal, “are all  
alike destructively acted upon during the hours  
of sunshine, and, but for provisions of Nature no  
less wonderful, would soon perish under the deli-  
cate tonch of the most subtile of the agencies of  
the universe.” But he observed that “those  
bodies which underwent this change during the  
daylight possessed the power of restoring them-  
selves to their original conditions during the  
hours of night, when this excitement was no  
longer influencing them.” Hence it has been in- \*  
ferred that the hours of darkness are as neces-  
sary to the inorganic creation as we know night  
and sleep are to the organic kingdom.” Not  
even does the moon shine every night, but gives  
place to darkness.  
  
T would not have’ every man nor every part of  
aman cultivated, any more than I would have  
every acre of earth cultivated: part will be till-  
age, but the greater part will be meadow and  
forest, not only serving an immediate use, but  
preparing a mould against a distant future, by the  
annual decay of the vegetation which it supports.

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WALKING. 203  
  
There are other letters for the child to learn  
than those which Cadmus invented. ‘The Span-  
iards have a good term to express this wild and  
dusky knowledge, — Gramética parday tawny  
grammar,—a kind of mother-wit derived from  
that same leopard to which I have referred.  
  
‘We havé heard of a Society for the Diffusion  
of Useful Knowledge. It is said that knowledge  
is power; and the like, Methinks there is equal  
need of a Society for the Diffusion of Useful Ig-  
norance, what we will call Beautiful Knowledge,  
a knowledge useful ina higher sense: for what  
is most of our boasted so-called knowledge but  
a conceit that we know something, which robs  
us of the advantage of our actual ignorance?  
‘What we call knowledge is often our positive  
ignorance; ignorance our negative knowledge.  
By long years of patient industry and reading of  
the newspapers, — for what are the libraries of  
science but files of newspapers?—a man accu-  
mulates a myriad facts, lays them up in hi  
memory, and then when in some spring of his  
life he saunters abroad into the Great Fields of  
thought, he, as it were, goes to grass like a horse,  
and leaves all his harness behind in the stable.  
  
I would say to the Society for the Diffusion of  
Useful Knowledge, sometimes, — Go to grass.  
‘You have eaten’ hay long enough. The spring  
hhas come with its green crop. ‘The very cows +

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204 WALKING.  
  
are driven- to their country pastures before the  
end of May; though I have heard of one un-  
natural farmer who kept his cow in the barn and  
fed her’ on hay all the year round. So, fre=  
quently, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful  
Knowledge treats its cattle.  
  
‘A man’s ignorance sometimes is not only  
useful, but beautiful, — while his knowledge, 50  
called, is oftentimes worse than useless, besides  
being ugly. Which is the best man to deal  
with, —he who knows nothing about a subject,  
and, what is extremely rare, knows that he  
knows nothing, or he who really knows some-  
thing about it, bat thinks that he knows all ?  
  
My desire for knowledge is intermittent; but  
my desire to bathe my head in atmospheres un-  
known to my feet is perennial and constant.  
‘The highest that we can attain to is not Knowl-  
edge, but Sympathy with Intelligence. I do  
not know that this higher knowledge amounts  
to anything more definite than a novel and  
grand surprise on a sudden revelation of the in-  
sufficiency of all that we called Knowledge be-  
fore, —a discovery that there are more things in  
heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our  
philosophy. It is the lighting up of the mist by  
the sun. Man cannot know in any higher sense  
than this, any more than he can look serenely  
and with impunity in the face of sun : ‘Os xt voiv,

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‘WALKING. 205,  
  
of xélvoy vojoas, — You will not perceive that,  
‘as perceiving a particular thing,” say the Chal-  
dean Oracles.  
  
‘There is something servile in the habit of  
seeking after a law which we may obey. We  
may study the laws of matter at and for our  
convenience, but a successful life knows no law.  
It is an unfortunate discovery certainly, that of  
a law which binds us where we did not know  
before that we were bound. Live free, child of  
the mist, — and with respect to knowledge we  
are all children of the mist. The man who takes  
the liberty to live is superior to all the laws, by  
virtue of his relation to the law-maker. “That  
is active duty,” says the Vishna Purana, “which  
is not for our bondage ; that is knowledge which  
is for our liberation: all other duty is good only  
unto weariness ; all other knowledge is only the  
cleverness of an artist.”  
  
It is remarkable how few events or crises  
there are in our histories; how little exercised  
we have been in our minds; how few experi-  
ences we have had. I would fain be assured  
that Iam growing apace and rankly, though  
my very growth disturb this dull equanimity,—  
though it be with struggle threugh long, dark,  
muggy nights or seasons of gloom. It would  
be well, if all our lives were a divine tragedy

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206 WALKING.  
  
even, instead of this trivial comedy or farce.  
Dante, Bunyan, and others, appear to-have been  
exercised in their minds more than we: they  
were subjected to a kind of culture such as our  
istrict schools and colleges do not contemplate.  
Even Mahomet, though many may scream at  
his name, had a good deal more to live for, ay,  
and to die for, than they have commonly.  
  
‘When, at rare intervals, some thought visits  
one, as perchance he is walking on a railroad,  
then indeed the cars go by without his hearing  
them, But soon, by some inexorable law, our  
life goes by and the cars return.  
  
“Gentle breeze, that wanderest unseen,  
‘And bendest the thstles round Loira of storms,  
‘Travellr of the windy glens,  
‘Why hast thou left my ear s0 soon 2”  
  
‘While almost all men feel an attraction draw-  
ing them to society, few are attracted strongly  
to Nature. In their relation to Nature men ap-  
pear to me for the most part, notwithstanding  
their arts, lower than the animals, It is not  
often a beautiful relation, as in the case of the  
animals. How little appreciation of the beauty  
of the landscape there is among us! We have  
to be told that the Greeks called the world  
Kéguos, Beanty,sor Order, but we do not see  
clearly why they did so, and we esteem it at  
best only a curious philological fact.

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WALKING, 207  
  
For my part, I feel that with regard to Natare  
Ilive a sort of border life, on the confines of a  
world into which I make occasional and tran-  
sional and transient forays only, and my patriot  
ism and allegiance to the State into whose ter-  
ritories 1 seem to retreat are those of a moss-  
trooper. Unto a life which I call natural I  
would gladly follow even a will-o'-the-wisp  
through bogs and sloughs unimaginable, but no  
moon nor fire-fly has shown me the causeway to  
it, Nature is a personality so vast and univer-  
sal that we have never seen one of her features.  
‘The walker in the familiar fields which stretch  
around my native town sometimes finds him-  
self in another land than is described in their  
owners’ deeds, as it were in some far-away field  
‘on the confines of the actual Concord, where her  
jurisdiction ceases, and the idea which the word  
Concord suggests ceases to be suggested. These  
farms which I have myself surveyed, these  
bounds which Thave set up, appear dimly still as  
through a mist; but they have no chemistry to  
fix them ; they fade from the surface of the glass ;  
and the picture which the painter painted stands  
out dimly from beneath. The world with which  
we are commonly acquainted leaves no trace,  
and it will have no anniversary.  
  
I took a walk on Spaulding’s Farm the other  
afternoon. I saw the setting sun lighting up

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208 WALKING.  
  
the opposite side of a stately pine wood. Its  
golden rays straggled into the aisles of the wood  
as into some noble ball. I was impressed as if  
some ancient and altogether admirable and shi  
ing family had settled there in that part of the  
land called Concord, unknown to me, — to  
whom the sun was servant,—who had not  
gone into society in the village, —who had not  
been called on. I saw their park, their pleasure-  
ground, beyond through the wood, in Spauld-  
ing’s cranberry-meadow. ‘The pines furnished  
them with gables as they grew. Their house  
was not obvious to vision; the trees grew  
through it, Ido not know whether I heard the  
sounds of a suppressed hilarity or not. ‘They  
seemed to recline on the sunbeams. They have  
sons and daughters. They are quite well. The  
farmer's cart-path, which leads directly through  
their hall, does not in the least put them out, —  
as the muddy bottom of a pool is sometimes  
seen through the reflected skies. ‘They never  
heard of Spaulding, and do not know that he is  
their neighbor, — notwithstanding I heard him  
whistle as he drove his team through the house.  
Nothing can equal the serenity of their lives.  
Their coat of arms is simply a lichen. I saw  
it painted on the pines and oaks. ‘Their attics  
were in the tops of the trees. ‘They are of no  
politics, ‘There was no noise of labor. I did

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+ WALKING, 209  
  
not perceive that they were weaving or spin=  
ning. Yet I did detect, when the wind lulled  
and hearing was done away, the finest imagin-  
able sweet musical hum, —as of a distant hive  
in May, which perchance was the sound of their  
thinking. ‘They had no idle thoughts, and no  
one without could see their work, for their in-  
dustry was not as in knots and excrescences  
embayed.  
  
But I find it difficult toremember them. ‘They  
fade irrevocably out of my mind even now while  
Ispeak and endeavor to recall them, and recol-  
lect myself: It is only after along and serious  
  
“effort to recollect my best thoughts that I be-  
  
come again aware of their cobabitancy. If it  
were not for such families as this, I think I  
should move out of Concord.  
  
‘We are accustomed to say in New England  
that few and fewer pigeons visit us every year.  
Our forests furnish no mast for them. So, it  
would seem, few and fewer thoughts visit each  
growing man from year to year, for the grove in  
‘our minds is laid waste, — sold to feed unneces-  
sary fires of ambition, or sent to mill, and there  
is scarcely a twig left for them to perch on.  
‘They no longer build nor breed with us. In  
some more genial seacon, perchance, a faint  
  
shadow flits across the landscape of the mind,

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210 WALKING,  
  
cast by the wings of some thought in its vernal  
or autumnal migration, but, looking up, we are  
unable to detect the substance of the thought  
itself. Our winged thoughts are turned to poul-  
try. They no longer soar, and they attain only  
to a Shanghai and Cochin-China grandeur.  
‘Those gra-a-ate thoughts, those gra-aate men  
you hear of!  
  
‘We hug the earth, —how rarely we mount!  
‘Methinks we might elevate ourselves a little  
more. We might clinb a tree, at least. I  
found my account in climbing a tree once. It  
was a tall white pine, on the top of a hill; and  
thongh I.got well pitched, I was well paid for  
it, for-I discovered new mountains in the hori-  
zon which Thad never seen before,—so much  
more of the earth and the heavens. I might  
have walked about the foot of the tree for three-  
score years and ten, and yet I certainly should  
never have seen them. But, above ail, I dis-  
covered around me,—it was near the end of  
June,—on the ends of the topmost branches  
only, a few minute and delicate ‘red cone-like  
blossoms, the fertile flower of the white pine  
looking heavenward. I carried straightway to  
the village the topmost spire, and showed it to  
stranger jurymen who walked the streets, — for  
it was court-week,— and to farmers and Ium-

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WALKING. Qu  
  
ber-dealers and wood-choppers and hunters, and  
not one had ever seen the like before,-but they  
wondered as at a star dropped down. ‘Tell of  
ancient architects finishing their works on the  
tops of columns as perfectly as on the lower  
and more visible parts! Nature has from the  
first expanded the minute blossoms of the forest  
only toward the heavens, above men’s heads and  
unobserved by them, We see only the flowers  
that are under our feet in the meadows, The  
pines have developed their delicate blossoms on  
the highest twigs of the wood every summer  
for ages, aswell over the heads of Nature's red  
children as of her white ones; yet scarcely a  
farmer or bunter in the land has ever seen them.  
  
Above all, we cannot afford not to live in the  
present. He is blessed over all mortals who  
loses no moment of the passing life in remem-  
bering the past. Unless our philosophy hears  
the cock crow in every barn-yard within our  
horizon, it is belated. ‘That’ sound commonly  
Feminds us that we are growing rusty and an  
tique in our employment and habits of thought.  
His, philosophy comes down to a more recent  
time than ours. There is something suggested  
by it that is a newer testament,— the gospel  
according to this moment. He has not fallen  
astern; he has got up early, and kept up early,

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212 WALKING.  
  
and to be where he is to be in season, in the  
foremost rank of time, It is an expression of  
‘the health and soundness of Nature, a brag for  
all the world, — healthiness as of a spring burst  
forth, a new fountain of the Muses, to celebrate  
this last instant of time. Where he lives no  
fugitive slave laws are passed. Who has not  
betrayed his master many times since last he  
heard that note?  
  
‘The merit of this bird’s strain is in its free-  
dom from all plaintiveness. The singer can  
easily move us to tears or to laughter, but  
where is he who can excite in us a pure morn-  
ing joy? When, in dolefal dumps, breaking the  
awful stillness of our wooden sidewalk on a  
Sunday, or, perchance, a watcher in the house  
of mourning, I hear a cockerel crow far or near,  
I think to myself, « There is one of us well, at  
any rate,” —and with a sudden gush return to  
my senses.  
  
‘We had a remarkable sunset one day last  
November. I was walking in a meadow, the  
source of a small brogk, when the sun at last,  
just before setting, after a cold gray day, reached  
a clear stratum in the horizon, and the softest  
brightest morning sunlight fell on the dry grass  
and on the stems of the trees in the opposite  
horizon, and on the leaves of the shrub-oaks on

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“ ‘WALKING, 213  
  
the hill-side, while our shadows stretched long  
over the meadow eastward, as if we were the  
only motes in its beams. Tt was such a light  
as we could not have imagined a moment be-  
fore, and the air also was so warm and serene  
that nothing was wanting to make a paradise  
of that meadow. When we reflected that this  
was not a solitary’ phenomenon, never to hap-  
pen again, but that it would happen forever and  
ever an infinite number of evenings, and cheer  
and reassure the latest child that walked there,  
it was more glorious still.  
  
‘The sun sets on some retired meadow, where  
no house is visible, with all the glory and splen-  
dor that it lavishes on cities, and perchance, as  
it has never set. before,— where there is but a  
solitary marsh-hawk to have his wings gilded  
dy it, or only a musquash looks out from his  
cabin, and there is some little black-veined  
‘brook in the imidst of the marsh, just begin-  
ning to meander, winding slowly round a de-  
caying stump. We walked in so pure and  
bright light, gilding the withered grass and  
leaves, so softly and serenely bright, I thought  
Thad never bathed in such a golden flood, with-  
out a ripple or a murmar to it. The west side  
of every wood and rising ground gleamed like  
the boundary of Elysium, and the sun on our  
backs seemed like a gentle herdsman driving us  
home at evening.

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214 WALKING.  
  
So we saunter toward the Holy Land, till  
one day the sun shall shine more brightly than  
ever he has done, shall perchance shine into our  
minds and hearts, and light up our whole lives  
with a great awakening light, as warm and se-  
rene and golden as on a bank-side in autumn.

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AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
[1882]  
  
‘Evnopeans coming to America are surprised  
by the brilliancy of our autumnal folinge.  
There is no account of such a phenomenon  
in English poetry, because the trees acquire  
but few bright colors there. The most that  
Thomson says on this subject in his “ Au-  
tumn” is contained in the lines, —  
  
“ But sce the fading many-colored woods,  
Shade deoponing over shade, the country round  
Imbrown ; a crowded umbrage, dusk and dun,  
  
Of every hue, from wan declining green to sooty dark”:  
  
   
  
and in the line in'which he speaks of  
Autumn beaming o'er the yellow woods.”  
  
‘The autumnal change of our woods has not  
made a deep impression on our own literature  
yet. October has hardly tinged our poetry.  
  
A great many, who have spent their lives in  
cities, and have never chanced to come into the  
country at this season, have never seer this, the  
flower, or rather the ripe fruit, of the year. I

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216 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
remember riding with one such citizen, who;  
thongh a fortnight too late for the most bril-  
liant tints, was taken by surprise, and would  
not believe that there had been any brighter.  
‘He had never heard of this phenomenon before.  
Not only many in our towns have never wit-  
nessed it, but it is scarcely remembered by the  
majority from year to year.  
  
‘Most appear to confound changed leaves with  
withered ones, as if they were to confound ripe  
apples with rotten ones. I think that the change  
to some higher color in aleaf is an evidence that  
it has arrived at a late and perfect maturity, an-  
swering to the maturity of fruits. It is generally.  
the lowest and oldest leaves which change first.  
But as the perfect winged and usually bright-col-  
ored inseet is short-lived, so the leaves ripen but  
to fall.  
  
Generally, every fruit, on ripening, and just  
before it falls, when it commences a more inde-  
pendent and individual existence, requiring less  
nourishment from any source, and that not so  
much from the earth through its stem as from’  
the sun and air, acquires a bright tint. 0 do  
leaves, ‘The physiologist says it is “due to an  
increased absorption of oxygen.” ‘That is the  
scientific account of the matter,—only a reas  
sertion of the fact. But Iam more interested  
in the rosy cheek than Tam to know what par

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AUTUMNAL TENTS. 217  
  
ticular diet the maiden fed on. ‘The very forest  
and herbage, the pellicle of the earth, must ac-  
quire a bright color; an evidence of its ripeness,  
—as if the globe itself were a fruit on its stem,  
with ever a cheek toward the sun.  
  
Flowers are but colored leaves, fruits but ripe  
ones. The edible part of most fruits is, as the  
physiologist says, “the parenchyma or fleshy  
tissue of the leaf,” of which they are formed.  
  
Our appetites have commonly confined our  
views of ripeness and its phenomena, color,  
mellowness, and perfectness, to the fruits which  
we eat, and we are wont to forget that an im-  
mense harvest which we do not eat, hardly use  
at all, is annually ripened by Nature. At our  
annual Cattle Shows and Horticultural Exhibi-  
tions, we make, as we think, a great show of  
fair fruits, destined, however, to a rather ignoble  
end, fruits not valued for their beauty chiefly.  
But round about md within our towns there is  
annually another show of fruits, on an infinitely  
grander scale, fruits which address our taste for  
beauty alone.  
  
October is the month for painted leaves.  
Their rich glow now flashes round the world.  
‘As fruits and leaves and the day itself acquire  
a bright tint just before they fall, so the year  
near its setting. October is its sunset sky; No-  
‘yember the later twilight.

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218 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
J formerly thought that it would be worth the  
while to get a specimen leaf from each chang-  
ing trag, shrub, and herbaceous plant, when it  
had acquired its brightest characteristic color, im  
its transition from the green to the brown state,  
outline it, and copy its color exactly, with paint  
in a book, which should be entitled, « October,  
or Autumnal Tints”; — beginning with the ear~  
liest reddening,— Woodbine and the lake of  
radical leaves, and coming down through the  
Maples, Hickories, and Sumachs, and many  
beautifully freckled leaves less generally known,  
to’ the latest Oaks and Aspens. What a me-  
mento such a book would be! You would  
need only to turn over its leaves to take a  
ramble through the autumn woods whenever  
you pleased. Or if I could preserve the leaves  
‘themselves, unfaded, it would be better still.  
Lhave made but little progress toward such  
a book, but I have endeftvored, instead, to  
describe all these bright tints in the order in  
which'they present themselves. The following  
are some extracts from my notes.  
  
‘THE PURPLE GRASSES.  
  
By the twentieth of August, everywhere in  
woods and swamps, we are reminded of the  
fall, both by the richly spotted Sarsaparilla-

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AUTOMNAL TINTS. 219  
  
leaves and Brakes, and the withering and black-  
ened Skunk-Cabbage and Hellebore, and, by  
the river-side, the already blackening Pontede-  
ria,  
  
The Purple Grass (Eragréstis pectindcea) is  
now in the height of its beauty. I remember  
still when I first noticed this grass particularly.  
Standing on a hillside: near our river, I saw,  
thirty or forty rods off, a stripe of purple half  
‘a dozen rods long, under the edge of a wood,  
where the ground sloped toward a meadow. It  
was as high-coldted and interesting, though not  
quite so bright, as the patches of Rhexia, being  
a darker purple, like a berry’s stain laid on close  
and thick. On going to and examining it, I  
found it to be a kind of grass in bloom, hardly  
a foot high, with but few green blades, and a  
fine spreading panicle of purple flowers, a shal-  
low, purplish mist trembling around me. Close  
at hand it appeared but a dull purple, and made  
little impression on the eye; it was even diffi-  
cult to detect; and if you plucked a single plant,  
you were surprised to find how thin it was, and  
how little color it had. But viewed at a dis-  
tance in a favorable light, it was of a fine lively  
purple, flower-like, enriching the earth. Such  
puny causes combine to produce these decided  
effects. Iwas the more surprised and charmed  
  
because grass is commonly of a sober and hum-  
ble eolor.

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220 \* AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
‘With its beautiful purple blush it reminds me,  
and supplies the place, of the Rhexia, which is  
now leaving off, and it is one of the most in-  
teresting phenomena of August. The finest  
patches of it grow on waste strips or selvages  
of land at the base of dry hills, just above the  
edge of the meadows, where the greedy mower  
does not deign to swing his scythe; for this is  
a thin and poor grass, beneath his notice. Or,  
it may be, because it is so beantiful he does not  
know that it exists; for the same eye does not  
see this and Timothy. He carefully gets the  
meadow hay and the more nutritious grasses  
which grow next to that, but he leaves this fine  
purple mist for the walker’s harvest, — fodder  
for his fancy stock. Higher up the bill, per-  
chanee, grow also Blackberries, John’s-Wort,  
and neglected, withered, and wiry June-Grass,  
How fortunate that it grows in such places,  
and not in‘the midst of the rank grasses which  
are annually cut! Nature thus keeps use and  
beauty distinct. I know many such localities,  
where it does not fail to present itself annually,  
and paint the earth with its blash. It grows.on  
the gentle slopes, either in a continuous patch  
or in scattered and rounded tufts a foot in  
diameter, and it lasts till it is killed by the  
first smart frosts.  
  
In most.plants the corolla or calyx is the part

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 221  
  
which attains the highest color, and is the most  
attractive; in many it is the seed-vessel or fruit;  
in others, as the Red Maple, the leaves; and in  
others still it is the very culm itself which is the  
principal flower or blooming part.  
  
‘The last is especially the case with the  
Poke or Garget (Phytolacca decindra). Some’  
which stand under our cliffs quite dazzle me  
with their purple stems now and early in  
September. They are as interesting to me as  
most flowers, and one of the most important  
fruits of our autumn. Every part is flower, (or  
fruit,) such is its superfluity of color, —stem,  
branéh, peduncle, pedicel, petiole, and even the’  
at length yellowish purple-veined leaves. Its  
cylindrical ‘racemes of berries of various hues,  
from green to dark purple, six or seven inches  
long, are gracefully drooping on all sides, offer-  
ing repasts to the birds; and even the sepals  
from which the birds have picked the berries are  
a brilliant lake-red, with crimson flame-like re-  
flections, eqiial to anything of the kind,—all on  
fite with ripeness. Hence the lacca, from lac,  
lake, ‘There are at the same time flower-buds,  
flowers, green berries, dark purple or ripe ones,  
and these flowerlike sepals, all on the same  
plant.  
  
‘We love to see any redness in the vegetation  
of the temperate zone. It is the color of colors.

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222 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
This plant speaks to our blood. It asks a bright  
sun on it to make it show to best advantage  
and it must be seen at this season of the year.  
On warm hillsides its stems are ripe by the  
twenty-third of August. At that date I walked  
through a beautiful grove of them, six or seven  
feet high, on the side of one of our cliffs, where  
they ripen early. Quite to the ground they  
were a deep brilliant purple with a bloom, con-  
trasting with the still clear green leaves. It ap-  
pears a rare triumph of Nature to have pro-  
duced and perfected such a plant, as if this  
were enongh for a summer. What a perfect  
maturity it arrives at! It is the emblem ‘of a  
successful life concluded by a death not prema-  
ture, which is an ornament to Nature. What  
if we were to mature as perfectly, root and  
branch, glowing in the midst of our decay, like  
the Poke! Iconfess that it excites me to be-  
hold them. I cut one fora cane, for I would  
fain handle and lean on it. Ilove to press the  
berries between my fingers, and see their juice  
staining my hand. ‘To walk amid these up-  
right, branching casks of purple wine, which  
retain and diffuse a sunset glow, tasting each  
one with your eye, instead of counting the  
pipes on a London dock, what a privilege!  
For Nature’s vintage is not confined to the  
vine. Our poets have sung of wine, the pro-

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AUTUMNAL TENTS. 223  
  
duct of a foreign plant which commonly they  
never saw, as if our own plants had no juice  
in them more than the singers. Indeed, this  
has been called by some the American Grape,  
and, though a native of America, its juices are  
used in some foreign countries to improve the  
color of the wine; so that the poetaster may  
be celebrating the virtues of the Poke without  
knowing it, Here are berries enough to paint  
afresh the western sky, and play the bacchanal  
with, if you will. And what flutes its ensan-  
guined stems would make, to be used in such  
a dance! It is truly a royal plant. I could  
spend the evening of the year musing amid the  
Poke-stems. And perchance amid these groves  
might arise at last a new school of philosophy  
or poetry. It lasts all through September.  
  
At the same time with this, or near the end  
of August, a to me very interesting genus of  
grasses, Andropogons, or Beard-Grasses, is in  
its prime. Andropogon furcatus, Forked Beard-  
Grass, or call it Purple-Fingered Grass; Andro-  
pogon scoparius, Purple Wood-Grass;, and An-  
dropogon (now called Sorghum) nutans, Indian-  
Grass. ‘The first is a very tall and slender-  
calmed grass, three to seven feet high, with  
four or five purple finger-like spikes raying up-  
ward from the top. ‘The second is also quite  
slender, growing in tufts two feet high by

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224 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
‘one wide, with culms often somewhat curving,  
which, as the spikes go out of bloom, have  
a whitish fuzzy look. ‘These two are prevail-  
ing grasses at this season on dry and sandy  
fields and hillsides. The culms of both, not  
to mention their pretty flowers, reflect a pur-  
ple tinge, and help to declare the ripeness of  
‘the year. Perhaps I have the more sympathy  
with them because they are despised by the  
farmer, and ocoupy sterile and neglected soil.  
They are high-colored, like ripe grapes, and  
express a maturity which the spring did not  
suggest. Only the August sun could have  
thus burnished these culms and leaves, The  
farmer has long since done his upland hgying,  
and he will not condescend to bring his scythe  
to where these slender wild grasses have at  
length flowered thinly; you often see spaces  
of bare sand amid them. But I walk encour  
aged between the tufts of Purple Wood-Grass,  
over the sandy fields, and along the edge of  
the Shrub-Oaks, glad to recognize these sim-  
ple contemporaries. With thoughts cutting a  
broad swathe I “get” them, with horse-rak-  
ing thoughts I gather them into windrows. ‘The  
fine-eared poet may hear the whetting of my  
scythe. These two were almost the first grasses  
‘that I leaned to distinguish, for I had not  
known by how many friends I was surrounded,

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 225  
  
—Thad seen them simply as grasses standing.  
The purple of their culms also excites me like  
that of the Poke-Weed stems.  
  
‘Think what refuge there is for one, before  
August is over, from college commencements  
and society that isolates! I can wkulk amid  
the tafts of Purple Wood-Grass on the bor-  
ders of the “Great Fields.” Wherever I walk:  
these afternoons, the Purple- Fingered Grass  
also stands like a guide-board, and points my  
thoughts to more poetic paths than they have  
lately travelled  
  
A man shall perhaps rush by and trample  
down plants as high as his head, and cannot  
be said to know that they exist, though he  
may have cut many tons of them, littered his  
stables with them, and fed them to his cattle  
for years. Yet, if he ever favorably attends  
to them, he may be overcome by their beauty.  
Each bumblest plant, or weed, as we call it,  
stands there to express ‘some thought or mood  
of ours; and yet how long it stands in vain!  
Thad walked. over those Great Fields so many  
Angusts, and never yet distinctly recognized  
these purple companions that I had there. I  
  
inst them and trodden on them,  
  
y, at last, they,.as it were, rose  
  
up\_and ble: e. Beauty and true wealth  
ate always thos cheap and despised. Heaven

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226 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
might be defined as the place which men  
avoid. Who can doubt that these grasses,  
which the farmer says are of no account to  
him, find some compensation in your appreci-  
ation of them? I may say that I never saw  
them before, — though, when I came to look  
‘them face to face, there did come down to me  
‘a purple gleam from previous years; and now,  
wherever I go, Isee hardly anything else, It is  
the reign and presidency of the Andropogons.  
  
Almost the very sands confess the ripening  
influence of the August sun, and methinks, to-  
gether with the slender grasses waving over  
them, reflect a purple tinge. ‘The impurpled  
sands! Such is the consequence of all this sun-  
shine absorbed into the pores of plants and of  
the earth. All sap or blood is now wine-col-  
ored. At last we have not only the purple sea,  
but the purple land.  
  
‘The Chestnut Beard-Grass, Indian-Grass, or  
‘Wood-Grass, growing here and there in’ waste  
places, but more rare than the former, (from two  
to four or five feet high,) is still handsomer and  
of more vivid colors than its congeners, and  
might well have caught the Indian’s eye. It  
has a long, narrow, one-sided, and slightly nod-  
ding panicle of bright purple and yellow flow-  
ets, like a banner raised above its reedy leaves.  
‘These bright standards are now advanced on

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AUTUMNAL TINTS, \* 227  
  
the distant hill-sides, not in large armies, but  
in scattered troops or single file, like the red  
men, They stand thus fair and bright, repre-  
sentative of the race which they are named af-  
ter, but for the most part unobserved as they.  
‘The expression of this grass haunted me for a  
week, after I first passed and noticed it, like  
the glance of an eye. It stands like an Indian  
chief taking a last look at his favorite hunting-  
grounds.  
  
   
  
‘THE RED MAPLE,  
  
By the twenty-fifth of September, the Red Ma-  
ples generally are beginning to be ripe. Some  
large ones have been conspicuously changing  
for a week, and some single trees are now very  
brilliant. Inotice @ small one, half a mile off  
across a meadow, against the green wood-side  
‘there, a far brighter red than the blossoms of  
any tree in summer, and more conspicuous, I  
have observed this tree for several autumns in-  
variably changing earlier than its fellows, just  
as one tree ripens its fruit earlier than another.  
It might serve to mark the season, perhaps, I  
should be sorry, if it were cut down. I know  
of two or three such trees in different parts of  
‘our town, which might, perhaps, be propagated  
from, as early ripeners or September trees, and  
their seed be advertised in the market, as well

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228 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
as that of radishes, if we cared as much about  
them.  
  
‘At present these burning bushes stand chiefly  
along the edge of the meadows, or I distinguish  
them afar on the hillsides here and there. Some-  
times you will see many small ones in a swamp  
tured quite crimson when all other trees around  
are still perfectly green, and the former appear  
#80 much the brighter for it. ‘They take you by  
surprise, as you are going by on one side, across  
the fields, thus early in the season, as if it were  
some gay encampment of the red men, or other  
foresters, of whose arrival you had not heard.  
  
Some single trees, wholly bright scarlet, seen  
against others of their kind still freshly green,  
or against evergreens, are more memorable than  
whole groves will be by-and-by. How beauti-  
fal, when a whole treé is like one great scarlet  
fruit fall of ripe juices, every leaf, from lowest  
limb to topmost spire, all aglow, especially if  
you look toward the sun! What more remark-  
able object can there be in the landscape? Vi  
ible for miles, too fair to be believed. If such  
a phenomenon occurred but once, it would be  
handed down by tradition to posterity, and get  
into the mythology at las  
  
‘The whole tree thus ripening in advance of  
its fellows attains a singular preéminence, and  
sometimes maintains it for a week or two. I

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 229  
  
am thrilled at the sight of it, bearing aloft its  
scarlet standard for the regiment of green-clad  
foresters around, and I go half a mile out of my  
way to examine it. A single tree becomes thus  
the crowning beauty of some meadowy vale,  
and the expression of the whole surrounding  
forest is at once more spirited for it.  
  
‘A small Red Maple has grown, perchance,  
far away at the head of some retired valley, a  
mile from any road, unobserved. It has faith-  
fully discharged the duties of a Maple there, all  
winter and summer, neglected none of its econ  
omies, but added to its stature in the virtue  
which belongs to a Maple, by a steady growth  
for so many months, never having gone gadding  
abroad, and is nearer heaven than it was in the  
spring. It has faithfully husbanded its sap, and  
afforded a shelter to the wandering bird, has  
long since ripened its seeds and committed them  
to the winds, and has the satisfaction of know-  
ing, perhaps, that a thousand little well-behaved  
Maples are already ‘settled in life somewhere.  
It deserves well of Mapledom. Its leaves have  
been asking it from time to time, in a whisper,  
“When shall we redden?”, And now, in this  
month of September, this month of travelling,  
when men are hastening to the sea-side, or the  
mountains, or the lakes, this modest Maple, still  
without budging an inch, travels in its reputa-

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230 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
tion, —runs up its scarlet flag on that billside,  
which shows that it has finished its summer's  
work before all other trees, and withdraws from  
the contest. At the eleventh hour of the year,  
the tree which no scrutiny could have detected  
here when it was most industrious is thus, by  
the tint of its maturity, by its very blushes, re-  
vealed at last to the careless and distant travel-  
ler, and leads his thoughts away from the dusty  
road into those brave solitudes which it inhab-  
it, It flashes out conspicuous with all the vir-  
tue and beauty of a Maple,— Acer rubrum.  
‘We may now read its title, or rubric, clear. Its  
virtues, not its sins, are as scarlet.  
Notwithstanding the Red Maple is the most  
intense scarlet of any of our trees, the Sugar-  
‘Maple has been the most celebrated, and Mi-  
chaux in his “Sylva” does not speak of the  
autumnal color of the former. About the sec-  
ond of October, these trees, both large and  
small, are most brilliant, though many are still  
green. In “sprout-lands” they seem to vie with  
one another, and ever some particular one in  
the midst of the crowd will be of a peculiarly  
pure scarlet, and by. its more intense color at-  
tract our eye even at a distance, and cary off  
the palm. A large Red-Maple swamp, when  
at the height of its change, is the most obvi-  
ously brilliant of all tangible things, where I

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AUTUMNAL THVTS. 231  
  
dwell, so abundant is this tree with us. It  
varies much both in form and color. A great  
many are merely yellow, more scarlet, others  
scarlet deepening into crimson, more red than  
common. Look at yonder swamp of Meples  
mixed with Pines, at the base of a Pine-clad  
hill, a quarter of a mile off, so that you get the  
full effect of the bright colors, without detecting  
the imperfections of the leaves, and see their  
yellow, scarlet, and crimson fires, of all tints,  
mingled and contrasted with the green. Some  
Maples are yet green, only yellow or erimson-  
tipped on the edges of their flakes, like the edges  
of a Hazel-Nut burr; some are wholly brilliant  
scarlet, raying out regularly and finely every  
way, bilaterally, like the veins of a leaf; others,  
of more irregular form, when I turn my head  
slightly, emptying out some of its earthiness  
and concealing the trunk of the tree, seem to  
rest heavily flake on flake, like yellow and scar-  
let clouds, wreath upon wreath, or like snow-  
drifts driving through the air, stratified by the  
wind. It adds greatly to the beauty of such a  
swamp at this season, that, even though there  
may be no other trees interspersed, it is not seen  
as a simple mass of color, but, different trees  
being of different colors and hues, the outline  
of each crescent tree-top is distinct, and where  
one laps on to another. Yet a painter would

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232 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
hardly venture to make them thus distinct a  
quarter of a mile off  
  
‘As I go across a meadow directly toward a  
low rising ground this bright afternoon, I see,  
some fifty rods off toward the sun, the top of a  
Maple swamp just appearing over the sheeny  
russet edge of the hill, a stripe apparently twe1  
ty rods long by ten feet deep, of the most in-  
tensely brilliant scarlet, orange, and yellow,  
equal to any flowers or fruits, or any tints ever  
painted. As I advance, lowering the edge of  
the bill which makes the firm foreground or  
lower frame of the picture, the depth of the  
brilliant grove revealed steadily increases, sug-  
gesting that the whole of the inclosed valley is  
filled with such color. One wonders that the  
tithing-men and fathers of the town are not out  
to see what the trees mean by their high colors  
and exuberance of spirits, fearing that some  
mischief is brewing. I do not see what the  
Puritans did at this season, when the Maples  
blaze ont in scarlet. ‘They certainly could not  
have worshipped in groves then, Perhaps that  
is what they built meeting-houses and fenced  
them round with horse-sheds for.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘THE ELM.  
  
Now, too, the first of October, or later, the  
Elms are at the height of their autumnal beauty,

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 233  
  
great brownish-yellow masses, warm from their  
‘September oven, hanging over the highway  
‘Their leaves are perfectly ripe. I wonder if  
there is any answering ripeness in the lives of  
the men who live beneath them. As I look  
down our street, which is lined with them, they  
remind me both by their form and color of yel-  
lowing sheaves of grain, as if the harvest had-  
indeed come to the village itself, and we might  
expect to find some maturity and flavor in the  
thoughts of the villagers at last. Under those  
bright rustling yellow piles just ready to fall on  
the heads of the walkers, how can any crudity  
or greenness of thought or act prevail? When  
I stand where half a dozen large Elms droop  
over a house, it is as if I stood within a ripe  
pumpkin-rind, and I fecl as mellow as if I were  
the pulp, thoigh I may be somewhat stringy  
and seedy withal. What is the late greenness  
of the English Elm, like a cucumber out of  
season, which does not know when to have  
done, compared with the early and golden ma-  
tarity of the American tree? The street is the  
seene of a great harvest-home. It would be  
worth the while to set out these trees, if only  
for their autumnal value, ‘Think of these great  
yellow canopies or parasols held over our heads  
and houses by the mile together, making the vil-  
lage all one and compact,— an u/marium, which

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234 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
is at the same time a nursery of men! And  
then how gently and unobserved they drop their  
burden and let in the sun when it is wanted,  
their leaves not heard when they fall on our  
roofs and in our streets; and thus the village  
parasol is shut up and put away! I see the  
market-man driving into the village, and disap-  
pearing under its canopy of Elm-tops, with his  
crop, as into a great granary or barn-yard. I  
am tempted to go thither as to a\*husking of  
thoughts, now dry and ripe, and ready to be  
separated from their integuments; but, alas! I  
foresee that it will be chiefly husks and little  
thought, blasted pig-corn, fit only for cob-meal,  
—for, as you sow, so shall you reap.  
  
   
  
FALLEN LEAVES.  
  
By the sixth of October the leaves generally  
begin to fall, in successive showers, after frost  
or rain; but the principal leaf-harvest, the acme  
of the Fall, is commonly about the sixteenth.  
Some morning at that date there is perhaps a  
harder frost than we have seen, and ice formed  
under the pump, and now, when the morning  
wind rises, the leaves come down in denser  
showers than ever. They suddenly form thick  
beds or carpets on the ground, in this gentle air,  
or even without wind, just the size and form of  
‘the tree above. Some trees, as small Hickories,

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 235  
  
appear to have dropped their leaves instantane-  
ously, as a soldier grounds arms at a signal; and  
those of the Hickory, being bright yellow s  
though witheredgeflect a blaze of light from the  
ground where they lie. Dowi they have come  
on alll sides, at the first earnest touch of an-  
tumn’s wand, making a sound like rain.  
  
Or else it is after moist and rainy weather  
that we notice how great a fall of leaves there  
has been in the night, though it may not yet be  
the touch" that loosens the Rock-Maple leaf.  
‘The streets are thickly strewn with the trophies,  
and fallen Elm-leaves make a dark brown pave-  
ment under our feet. After some remarkably  
warm Indian-summer day ot days, I perceive  
that it is the unusual heat which, more than  
anything, causes the leaves to fall, there having  
been, perhaps, no frost nor rain for some time.  
‘The intense heat suddenly ripens and wilts them,  
just as it softens and ripens peaches and other  
fruits, and causes them to drop.  
  
The leaves of late Red Maples, still bright,  
strew the earth, often crimson-spotted on a yel-  
low ground, like some wild apples, — though  
they preserve these bright colors on the ground  
but a day or two, especially if it rains. On  
causeways I go by trees here and there all, hare  
and emoke-like, having lost their brilliant cloth-  
ing; but there it lies, nearly as bright as ever,

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236 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
on the ground on one side, and making nearly  
as regular a figure as lately on the tree. I would  
rather say that I first observe the trees thus flat  
on the ground like a permanens colored shadow,  
and they suggest to look for the boughs that  
bore them. A queen might be proud to walk  
where these gallant trees have spread their  
bright cloaks in the mud. I see wagons roll  
over them as a shadow or a reflection, and the  
  
+ drivers heed them just as little as they did their  
shadows before.  
  
Birds'-nests, in the Huckleberry and other  
shrubs, and in trees, are already being filled with  
the withered leaves. So many have fallen in  
the woods, that a squirrel cannot run after a  
falling nut without being heard. Boys are rak-  
ing them in the streets, if only for the pleasure  
of dealing with such clean crisp substances.  
Some sweep the paths scrupulously neat, and  
then stand to see the next breath strew them  
with new trophies. ‘The swamp-floor is thickly  
covered, and the Lycopodium lucidulum looks  
suddenly greener amid them. In dense woods  
they half-cover pools that are three or four rods  
long. The other day I could hardly find a well-  
known spring, and even suspected that it had  
dried up, for it was completely concealed by  
freshly fallen leaves; and when I swept them  
aside and revealed it, it was like striking the

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 237  
  
earth, with Aaron’s rod, for a new spring. Wet  
  
grounds about the edges of swamps look dry  
  
with them. At one swamp, where I was sur  
  
veying, thinking to step on a leafy shore from a  
  
rail, I got into the water more than a foot deep.  
\* “When I go to the river the day after the prin-  
cipal fall of leaves, the sixteenth, I find my boat  
all covered, bottom and seats, with the leaves of  
the Golden Willow under which it is moored,  
and I set sail with a cargo of them rustling  
under my feet. If I empty it, it will be full  
again to-morrow. Ido not regard them as lit-  
ter, to be swept out, but accept them as suit-  
able straw or matting for the bottom of my car-  
riage. When I turn up into the month of the  
Assabet, which is wooded, large fleets of leaves  
are floating on its surface, as it were getting out  
to sea, with room to tack; but next the shore, a  
little farther up, they are thicker than foam, quite  
concealing the water for a:rod in width, under  
and amid the Alders, Button-Bushes, and Ma-  
ples, still perfectly light and dry, with fibre un-  
relaxed; and at a rocky bend where they are  
met and stopped by the morning wind, they  
sometimes form a broad and dense crescent quite  
across the river. When I tam my prow that  
way, and the wave which it makes strikes them,  
list what a pleasant rustling from these dry sub-  
stances grating on: one another! Often it is

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238 AUTUMNAL TEXTS.  
  
their undulation only which reveals the water  
beneath them. Also every motion of the wood.  
turtle on the shore is betrayed by their rustling  
there. Or even in mid-channel, when the wind  
rises, I hear them blown with a rustling sound.  
Higher up they are slowly moving round and  
round in some great eddy which the river makes,  
as that at the “Leaning Hemlocks,” where the  
water is deep, and the current is wearing into  
the bank.  
  
Perchanee, in the afternoon of such a day,  
‘when the water is perfectly calm and full of re-  
flections, I paddle gently down the main stream,  
and, turning up the Assabet, reach a quiet cove,  
where I unexpectedly find myself surrounded by  
myriads of leaves, like fellow-voyagers, which  
seem to have the same purpose, or want of pur-  
pose, with myself, See this great fleet of scat-  
tered leaf-boats which we paddle amid, in this  
smooth river-bay, each one curled up on every  
side by the sun’s skill, each nerve a tiff spruce  
knee, —like boats of hide, and of all patterns,  
Charon’s boat probably among the rest, and  
some with lofty prows and poops, like the stately  
vessels of the ancients, scarcely moving in the  
sluggish current, — like the great fleets, the  
dense Chinese cities of boats, with which you  
mingle on entering some great mart, some New  
York or Canton, which we are all steadily ap-

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 239  
  
proaching together. How gently each has been  
deposited on the water! No violence has been  
used towards them yet, though, perchance, pal-  
pitating hearts were present at the launching.  
‘And painted ducks, too, the splendid wood-duck  
among the rest, often come to sail and float  
amid the painted leaves,— barks of a nobler  
model still! 3  
  
‘What wholesome herb-drinks are to be had  
in the swamps now! What strong medicinal,  
but rich, scents from the decaying leaves! ‘Tye  
rain falling on the freshly dried herbs and leaves,  
and filling the pools and ditches into which they  
have dropped thus clean and rigid, will soon con-  
vert them into tea,—green, black, brown, and  
yellow teas, of all degrees of strength, enough  
to set all Nature a gossiping. Whether we  
drink them or not, as yet, before their strength  
is drawn, these leaves, dried on great Nature's  
coppers, are of such various pure and delicate  
tints as might make the fame of Oriental teas.  
  
How they are mixed up, of all species, Oak  
and Maple and Chestnut and Birch! But Na-  
ture is not cluttered with them ; she is a perfect  
husbandman; she stores them all. Consider  
what a vast crop is thus annually shed on the  
earth! This, more than any mere grain or seed,  
is the great harvest of the year. ‘The trees are  
now repaying the earth with interest what they

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240 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
have taken from it. They are discounting. They  
are about to add a leaf’s thickness to the depth  
of the soil. ‘This is the beautiful way in which  
Nature gets her muck, while I chaffer with this  
man and that, who talks to me-about sulphur  
and the cost of carting. Wee are all the richer  
for their decay. I am more interested in this  
crop than in the English grass alone or in the  
corm, Tt prepares the virgin mould for future  
cornfields and forests, on which the earth fat-  
tens. It keeps our homestead in good heart.  
For beautiful variety no crop can be com-  
\_pared with this. Here is not merely the plain  
ellow of the grains, but nearly all the colors  
that we know, the brightest blue not excepted:  
the early blushing Maple, the Poison-Sumach  
blazing its sins as scarlet, the mulberry Ash, the  
rich chrome-yellow of the Poplars, the brilliant  
red Huckleberry, with which the hills’ backs are  
painted, like those of sheep. The frost touches  
them, and, with the slightest breath of returning  
day or jarring of earth’s axle, see in what show-  
ers they come floating down! ‘The ground is  
all party-colored with them. But they still live ~  
in the soil, whose fertility and bulk they in-  
crease, and in the forests that spring from it,  
‘They stoop to rise, to mount higher in coming  
years, by subtle chemistry, climbing by the sap  
in the trees, and the sapling’s first fruits thus

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. at  
  
shed, transmuted at last, may adom its crown,  
when, in after-years, it has become the monarch  
of the forest,  
  
It is pleasant to walk over the beds of these  
fresh, crisp,and mustling leaves, How beauti-  
fully they goto their graves! how gently lay  
themselves down and\_turn to mould! — painted  
of a thousand hues, and fit to make the beds of |,  
us living. So they troop to their last resting- |  
place, light and frisky. They put on no weeds, |  
but menzily they go scampering over the earth, |  
selecting the spot, choosing a lot, ordering no |  
iron fence, whispering all through the woods |  
about it, —some choosing the spot where the  
bodies of men are mouldering beneath, and \  
meeting them haléway. How many flatter. |  
ings before they rest quietly in their graves  
‘They ‘that soared so loftily, how contentedly |  
they return to dust again, and are laid low, re- |  
signed to lie and decay at the foot of the tree,  
and afford nourishment to new generations of |  
their kind, as well as to flutter on high! They  
teach us how to die. One wonders if the time  
Will\_ever comme when men, with their boasted  
  
in immortality, will lie down as gracefully  
ripe, — with such an Indian-summer  
‘serenity will shed their bodies, as they do their  
hair and nails.  
\* ‘When the leaves fall, the whole earth is a  
16

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242 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
cemetery pleasant to walk in. Tlove to wan-  
der and muse over them in their graves. Here  
fare no lying nor vain epitaphs. What though  
you own no lot at Mount Auburn? Your lot  
is surely cast somewhere in this vast cemetery,  
which has been consecrated from of old. You  
need attend no auction to secure a place. There  
is room enough here, The Loose-strife shall  
bloom and the Huckleberry-bird sing over your  
bones. ‘The woodman and hunter shall be your  
sextons, and the children shall tread upon the  
borders as much as they will. Let us walk in  
the cemetery of the leaves,— this is your true  
Greenwood Cemetery.  
  
‘THE SUGAR-MAPLE.  
  
Bur think not that the splendor of the year  
is over; for as one leaf does not make a sum-  
mer, neither does one falling leaf make an au-  
tumn. ‘The smallest Sugar- Maples in our  
streets make a great show as early as the fifth  
of October, more than any other trees there.  
‘As I look up the Main Street, they appear like  
painted screens standing before the houses; yet  
many are green. But now, or generally by the  
seventeenth of October, when almost all Red  
Maples, and some White Maples, are bare, the  
large Sugar-Maples also are in their glory, glow-

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AUTUMNAL Tr  
  
   
  
23,  
ing with yellow and red, and show unexpectedly  
bright and delicate tints. ‘They are remarkable  
for the contrast they often afford of deep blush-  
ing red on one half and green on the other.  
‘They become at length dense masses of rich  
yellow with a deep scarlet blush, or more than  
blush, on the exposed surfaces. They are the  
brightest trees now in the street,  
  
‘The large ones on our Common are particu-  
larly beautiful, A delicate, but warmer than  
golden yellow is now the prevailing color, with  
scarlet cheeks. Yet, standing on the cast side  
of the Common just before sundown, when the  
western light is transmitted through them, I  
see that their yellow even, compared with the  
pale lemon yellow of an Elm close by, amounts  
toa scarlet, without notiéing the bright scarlet  
portions. Generally, they are great regular oval  
masses of yellow and scarlet. All the sunny  
warmth of the season, the Indian - summer,  
seems to be absorbed in their leaves. The  
lowest and inmost leaves next the bole are, as  
usual, of the most delicate yellow and green,  
like the complexion of young men brought up  
in the house, ‘There is an auction on the Com-  
mon to-day, but its red flag is hard to be dis  
cerned amid this blaze of color.  
le did the fathers of the town anticipate  
illiant success, when they caused to be im.

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aut AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
ported from farther in the country some straight  
poles with their tops cut off, which they called  
‘Sugar-Maples; and, as I remember, after they  
were set out, a neighboring merchant's clerk, by  
way of jest, planted beans about them. Those  
which were then jestingly called bean-poles are  
to-day far the most beautiful objects notice-  
able in our streets. They are worth all and  
more than they have cost, + thongh one of the  
selectmen, while setting them out, took the cold  
which occasioned his death, — if only because  
they have filled the open eyes of children with  
their rich color unstintedly so many Octobers.  
‘We will not ask them to yield us sugar in the  
spring, while they afford us so fair a prospect in  
the autumn. Wealth in-doors may be the in-  
heritance of few, but it is equally distributed  
on the Common. All children alike can revel  
in this golden harvest.  
  
Surely trees should be set in our streets with  
a view to their October splendor; thongh I  
doubt whether this is ever considered by the  
“Tree Society.” Do you not think it will make  
some odds to these children that they were  
brought up under the Maples? Hundreds of  
eyes are steadily drinking in this color, and by  
these teachers even the truants are caught and  
educated the moment they step abroad. Indeed,  
neither the truant nor the studious is at present

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 245  
  
taught color in the schools, These are instead  
of the bright colors in apothecaries’ shops and  
city windows. It is a pity that we have no  
more Red Maples, and some Hickories, in our  
streets as well. Our paint-box is very imper-  
fectly filled. Instead of, or beside, supplying  
such paint-boxes as we do, we might supply  
these natural colors to the young. Where else  
will they-study color under greater advantage:  
‘What School of Design can vie with this?  
‘Think how much the eyes of painters of all  
kinds, and of manufacturers of cloth and paper,  
and paper-stainers, and countless others, are to  
be educated by these autumnal colors. ‘The stax  
tioner’s envelopes may be of very various tints,  
yet, not so various as those of the leaves of a  
single tree. If you want a different shade or  
tint of a particular color, you have only to look  
farther within or without the tree or the wood.  
‘These leaves are not many dipped in one dyc,  
as at the dye-house, but they are dyed in light  
of infinitely various degrees of strength, and left  
to set and dry there.  
  
Shall the names of so many of our colors  
continue to be derived from those of obscure  
foreign localities, as Naples yellow, Prussian  
blue, raw Sienna, burnt Umber, Gamboge? —  
(eurely the Tyrian purple must have faded by  
this time), — or from comparatively trivial arti-

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216 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
cles of commerce, — chocolate, lemon, coffee,  
cinnamon, claret? — (shall we compare our  
Hickory to a lemon, or a lemon to a Hick-  
ory?) —or from ores and oxides which few  
ever see? Shall we so often, when describing  
to our neighbors the color of something we have  
seen, refer them, not to some natural object in  
our neighborhood, but perchance to a bit of  
earth fetched from the other side of the planet,  
which possibly they may find at the apothe-  
cary’s, but which probably neither they nor we  
ever saw? Have we not an earth under our  
feet,—ay, and a sky over our heads? Or is the  
last aif’ ultramarine? What do we know of  
sapphire, amethyst, emerald, raby, amber, and  
the like, —\_most of us who take these names in  
vain? Leave these precious words to cabinet-  
Keepers, virtuosos, and maids-of-honor, — to the  
Nabobs, Begums, and Chobdars of Hindostan,  
or wherever else. I do not see why, since Amer-  
ica and her autumn woods bave been discovered,  
our leaves should not compete with the precious  
stones in giving names to colors; and, indeed, I  
believe that in course of time the names of some  
of our trees and shrubs, as well as flowers, will  
get into our popular chromatic nomenclature.  
  
But of much more importance than a know!  
edge of the names and distinctions of color  
the joy and exhilaration which “these colored

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 247  
  
eaves excite, Already these brilliant trees  
throughout the street, without any more variety,  
are at least equal to an annual festival and holi-  
day, or a week of such. ‘These are cheap and  
innocent gala-days, celebrated by one and all  
without the aid of committees or marshals, such  
“a show as may safely be licensed, not attracting  
gamblers or ram-sellers, not requiring any special  
police to keep the peace. And poor indeed must  
be that New-England village’s October which  
has not the Maple in its streets. ‘This October  
festival costs no powder, nor ringing of bells,  
bt every tree is a living liberty-pole on which a  
thousand bright flags are waving.  
  
No wonder that we must have our annual  
Cattle-Show, and Fall Training, and perhaps  
Cornwallis, our September Courts, and the  
like. Nature herself holds her annual fair in  
October, not only in the streets, but in every  
hollow and on every hill-side. When lately we  
looked into that Red-Maple swamp all ablaze,  
where the trees were clothed in their vestures  
of most dazzling tints, did it not suggest a  
thousand gypsies beneath, —a race capable  
of wild delight,—or even the fabled fawns,  
satyrs, and wood-nymphs come back to earth?  
‘Or was it only a congregation of wearied wood-  
choppers, or of proprietors come to inspect their  
lots, that we thought of? Or, earlier still, when

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28 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
we paddled on the river through that fine-grained  
September air, did there slot appear to be some~  
thing new going on under the sparkling surface  
of the stream, a shaking of props, at least, so  
that we made haste in order to be up in time ?  
Did not the rows of yellowing Willows and |  
Batton-Bushes .on each side seem like rows  
of booths, under which, perhaps, some fluvia~  
tile egg-pop equally yellow was effervescing?  
Did not all these suggest that man’s spirits  
should rise as high as Nature’s,—should hang  
out their flag, and the routine of his life be in-  
terrupted by an analogous expression of joy and  
hilarity ?  
  
‘No annual training or muster of soldiery, no  
celebration with its scarfs and banners, could  
import into the town a hundredth part of the  
annual splendor of our October. "We have only  
to set the trees, or let them stand, and Nature  
will find the colored drapery, — flags of all her  
nations, some of whose private signals hardly  
the botanist can read, — while we walk under  
the triumphal arches of the Elms. Leave it to  
Nature to appoint the days, whether the same  
as in neighboring States or not, and let the  
clergy read her proclamations, if they can un-  
derstand them. Behold what a brilliant drap-  
ery is her Woodbine flag! What public-spir-  
ited merchant, think you, has contributed this

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 249  
  
part of the show? There is no handsomer  
shingling and paint than this vine, at present  
covering a whole side of some houses. I do  
not believe that the Ivy never sere is compara-  
ble to it, No wonder it has been extensively  
introduced into London. Let us have a good  
many Maples and Hickories and Scarlet Oaks,  
then, I say. Blaze away! Shall that dirty  
roll of bunting in the gun-house be all the colors  
a village can display? A village is not com-  
plete, unless it have these trees to mark the  
season in it. They are important, like the  
town-clock. A village that has them not will  
not be found to work well. It has a screw  
loose, an essential part is wanting. Let us  
have Willows for spring, Elms for summer,  
Maples and Walnuts and Tupeloes for au-  
tumn, Evergreens for winter, and Oaks for  
all seasons. What is a gallery in a house to  
a gallery in the streets, which very ‘market-  
man rides through, whether he will or not?  
Of course, there is not a picture-gallery in the  
country which would be worth so much to us  
as is the western view at sunset under the  
Elms of our main street. They are the frame  
to a picture which is daily painted behind  
them, An avenue of Elms as large as our  
largest and three miles long would seem to  
lead to some admirable ploce, thongh only  
€ were at the end of it.

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250 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
A village needs these innocent stimulants of  
bright and cheering prospects to keep off melan-  
choly and superstition, Show me two villages,  
one embowered in trees and blazing with all the  
glories of October, the other a merely trivial and  
treeless waste, or with only a single tree or two  
for suicides, and I shall be sure that in the lat-  
ter will be found the most starved and bigoted  
religionists and the most desperate drinkers.  
Every washtub and milkean and gravestone  
will be exposed. The inhabitants will disap-  
pear abraptly behind their barns and houses,  
like desert Arabs amid their rocks, and I shall  
look to see spears in their hands. ‘They will be  
ready to accept the most barren and forlorn  
doctrine, —as that the world is speedily com-  
ing to an end, or bas already got to it, or that  
they themselves are turned wrong side outward.  
‘They will perchance crack their dry joints at  
one another «and call it a spiritual communi-  
cation.  
  
But to confine ourselves to the Maples.  
‘What if we were to take half as much pains  
in protecting them as we do in setting them  
‘out, —not stupidly tie our horses to our dahlia-  
stems?  
  
‘What meant the fathers by establishing this  
perfectly living institution before the church, —  
this institution which needs no repairing nor

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 251  
  
repainting, which is continually enlarged and  
repaired by its growth? Surely they  
  
Wrought in a aad sincerity ;  
‘Themselves from God they could not free  
‘They planted better than they knew ;  
‘The conscious trees to beauty grow.”  
  
   
  
Verily these Maples are cheap preachers, per-  
manently settled, which preach their half-cen-  
tury, and century, ay, and century-and-a-half  
sermons, with constantly increasing unction and  
influence, ministering to many generations of  
men; and the least we can do is to supply them  
with enitable colleagues as they grow infirm,  
  
‘THE SCARLET OAK.  
  
Beoneme to a genus which is remarkable  
for the beautiful form of its leaves, I suspect  
that some Scarlet-Qak leaves surpass those of  
all other Oaks in the rich and wild beauty of  
their outlines. I judge from an acquaintance  
with twelve species, and from drawings which  
T have seen of many others,  
  
Stand under this tree and see how finely its  
leaves are cut against the sky,—as it were,  
only a few sharp points extending from a mid-  
rib. ‘They look like double, treble, or quadruple  
crosses. ‘They are far more ethereal than the |

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252 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
ess deeply scolloped Oak-leaves. They have  
s0 little leafy terra firma that they appear melt-  
ing away in the light, and scarcely obstruct our  
view. The leaves of very young plants are, like  
those of full-grown Oaks of other species, more  
entire, simple, and lumpish in their outlines;  
but these, raised high on old trees, have solved  
the leafy problem. Lifted higher and higher,  
and sublimated more and more, putting off  
some earthiness and cultivating more intimacy  
with the light each year, they have at length the  
least possible amount of earthy matter, and the  
[greatest spread and grasp of skyey influences.  
‘There they dance, arm in arm with the light, —  
{tripping it on fantastic points, fit partners in  
jthose aérial halls. So intimately mingled are  
‘they with it, that, what with their slenderness  
‘and their glossy surfaces, you can bardly tell at  
last what in the dance is leaf.and what is light.  
And when no zephyr stirs, they are at most but  
\a rich tracery to the forest-windows.  
  
\* Tam again struck with their beauty, when,  
a month later, they thickly strew the ground  
in the woods, piled one upon another under  
my feet, ‘They are then brown above, but  
purple beneath. With their narrow lobes and  
their bold deep scollops reaching almost to the  
middle, they suggest that the material must be  
cheap, or else there has been a lavish expense

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 253  
  
in their creation, as if so much had been cut  
out, Or else they seem to us the remnants of  
the stuff out of which leaves have been cut  
with a die, Indeed, when they lie thus one  
upon another, they remind me of a pile of  
serap-tin.  
  
Or bring one home, and study it closely at  
your leisure, by the fireside. It-is a type, not  
from any Oxford font, not in the Basque nor  
the arrow-headed character, not found on the  
Rosetta Stone, but destined to be copied in  
sculpture one day, if they ever get to whit-  
tling stone here. What a wild and pleasing  
outline, a combination of gracefal curves and  
angles! The eye rests with equal delight on  
what is not leaf and on what is leaf —on  
the broad, free, open sinuses, and on the long,  
sharp, bristle-pointed lobes. A simple oval out-  
line would include it all, if you connected the  
points of the leaf; but how much richer is it  
than that, with its half-dozen deep scollops, in  
which the eye and thought of the beholder are  
embayed! If I were a drawing-master, I would  
set my pupils to copying these leaves, that they  
might learn to draw firmly and gracefully.  
  
Regarded as water, it is like a pond with half +  
a dozen broad rounded promontories extending  
nearly to its middle, half from each side, while  
its watery bays extend far inland, like sharp

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254 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
friths, at each of whose heads several fine  
streams empty in, — almost a leafy archipel-  
ago.  
  
But it oftener suggests land, and, as Diony-  
sius and Pliny compared the form of the Morea  
to that of the leaf of the Oriental Plane-tree,  
so this leaf reminds me of some fair wild island  
  
“im the ocean, whose extensive coast, alternate  
rounded bays with smooth strands, and sharp-  
pointed rocky capes, mark it as fitted for the  
habitation of man, and destined to become a  
centre of civilization at last. To the sailor's  
eye, it is a much-indented shore. Is it not, in  
fact, a shore to the aérial ocean, on which the  
windy surf beats? At sight of this leaf we are  
all mariners,— if not vikings, buccaneers, and  
filibusters. Both our love of repose and our  
spirit of adventure are addressed. In our most  
casual glance, perchance, we think, that, if we  
sueceed in doubling those sharp capes, we shall  
find deep, smooth, and secure havens in the  
ample bays. How different from the White-  
Oak leaf, with its rounded headlands, on which  
no lighthouse need be placed! ‘That is an Eng-  
land, with its long civil history, that may be  
read. This is some still unsettled New-found  
Island or Celebes. Shall we go and be rajabs  
there ?  
  
By the twenty-sixth of October the large

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 255  
  
Scarlet Oaks are in their prime, when other  
Oaks are usually withered. They have been  
kindling their fires for a week past, and now  
generally burst into a blaze. This alone of  
our indigenous deciduous trees (excepting the  
Dogwood, of which I do not know half a  
dozen, and they are but large bushes) is now  
in its glory. The two Aspens and the Sugar-  
Maple come nearest to it in date, but they  
have lost the greater part of their leaves. Of  
evergreens, only the Pitch-Pine is still com-  
monly bright.  
  
Bat it requires a particular alertness, if not  
devotion to these phenomena, to appreciate the  
wide-spread, but late and unexpected glory of  
the Scarlet Oaks. Ido not speak here of the  
small trees and shrubs, which are commonly  
observed, and which are now withered, but  
of the large trees. Most go in and shut  
their doors, thinking that bleak and colorless  
November has already come, when some of  
‘the most brilliant and memorable colors are  
not yet lit.  
  
‘This very perfect and vigorous one, about  
forty feet high, standing in an open pasture,  
which was quite glossy green on the twelfth,  
is now, the twenty-sixth, completely changed  
to bright dark scarlet,—every leaf, between  
you and the sun, as if it had been dipped

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256 AUTUMNAL THNTS.  
  
into a scarlet dye. ‘The whole tree is much like  
a heart in form, as well as color. Was not  
this worth waiting for? Little did you think,  
ten days ago, that that cold green tree would  
assume such color as this. Its leaves are still  
firmly attached, while those of other trees are  
falling around it, It seems to say,—“I am  
the last to blush, but Iblash deeper than any  
of ye. I bring up the rear in my red coat.  
‘We Scarlet ones, alone of Oaks, have not  
given up the fight.”  
  
‘The sap is now, and even far into Novem-  
ber, frequently flowing fast in these trees, as in  
\*Maples in the spring; and apparently their  
Dright tints, now that most other Oaks are  
‘withered, are connected with this phenomenon.  
‘They are fall of life. It has a pleasantly astrin-  
gent, acorn-like taste, this strong Oak-wine, as  
I find on tapping them with my knife,  
  
‘Looking across this woodland valley, a quar-  
ter of a mile wide, bow rich those Scarlet Oaks,  
embosomed in Pines, their bright red branches  
intimately intermingled with them! ‘They have  
their full effect there, ‘The Pine-boughs are the  
green calyx to their red petals. Or, as we go  
along a road in the woods, the sun striking end-  
wise through it, and lighting up the red tents  
of the Oaks, which on each side are mingled  
with the liquid green of the Pines, makes a

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 257  
  
very gorgeous scene. Indeed, without the ever  
greens for contrast, the autumnal tints would  
lose much of their effect.  
  
The Scarlet Oak asks a clear sky and the  
brightness of late October days, These bring  
out its colors. If the sun goes into a cloud,  
they become comparatively indistinct. As I sit  
on a cliff in the southwest part of our town, the  
sun is now getting low, and the woods in Lin-  
coln, south and east of me, are lit up by its more  
level rays; and in the Scarlet Oaks, scattered so  
equally over the forest, there is brought out a  
more brilliant redness than I had believed was  
in them, Every tree of this species which is  
visible in those directions, even to the horizon,  
now stands out distinetly red. Some great ones  
lift their red backs high above the woods, in the  
next town, like huge roses with a myriad of fine  
petals; and some more slender ones, in a small  
grove of White Pines on Pine Hill in the east, on  
the very verge of the horizon, alternating with  
the Pines on the edge of the grove, and shoul-  
dering them with their red coats, look like sol-  
diers in red amid hunters in green. This time it  
is Lincoln green, too. Till the sun got low, I did  
“pot believe that there were so many red coats in  
the forest army. Theirs is an intense buming  
red, which would lose some of its strength, me-  
thinks, with every step you might take toward  
  
u

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258 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
them; for the shade that lurks amid their foli-  
age does not report itself at this distance, and  
they are unanimously red. ‘The focus of their  
reflected color is in the atmosphere far on this  
side. Every such tree becomes a nucleus of  
red, as it were, where, with the declining sun,  
that color grows and glows. It is partly bor-  
rowed fire, gathering strength from the sun on  
its way to your eye. It has only some compar-  
atively duli red leaves for a rallying-point, or  
Kindling-stoff, to start it, and it becomes an  
intense scarlet or red mist, or fire, which finds  
fuel for itself in the very atmosphere. So viva-  
cious is redness. The very rails reflect a rosy  
light at this hour and eeason, “You see a redder  
tree than exists.  
  
If you wish to count the Searlet Oaks, do it  
now. Ina clear day stand thus on a hill-top in  
the woods, when the sun is an hour high, and  
every one within range of your vision, excepting  
in the west, will be revealed. You might live  
to the age of Methuselah and never find a tithe  
of them, otherwise. Yet sometimes even in  
a dark day I have thought them as bright as  
I ever saw them. Looking westward, their  
colors are lost in a blaze of light; but in othe  
directions the whole forest is a flower-garden, in  
which these late roses burn, alternating with  
green, while the so-called “gardeners,” walking

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AUTUMNAL THYTS. 259  
  
here and there, perchance, beneath, with spade  
and water-pot, see only a few little asters amid  
withered leaves.  
  
‘These are my China-asters, my late garden-  
flowers. It costs me nothing for a gardener.  
‘The falling leaves, all over the forest, are pro-  
tecting the roots of my plants. Only look at  
what is to:be seen, and you will have garden  
enough, without deepening the soil in your yard.  
‘We have only to elevate our view a little, to see  
the whole forest asa garden. The blossoming  
of the Scarlet Oak, — the forestlower, sur-  
passing all in splendor, (at least since the Ma-  
ple)! Ido not know but they interest me more  
than the Maples, they are so widely and equally  
dispersed -throughout the forest; they are so  
hardy, a nobler tree on the whole ;— our  
chief November flower, abiding the approach  
of winter with us, imparting warmth to early  
November prospects. It is remarkable that the  
latest bright color that is general should be this  
deep, dark scarlet and red, the intensest of  
colors. ‘The ripest fruit of the year; like the  
check of a hard, glossy, red apple, from the cold  
Isle of Orleans, which will not be mellow for  
Eating till next spring! When I rise to a hill-  
top, a thousand of these great Oak roses, dis  
tributed on every side, as far as the horizon!  
Tadmire them four or five miles off! This my

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260 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
unfailing prospect for a fortnight past! This  
late forest-flower surpasses all that spring or  
summer could do. ‘Their colors were but rare  
and dainty specks comparatively, (created for  
the near-sighted, who walk amid the bumblest  
herbs and underwoods,) and made no impres-  
sion on a distant eye, Now it is an extended  
forest or a mountain-side, through or along  
which we journey from day to day, that bursts  
into bloom. Comparatively, our gardening is  
on a petty scale,— the gardener still nursing  
a few asters amid dead weeds, ignorant of the  
gigantic asters and roses, which, as it were,  
overshadow him, and ask for none of his care.  
It is like a little red paint ground on a saucer,  
and held up against the sunset sky. “Why not  
take more elevated and broader views, walk  
in the great garden, not skulk in a little “de-  
bauched” nook of it? consider the beauty of  
the forest, and not merely of a few impounded  
herbs?  
  
Let your walks now be a little more adven-  
turous; ascend the hills. If, about the last of  
October, you ascend any hill in the outskirts  
of our town, and probably of yours, and look  
over the forest, you may see—— well, what I  
have endeavored to describe. “All this you  
surely will see, and much more, if you are  
pared to see it, — if you look for it.” Otherwise,

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 261  
  
regular and universal as this phenomenon is,  
whether you stand on the hill-top or in the hol-  
low, you will think for threescore years and ten  
that all the wood is, at this season, sere and  
brown, Objects are concealed from our view,  
not so much because they are out of the course  
of our visual ray as because we do not bring  
our mi id eyes to bear on them; for there  
is no power to see in the eye itself, any more  
than in any other jelly We do not realize how  
far and widely, or how near and narrowly, we  
are to look. ‘The greater part of the phenomena  
of Nature are for this reason concealed from us  
all our lives. ‘The gardener sees only the gar-  
dener's garden, Here, too, as in political econ-  
omy, the supply answers to the demand. Nature  
does not cast pearls before swine. There is just  
as much beanty visible to us in the landscape  
as we are prepared to appreciate, —not a grain  
more. The actual objects which one man will  
see from a particular hill-top are just as different  
from those which another will see as the behold-  
ers are different. The Scarlet Oak must, in a  
sense, be in your eye when you go forth, We  
cannot see anything until we are possessed with  
the dea of it, take i into our heads, — and then  
we can hardly see anything else. In my botan- |  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘cal rambles, I find, that, first, the idea, or image,  
of a plant occupies my thoughts, though it may

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262 AUTUMNAL: TENTS,  
  
than Hudson's Bay,—and for some weeks or  
, months I go thinking of it, and expecting it,  
| unconsciously, ‘and at length I surely see it.  
\ This is the history of my finding a score or  
\ more of rare plants, which I could name. A  
\man sees only what concerns him. A botanist  
Jabsorbed in the study of grasses does not distin-  
iguish the grandest Pasture Oaks. He, as it  
| were, tramples down Oaks unwittingly in\_bis  
| walk, or at most sees only their oT  
| have found that it required a different inten-  
| tion of the eye, in the same locality, to see  
\ different plants, even when they were closely  
\ allied, as Juncacee and Gramineae: when I was  
Hooking for the former, I did not see the latter in  
| the midst of them. How much more, then, it  
\* | requires different intentions of the eye and of  
ithe mind to attend to different departments of  
knowledge! How differently the poet and the  
naturalist look at objects!  
  
‘Take a New-England selectman, and set him  
on the highest of our hills, and tell him to look,  
— sharpening his sight to the utmost, and put-  
ting on the glasses that suit him best, (ay, using  
a spy-glass, if he likes,) —and make a full report.  
What, probably, will he spy ?— what will he  
select to look at? Of course, he will see a  
Brocken spectre of himself, He will see sev-  
  
| sseem very foreign to this locality,—no nearer  
}

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 263  
  
eral meeting-houses, at least, and, perhaps, that  
somebody ought to be assessed higher than he  
is, since he has so handsome a wood-lot.\_ Now  
take Julius Cesar, or Immanuel Swedenborg,  
or a Fegee-Islander, and set bim up there.  
Or suppose all together, and let them com-  
pare notes afterward. Will it appear that  
they Nave enjoyed the same prospect? What  
they will see will be as different as Rome  
was from Heaven or Hell, or the last from \*  
the Fegee Islands. For aught we know, as  
strange a man as any of these is always at  
our elbow.  
  
‘Why, it takes a sharp-shooter to bring down\  
even such trivial game as snipes and wood- \  
cocks ; he must take very particular aim, and |  
know what he is aiming at. He would stand  
avery small chance, if he fired at iandom into j  
the sky, being told that snipes were flying there.  
And s with him that shoots.at hee  
though he wait till the sky falls, he will not bag |  
any, if he does not already know its seasons |  
and haunis, and the color of its wing,—if be [  
has not dreamed of it, so that he can anticipate  
it; then, indeed, he flashes it at every step,  
shoots double and on the wing, with both bar-  
rels, even in cornfields, ‘The sportsman trains  
himself, dresses and watches unweariedly, and  
Toads and primes for his particular game. He

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264 AUTUMNAL TINTS.  
  
) prays for it, and offers sacrifices, and so he gets  
it. After due and long preparation, schooling his  
eye and hand, dreaming awake and asleep, with  
gun and paddle and boat he goes out after  
meadow-hens, which most of bis townsmen  
never saw nor dreamed of, and paddles for  
miles against a head-wind, and wades in water  
up to his knees, being ont all day without his  
dinner, and therefore he gets them. He had  
them half-way into his bag when he started,  
and has only to shove them down. The tme  
sportsman can shoot you almost any of his  
game from his windows: what else has he  
windows or eyes for? It comes and perches  
at last on the barrel of his gun; but the rest  
of the world never see it with the feathers on.  
‘The geese fly exactly under bis zenith, and  
honk when they get there, and he will keep  
himself supplied by firing up his chimney ;  
twenty musquash have the refusal of each one  
of his traps before it'is empty. If he lives, and  
his game-spirit increases, heaven and earth shall  
fail bim sooner than game; and when he dies,  
he will go to more extensive, and, perchance,  
happier hunting-grounds. ‘The fisherman, too,  
dreams of fish, sees a bobbing cork in his  
dreams, till he can almost catch them in his  
sink-spout. I knew a girl who, being sent to  
pick huckleberries, picked wild gooseberries by

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AUTUMNAL TINTS. 265  
  
the quart, where no one else knew that there!  
‘were any, because she was accustomed to pick|  
them up country where she came from. The  
astronomer knows where to go star-gathering,  
‘and sees one clearly in his mind before any  
have seen it with a giass. ‘The hen scratches  
and finds her food right under where she stands ;  
but such is not the way with the hawk.  
  
These bright leaves which I have mentioned  
are not the exception, but the rule; for I believe  
‘that all leaves, even grasses and mosses, acquire  
brighter colors just before their fall. When you  
come to observe faithfully the changes of each  
humblest plant, you find that each has, sooner  
or later, its peculiar autumnal tint} and if you  
‘undertake to make a complete list of the bright  
tints, it will be nearly as long as a catalogue of  
the plants in your vicinity.

Page-9422

‘WILD APPLES.  
(862)  
‘THE HISTORY OF THE APPLE-TKEE.  
  
Ir is remarkable how closely the history of  
the Apple-tree is connected with that of man.  
The geologist tells us that the order of the  
Rosacee, which includes the Apple, also the  
true Grasses, and the Labiate, or Mints, were  
introduced only a short time previous to the  
appearance of man on the globe.  
  
It appears that apples made a part of the  
food of that unknown primitive people whose  
traces have lately been found at the bottom  
of the Swiss lakes, supposed to be older than  
the foundation of Rome, so old that they had  
no metallic implements. An entire black and  
shrivelled Crab-Apple has been recovered from  
their stores.  
  
‘Tacitus says of the ancient Germans, that  
they satisfied their hunger with wild apples  
(agrestia poma) among other things.  
  
Niebuhr observes that “the words for a house,

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WILD APPLES. 267  
  
a field, a plough, ploughing, wine, oil, milk,  
sheep, apples, and others relating to agricul-  
ture and the gentler way of life, agree in  
Latin and Greek, while the Latin words for  
all objects pertaining to war or the chase are  
utterly alien from, the Greek.” Thus the ap-  
ple-tree may be considered a syribol of peace  
no less than the olive.  
  
‘The apple was early so important, and gener-  
ally distributed, that its name traced to its root  
in many languages signifies fruit in general.  
Mior, in Greek, means an apple, also the fruit  
of other trees, also a sheep and any cattle, and  
finally riches in general.  
  
‘The apple-tree has been celebrated by the  
Hebrews, Greeks, Romans, and Scandinavians.  
Some have thought that the first human pair  
were tempted by its frait. Goddesses are fabled  
to have contended for it, dragons were set to  
watch it, and heroes were employed to pluck it.  
  
‘The tree is mentioned in at least three places  
in the Old Testament, and its fruit in two or  
three more. Solomon sings, —“ As the apple-  
tree among the trees of the wood, so is my  
beloved among the sons.” And again, — Stay  
me with flagons, comfort me with apples” ‘The  
noblest part of man’s noblest feature is named  
from this fruit, “the apple of the eye.”  
  
The apple-tree is also mentioned by Homer

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268 WILD APPLES.  
  
and Herodotus. Ulysses saw in the glorious  
garden of Aleinoiis “pears and pomegranates,  
and apple-trees bearing beautiful fruit” (cal  
pNex dyAaécapmo:). And according to Homer,  
apples were among the fruits which Tantalus  
could not pluck, the wind ever blowing their  
boughs away from him. ‘Theophrastus knew  
and described the apple-tree as a botanist,  
  
According to the Prose Edda, “Iduna keeps  
in a box the apples which the gods, when they  
feel old age approaching, have only to taste of  
to become young again. It is in this manner  
‘that they will be kept in renovated youth until  
Ragnardk” (or the destruction of the gods).  
  
Tlearn from Loudon that the ancient Welsh  
bards were rewarded for excelling in song by the  
token of the apple-spray;” and “in the High-  
lands of Scotland the apple-tree is the badge of  
the clan Lamont.”  
  
‘The apple-tree (Pyrus malus) belongs chiefly  
to the northern temperate zone. Loudon says,  
that “it grows spontaneously in every part of  
Europe except the frigid zone, and throughout  
‘Western Asia, China, and Japan.” We have  
also two or three varieties of the apple in-  
digenous in North America, The cultivated  
apple-tree was first introduced into this Coun-  
try by the earliest settlers, and is thought to  
do as well or better here than anywhere else.

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WILD APPLES. 269  
  
Probably some of the varieties which are now  
cultivated were first introduced into Britain by  
the Romans.  
  
Pliny, adopting the distinction of Theophras-  
tus, says,—“ Of trees there are some which are  
altogether wild (sylvestres), some more civilized  
(urbaniores):” Theophrastus includes the apple  
among the last; and, indeed, it is in this sense  
the most civilized of all trees. It is as harmless  
as a dove, as beautiful us a rosé, and as valu-  
-as\_flacks and\_herds. It has been longer  
cultivated than any other, and 80 is more hu-  
manized; and who knows but, like the dog,  
it will at length be no longer traceable to its  
wild original? It migrates with man, like the  
dog and horse and cow: first, perchance, from  
Greece to Italy, thence to England, thence to  
America; and our Western “emigrant is still  
marching steadily toward the setting son with  
the seeds of the apple in his pocket, or perhaps  
a few young trees strapped to his load. At  
least a’ million apple-trees are thus set farther  
westward this year than any cultivated ones  
grew last year. Consider how the Blossom-  
‘Week, like the Sabbath, is thas annually  
spreading over the prairies; for when man  
migrates, he carries with him not only his  
birds, quadrupeds, insects, vegetables, and his  
very sward, but his orchard also.

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270 WILD APPLES.  
  
‘The leaves and tender twigs are an agree-  
able food to many domestic animals, as the  
cow, horse, sheep, and goat; and the fruit  
is sought after by the first, as well as by the  
hog. ‘Thus there appears to have existed a  
natural alliance between these animals and  
this tree from the first. “The fruit of the  
Crab in the-forests of France” is said to be  
“a great resource for the wild-boar.”  
  
Not only the Indian, but many indigenous  
insects, birds, and quadrupeds, welcomed the  
apple-tree to these shores. The tent-caterpil-  
lar saddled her eggs on the very first twig  
that was formed, and it has since shared her  
affections with the wild cherry; and the can-  
ker-worm also in a measure abandoned the  
elm to feed on it. As it grew apace, the blue-  
bird, robin, cherry-bird, king-bird, and many  
more, came with haste and built their nests  
and warbled in its boughs, and so became  
orebard-birds, and multiplied more than ever.  
It was an era in the history of their race.  
‘The downy woodpecker found such a savory  
morsel under its bark, that he perforated it in  
aring quite round the tree, before he left it,—  
a thing which he had never done before, to my  
Knowledge. It did not take the partridge long  
  
2 to find out how sweet its buds were, and every  
winter eve she flew, and still flies, from the

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WILD APPLES. an  
  
wood, to pluck them, much to the farmer’s sor-  
row. The rabbit, too, was not slow to learn the|  
taste of its twigs and bark; and when the fruit  
was ripe, the squirrel half-rolled, half-carried i  
to his hole; and even the musquash crept uj  
the bank from the brook at evening, and greed:  
ily devoured it, until he had worn a path in th  
grass there; and when it was frozen and thaw!  
ed, the crow and the jay were glad to taste i  
occasionally. The owl crept into the first ap-  
ple-tree that became hollow, and fairly hooted  
with delight, finding it just the place for him;  
0, settling down into it, he has remained there  
ever since.  
  
My theme being the Wild Apple, I will merely  
glance at some of the seasons in the annual  
growth of the cultivated apple, and pass on to  
my special provinee.  
  
‘The flowers of the apple are perhaps the most  
beautiful of any tree’s, 0 copious and so delicious  
to both sight and scent. The walker is fre-  
quently tempted to turn and linger near some  
more than usually handsome one, whose blos-  
soms are two thirds expanded. How superior it  
is in these respects to the pear, whose blossoms  
are neither colored nor fragrant !  
  
By the middle of July, green apples are s0  
large as to remind us of coddling, and of the au-  
tumn, ‘The sward is commonly strewed with

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22 WILD APPLES.  
  
little ones which fall still-born, as it were, — Na-  
tare thus thinning them for us. ‘The Roman  
writer Palladins said, —“ If apples are inclined  
to fall before their time, a stone placed in a split  
root will retain them.” Some such notion, still  
surviving, may account for some of the stones  
which we see placed to be overgrown in the  
forks of trees. ‘They have a saying in Suffolk,  
‘England, —  
  
“ At Michaelmas time, or a litle before,  
  
Half an apple goes tothe core.”  
  
Early apples begin to be ripe about the first  
of August; but I think that none of them are  
0 good to eat as some to smell. One is worth  
inore to scent your handkerchief with than any  
perfume which they sell in the shops. ‘The fra-  
grance of some fruits is not to be forgotten,  
along with that of flowers, Some gnarly apple  
which I pick up in the road reminds me by its  
fragrance of all the wealth of Pomona, — car-  
ying me forward to those days when they will  
be collected in golden and ruddy heaps in the  
orehards and about the cider-mills.  
  
A week or two later, as you are going by or-  
chards or gardens, especially in the evenings, you  
pase throngh a little region possessed by the  
fragrance of ripe apples, and thus enjoy them  
‘without price, and without robbing anybody.

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‘WILD APPLES. 273  
  
There is thus about all natural products. cer-  
tain volatile.and ethereal quality which represents,  
théir highest value, and which cannot be vulgar  
ized, or bought and sold. No mortal has ever em  
joyed the perfect flavor of any fruit, and only the  
godlike among men begin to. taste its ambrosial  
qualities. For nectar and ambrosia are only  
those fine flavors of every.earthly fruit which our  
coarse palates fail. to perceive, —just as we oc-  
cupy the heaven of the gods without knowing it  
‘When I see a particularly mean man carrying a  
load of fair and fragrant early apples to market,  
Tseom to see a contest going on between him  
and his horse, on the one side, and the apples on  
the other, and, to my mind, the apples always  
gain it. Pliny says that apples are the heaviest  
of all things, and that the oxen begin to sweat  
at the mere sight of a load of them. Our driver  
begins to lose his load the moment he tries to  
transport them to where they do not belong, that  
is, to any but the most beautiful. Though he  
gets out from time to time, and feels of them,  
and thinks they are all there, I see the stream of  
their evanescent and celestial qualities going to  
heaven from his cart, while the pulp and skin  
and core only are going to market. They are  
not apples, but pomace. Are not these still  
Iduna’s apples, the taste of which keeps the gods  
  
forever young? and think you that,they will let  
18

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274 WILD APPLES.  
  
Loki or Thjassi carry them off to Jétanheim,  
while they grow wrinkled and gray? No, for  
Ragnarik, or the destruction of the gods, is Aot  
yet,  
  
‘There is another thinning of the fruit, com-  
monly near the end of August or in September,  
when the ground is strewn with windfalls; and  
this happens especially when high winds occur  
after rain. In some orchards you may see fully  
three quarters of the whole crop on the ground,  
lying in a circular form beneath the trees, yet  
hard and green, —or, if it is a hill-side, rolled far  
down the hill. However, it is an ill wind that  
blows nobody any good. All the country over,  
people are busy picking up the windfalls, and  
this will make them cheap for early apple-pies.  
  
In October, the leaves falling, the apples are  
more distinct on the trees. Tsaw one year ina  
neighboring town some trees fuller of fruit than  
remember to have ever seen before, small yel-  
low apples hanging over the road. The branches  
were gracefully drooping with their weight, like  
a barberry-bush, so that the whole tree acquired  
a new character. Even the topmost branches,  
instead of standing erect, spread and drooped in  
all directions ; and there were so many poles sup-  
porting the lower ones, that they looked like pic-  
tures of banian-trees. As an old English mann-  
script says, “The mo appelen the tree bereth,  
the more sche boweth to the folk.”

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WILD APPLES.  
  
   
  
‘Surely the apple is the noblest of fruits, Let  
the most beautiful or the swiftest have it, That  
should be the going” price of apples  
  
Between the fifth and twentieth of October I  
see the barrels lie under the trees. And perhaps  
I talk with one who is selecting some choice bar-  
rels to fulfil an order. He turns a specked one  
over many times before he leaves it out If I  
were to tell what is passing in my mind, I should  
say that every one was specked which he had  
handled; for he rabs off all the bloom, and those  
fagacious ethereal qualities leave it. Cool eve-  
ings prompt the farmers to make haste, and at  
length I see only the ladders here and there left  
leaning against the trees.  
  
It would be well, if we accepted these gifts  
with more joy and gratitude, and did not think  
it enough simply to puta fresh load of compost  
about the tree. Some old English customs are  
suggestive at least. I find them described  
chiefly in Brand’s “Popular Antiquities.” IE  
appears that “on Christmas eve the farmers and  
their men in Devonshire take a large bowl of  
cider, with a toast in it, and carrying it in state  
to the orchard, they salute the apple-trees with  
much ceremony, in order to make them bear  
well the next season.” ‘This salutatio consists  
in “ throwing some of the cider about the roots  
of the tree, placing bits of the toast on the

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276 WILD APFLES.  
  
ranches,” and then, “ encircling one of the best  
bearing trees in the orchard, they drink the fol-  
lowing toast three several times: —  
  
‘Here's to thee, old apple-tree,  
‘Whence thou mayet bud, and whence thou mayst blow,  
‘And whence thou mayst bear apples enow |  
  
‘Hatefull! capefall  
  
‘Busbel, bushel, eacks-full  
  
‘And my pockets fall, too! Hurral"™  
  
‘Also what was called “ apple-howling” used  
to be practised in various counties of England  
on New- Year's eve. A troop of boys visited the  
different orchards, and, encircling the apple-trees,  
repeated the following words :  
  
‘Stand fas, root | bear wall, top!  
  
Pray God send us a gogd howling erop :  
  
Every twig, apples big:  
  
Every bow, apples enow!”  
« ‘They then shout in choras, one of the boys ac-  
companying them on acow’s hon. During this  
ceremony they rap the trees with their sticks.”  
This is called “wassailing” the trees, and is  
thought by some to be'‘‘a relic of the heathen  
sacrifice to Pomona.”  
  
Herrick sings, —  
  
“ Wasail the trees tht they may beare  
  
You many a plum and many a peare;  
  
For more or loss fruits they will bring  
  
As you so give them waseaili

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WILD APPLES. 277  
  
Oar poets have as yet a better right to sing of  
cider than of wine ; but it behooves them to sing  
better than English Phillips did, else they will  
do no credit to their Muse.  
  
‘THE WILD APPLE,  
  
So much for the more civilized apple-trees  
(urbaniores, as Pliny calls them). I love bet-  
ter to go through the old orchards of ungrafted  
apple-trees, at whatever season of the year, —  
so irregularly planted: sometimes two trees  
standing close together} and the rows so de-  
vious that you would think that they not only  
had’ grown while ‘the owner was sleeping, but  
had been set out by him in a somnambulic  
state. The rows of grafted fruit will never  
tempt me to wander amid them like these.  
But I now, alas, speak rather from memory  
than from any recent experience, such ravages  
have been made!  
  
Some soils, like a rocky tract called the  
Easterbrooks Country in my neighborhood, are  
80 suited to the apple, that it will grow faster  
in them without any care, or if only the ground  
ig broken up once a year, than it will in many  
places with any amount of care. The owners  
of this tract allow that the soil is excellent for  
fruit, but they say that it is so rocky that they

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278 WILD APPLES.  
  
have not patience to plough it, and that, to-  
gether with the distance, is the reason why it is  
not cultivated. ‘There are, or were recently, ex-  
tensive orchards there standing without order.  
Nay, they spring up wild and bear well there  
in the midst of pines, birches, maples, and oaks.  
I am often surprised to see rising amid these  
trees the rounded tops of apple-trees glowing  
with red or yellow fruit, in harmony with the  
autumnal tints of the forest,  
  
Going up the side of a cliff about the first of  
November, I saw a vigorous young apple-tree,  
which, planted by birds or cows, had shot up  
amid the rocks and open woods there, and had  
now inuch fruit on it, uninjured by the frosts,  
when all cultivated apples were gathered. It  
was a rank wild growth, with many green  
leaves on it still, and made an impression of  
thorniness. ‘The fruit was hard and green, but  
looked as if it would be palatable in the winter.  
‘Some was dangling on the twigs, but more half  
buried in the wet leaves under the tree, or rolled  
far down the hill amid the.rocks. The owner  
knows nothing of it. The day was not observed  
when it first blossomed, nor when it first bore  
frait, unless by the chickadee. There was no  
dancing on the green beneath it in its honor,  
and now there is no hand to pluck its fruit, —  
which is only gnawed by squirrels, as I per

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WILD APPLES. 279  
  
ceive. It has done double duty,— not only  
bome this crop, but each twig has grown a  
foot into the air. And this is suck fruit! bigger  
than many berries, we must admit, and carried  
home will be sound and palatable next spring.  
What care I for Iduna’s apples so long as I can  
get these?  
  
‘When I go by this shrub thus late and hardy,  
and see its dangling fruit, I respect the tree, and  
Tam grateful for Nature’s bounty, even though  
Tcannot eat it. Here on this rugged and woody  
hill-side has grown an apple-tree, not planted by  
man, no relic of a former orchard, but a natural  
growth, like the pines and oaks, Most fruits  
‘which we prize and use depend entirely on our  
care. Corn and grain, potatoes, peaches, melons,  
etc., depend altogether oh our planting; but the  
apple emulates man’s independence and enter-  
prise. It is not simply carried, as I have said,  
but, like him, to some extent, it has migrated to  
this New World, and is even, here and there,  
making its way amid the aboriginal trees; just  
fas the ox and dog and horse sometimes run wild  
and maintain themselves.  
  
Even the sourest and crabbedest apple, grow-  
ing in the most unfavorable position, suggests  
such thoughts as these, it is so noble a fruit.

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280 ‘WILD APPLES.  
  
‘THE CRAB.  
  
Nevertheless, our wild apple is wild only like  
myself, perchance, who belong not to the abo-  
iginal race here, but have strayed into the  
woods from the cultivated stock. Wilder stil,  
as I have said, there grows elsewhere in this  
country a native and aboriginal Crab-Apple,  
Malus coronaria, “whose nature has not yet  
been modified by cultivation.” It is found  
from Western New-York to Minnesota, and  
southward. Michaux says that its ordinary  
height “ie fifteen or eighteen feet, but it is  
sometimes found twenty-five or thirty fect  
high,” and that the large ones “exactly resem-  
ble the common apple-tree.” “The flowers are  
white mingled with rose-color, and are col-  
lected in corymbs.” They are remarkable for  
their, delicious odor. The fruit, according to  
him, is about an inch and a half in diameter,  
and is intensely acid. Yet they make fine  
sweetmeats, and also cider of them., He con-  
cludes, that “if, on being cultivated, it does  
not yield new and palatable varieties, it will  
at least be celebrated for the beauty of its  
flowers, and for the sweetness of its perfume.”  
  
I never saw the Crab-Apple till May, 1861.  
Thad heard of it through Michaux, but: more  
modern botanists, so far as I know, have not

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WILD APPLES. 281  
  
treated it as of any peculiar importance. ‘Thus  
it was a halffabulous tree to me. I contem-  
plated a pilgrimage to the “Glades,” a por-  
tion of Pennsylvania where it was said to  
grow to perfection. I thought of sending to a  
nursery for it, but doubted if they had it, or  
would distinguish it from European varieties.  
At last I had occasion to go to Minnesota,  
and on entering Michigan I began to notice  
from the cars a tree with handsome rose-col-  
ored flowers. At first I thought it some va-  
riety of thorn; but it was not long before the  
auth ested: oa me; thas ald sws my, Jone:  
sought Crab-Apple. It was the prevailing flow-  
ering sbrab or tree to be seen from the cars at  
that season of the year,— about the middle of  
May. Bat the cars neyer stopped before one,  
und so I was launched on the “bosom of the  
Mississippi without having touched one, ex-  
periencing the fate of Tantalus. On arriving  
at St. Anthony's Falls, I was sorry to be told  
that I was too far north for the’ Crab-Apple.  
Nevertheless I succeeded in finding it about  
eight miles west of the Falls; touched it and  
smelled it, and secured a lingering corymb of  
flowers for my herbarium. ‘This must have  
been near its northern limit.

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282 WILD APPLES.  
  
HOW THE WILD APPLE GROWS.  
But though these are indigenous, like the  
  
Indians, I doubt whether they are any hardier.  
  
‘than those backwoodsmen among the apple-  
trees, which, though descended from cultivated  
stocks, plant themselves in distant fields and  
forests, where the soil is favorable to them. I  
know of no trees which have more difficulties  
to contend with, and which more sturdily resist  
their foes. ‘These are the ones whose story we  
have to tell. It oftentimes reads thus: —  
  
Near the beginning of May, we notice little  
thickets of apple-trees just springing up in the  
pastures where cattle have been, —as the rocky  
ones of our Easterbrooks Country, or the top  
of Nobscot Hill, in Sudbury. One or two of  
‘these perhaps’ survive the drought and other ac-  
cidents, — their very birthplace defending them  
against the encroaching grass and some other  
dangers, at first.”  
  
In two years time t had thus  
‘Reached the level of the rocks,  
  
Admired the stretching world,  
‘Nor feared the wandering flocks,  
  
Bat at this tender age  
Tis sufferings began :  
There came a browsing ox  
  
‘And cut it down a span.

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WILD APPLES. 283  
  
This time, perhaps, the ox does not notice  
it amid the grass; but the next year, when it  
has grown more stout, he recognizes it for a  
fellow-emigrant from the old country, the flavor|  
of whose leaves and twigs he well knows; ani  
though at first he pauses to welcome it, =f  
express his surprise, and gets for answer, ‘Th  
same cause that brought you here brought me,”  
he nevertheless browses: it again, reflecting, it  
may be, that he has some title to it.  
  
‘Thus cut down annually, it does not despair}  
but, putting forth two short twigs for every on  
cat off, it spreads out low along the ground i  
the hollows or between the rocks, growing mord  
  
«stout and scrubby, until it forms, not a tree ad  
yet, but a little pyramidal, stiff, twiggy mass,  
almost as solid and impenetrable as a rock:  
Some of the densest and most impenetrable  
clumps of bushes that I have ever seen, as  
well on account of the closeness and stub-;  
bornness of their branches as of their thorns,!  
have been these wild-apple scrubs. They are!  
more like the scrubby fir and black spruce on.  
which you stand, and sometimes walk, on the  
tops of mountains, where cold is the demon.  
they contend with, than anything else. No  
wonder they are prompted to grow thorns at  
last, to defend themselves against such foes,  
In their thorniness, however, there is no malice,  
only some malic acid.

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284 WILD APPLES.  
  
‘The rocky pastures of the tract I have referred  
'to,—for they maintain their ground best in a  
rocky field,—are thickly sprinkled with “these  
little tufts, reminding you often of some rigid  
gray mosses or lichens, and you see thousands  
of little tees just springing up between them,  
with the seed still attached to them,  
  
‘Being regularly clipped all around each year  
by the cows, as a hedge with shears, they are  
often of a perfect conical or pyramidal form,  
from one to four feet high, and more or less  
sharp, as if trimmed by the gardener’s art. In  
the pastures on Nobscot Hill and its spurs, they  
make fine dark shadows when the sun is low.  
‘They are also an excellent covert from hawks  
for many small birds that roost and build in  
them. Whole flocks perch in them at night, and  
Thave seen three robins’ nests in one which was  
six feet in-diameter.  
  
‘No doubt many of these are already old trees,  
if you reckon from the day they were planted,  
but infants still when you consider their devel-  
‘opment and the long life before them. Icounted  
the annual rings of some which were just one  
  
' foot high, and as wide as high, and found that  
  
they were about twelve years. old, but quite  
sound oad thrifty! ‘They were so low that they  
were unnoticed by the walker, while many of  
their contemporaries from the nurseries were

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WILD APPLES 285  
  
already bearing considerable crops. But what  
you gain in time is perhaps in this case, too,  
Jost in power, — that is, in the vigor of the tree.  
‘This is their pyramidal state.  
  
‘The cows continue to browse them thus for  
twenty years or more, keeping them down and  
compelling them to spread, until at last they are  
so broad that they become their own fence, when  
some interior® shoot, which their foes cannot |  
reach, darts upward with joy: for it has not for-  
gotten its high calling, and bears its own pecul-  
iar fruit in triumph.  
  
Such are the tactics by which it finally defeats  
its bovine foes. Now, if you have watched the  
progress of a particular shrub, you will see that  
it is no longer a simple pyramid or cone, but  
that ont of its apex there rises a sprig or two,  
growing more lustily perchance than an orchard-  
tree, since the plant now devotes the whole of |  
its repressed energy to these upright parts. Ina  
short time these become a small tree, an inverted  
pyramid resting on the apex of the other, so that  
the whole has now the form of a vast hour-gla:  
The spreading bottom, having served its pur-  
pose, finally disappears, and the generous tree  
permits the now harmless cows to come in and  
stand in its shade, and rub against and redden  
its trunk, which has grown in spite of them, and  
even to taste a part of its fruit, and so disperse  
the seed.

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286 WILD APPLES. :  
  
Thus the cows create their own shade and  
food; and the tree, its hour-glass being inverted,  
lives a second life, as it were.  
  
It is an important question with some nowa-  
days, whether you should trim young apple-trees  
‘as high as your nose or as high as your eyes.  
‘The ox trims them up as high as he can reach,  
and that is about the right height, I think.  
  
In spite of wandering kine, and other adverse  
circumstances, that despised shrub, valued only  
by small birds as a covert and shelter from  
hawks, has its blossom-week at last, and in  
course of time its harvest, sincere, though small.  
  
By the end of some October, when its leaves  
have fallen, I frequently see such a central sprig,  
whose progress I have watched, when I thought  
it had forgotten its destiny, as I had, bearing its  
first crop of small green or yellow or rosy fruit,  
which the cows cannot get at over the bushy and  
thorny hedge which surrounds it, and I make  
hhaste to taste the new and undescribed variety.  
‘We have all heard of the numerous varieties of  
fruit invented by Van Mons and Knight. This  
is the system of Van Cow, and she has invented  
far more and more memorable varieties than  
both of them.  
  
‘Through what hardships it may attain to bear  
a sweet fruit! Though somewhat small, it may  
prove equal, if not superior, in flavor to that

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‘WILD APPLES. 237  
  
which has grown in a garden,—will perchance  
be all the sweeter and more palatable for the  
very difficulties it has had to contend with.  
‘Who knows but this chance wild fruit, planted  
by a cow or a bird on some remote and rocky hill  
side, where it is as yet unobserved by man, may  
be the choicest of ail its kind, and foreign poten-  
tates shall bear of it, and royal societies seek to  
propagate it, though the virtues of the perhaps  
truly crabbed owner of the soil may never be  
heard of,—at least, beyond the limits of his vile  
lage? Tt was thus the Porter and the Baldwin  
grew.  
  
Every wild-apple shrub excites our expectation  
thus, somewhat as every wild child. It is, per  
haps, a prince in disguise. What a lesson to  
man! So are human beings, referred to the  
highest standard, the celestial fruit which they  
suggest and aspire to bear, browséd on by fate;  
and only the most persistent and strongest gen-  
ius defends itself and prevails, sends a tender  
scion upward at last, and drops its perfect fruit  
on the ungrateful earth. Poets and philosophers  
and statesmen thus spring up in the country  
pastures, and outlast jhe hosts of unoriginal  
men.  
  
Such is always the pursuit of knowledge.  
‘The celestial fruits, the golden apples of the  
Hesperides, are ever guarded by a hundred-

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288 WILD APPLES.  
  
headed dragon which never sleeps, so that it is  
an Herculean-labor to pluck them.  
  
‘This is one, and the most remarkable way, in  
which the wild apple is propagated; but com-  
monly it springs up at wide intervals in woods  
and swamps, and by the sides of roads, as the  
soil may suit it, and grows with comparative  
rapidity. Those which grow ‘in dense woods  
are very tall and slender. I frequently pluck  
from these trees a perfectly mild and tamed  
fruit, As Palladius says, “ Et injussu consterni-  
tur ubere mali”: And the ground is strewn with  
the fruit of an unbidden apple-tree.  
  
It is an old notion, that, if these wild trees do  
not bear a valuable fruit of their own, they are  
the best stocks by which to transmit to posterity  
the most highly prized qualities of others. How-  
ever, I am nof in search of stocks, but the wild  
fruit itself, whose fierce gust has suffered no  
“inteneration.”, It is not my  
  
# “highest plot  
‘To plant the Bergamot.”  
  
‘THE FRUIT, AND ITS FLAVOR  
  
‘The time for wild apples is the last of Oc-  
tober and the first of November. They then  
get to be palatable, for they ripen late, and they  
are still perhaps as beautiful as ever. I make a

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WILD APPLES. 289  
  
great account of these fruits, which the farmers  
do not think it worth the while to gather,—wild  
flavors of ‘the Muse, vivacious and inspiriting.  
‘The farmer thinks that he has better in his bar-  
els, but he is mistaken, unless he has a walker’s  
appetite and imagination, neither of which can  
he have.  
  
Such as grow quite wild, and are left out till  
the first of November, I presume that the owner  
does not mean to gather. ‘They belong to chil-  
dren as wild as themselves, — to certain active  
boys that I know,—to the wild-cyed woman of  
the fields, to whom nothing comes amiss, who  
gleans after all the world,—and, moreover, to  
us walkers, We have met with them, and they  
are ours. These rights, long enough insisted  
upon, have come to be an institution in some  
old countries, where they have learned how to  
live. I hear that “the custom of grippling,  
which may be called apple-gleaning, is, or was  
formerly, practised in Herefordshire. It consists  
in leaving a few apples, which are called the  
gripples, on every tree, after the general gather.  
ing, for the boys, who go with climbing-poles  
and bags to collect them.”  
  
‘As for those I speak of, I pluck them as a  
wild fruit, native to this quarter of the earth, —  
froit of old trees that have been dying ever since  
  
Iwas a boy and are not yet dead, frequented  
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290 WILD APPLES.  
  
only by the woodpecker and the squirrel, deserted’  
now by the owner, who has not faith enough to  
Took under their boughs. From the appearance  
of the tree-top, at a little distance, you would  
expect nothing but lichens to drop from it, but  
your faith is rewarded by finding the ground  
strewn with spirited fruit, — some of it, perhaps,  
ccllected at squirrel-holes, with the marks of  
their teeth by which they carried them, — some  
containing a cricket or two silently feeding  
within, and some, especially in damp days, a  
shelless enail. The very sticks and stones lodged.  
in the tree-top might have convinced you of the  
savoriness of the fruit which has been so eagerly  
sought after in past years,  
  
Thave seen no account of these among the  
“Fruits and Fruit-Trees of America,” though  
they are more memorable to my taste than the  
  
sd kinds; more racy and wild American  
flavors do they possess, when October and No-  
vember, when December and January, and per  
haps February and March even, have assuaged  
them somewhat An old farmer in my neigh-  
‘borhood, who always selects the right word,  
says that “they have a kind of bow-arow  
tang”  
  
Apples for grafting appear to have been se-  
  
\* lected commonly, not so much for their spirited  
flavor, as for their mildness, their size, and bear--

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WILD APPLES. 291  
  
   
  
ing qualities, — not so much for their beauty, as  
for their fairness and soundness. Indeed, Ihave  
no faith in the selected lists of pomological gen-  
tlemen. Their « Favorites” and “ None-suches”  
and “Seck-no-farthers,” when I have fruited  
them, commonly turn out very tame and forget-  
able. ‘They are eaten with comparatively little  
zest, and have no real fang nor smack to them.  
  
‘What if some of these wildings are acrid and  
puckery, genuine verjuice, do they not still be-  
long to the Pomacea, which are uniformly inno-  
cent and kind to our race? I still begrudge  
them to the cider-mill. Perhaps they are not  
fairly ripe yet.  
  
No wonder that these small and high-colored  
apples are thought to make the best cider. Lou-  
don quotes from the “ Herefordshire Report,”  
that “ apples of a small size are always, if equal  
in quality, to be preferred to those of a larger  
size, in order that the rind and kernel may bear  
the greatest proportion to the pulp, which affords  
the weakest and most watery juice.” And be  
says, that, “ to prove this, Dr. Symonds, of Here-  
ford, about the year 1800, made one hogshead  
of cider entirely from the rinds and cores of ap-  
ples, and another from the pulp only, when the  
first was found of extraordinary strength and  
flavor, while the latter was sweet and insipid.”  
  
Evelyn says that the “Red-strake” was the

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292 WILD APPLES.  
  
favorite cider-apple in his day; and he quotes  
‘one Dr. Newburg as saying, “In Jersey \*t is a  
general observation, as I hear, that the more of  
red any apple has in its rind, the more proper it  
is for this use. Pale-faced apples they exclude  
as much as may be from their cider-vat.” ‘This  
opinion still prevails.  
  
‘All apples are good in Noveriber. Those  
which the farmer leaves out as unsalable, and  
unpalatable to those who frequent the markets,  
are choicest fruit to the walker. But it is re.  
markable that the wild apple, which I praise as  
so spirited and racy when eaten in the fields or  
woods, being brought into the house, has fre-  
quently a harsh and crabbed taste. ‘The Saun-  
terer’s Apple not even the saunterer can eat in  
the house. ‘The palate rejects it there, as it does  
haws and acorns, and demands a tamed one; for  
there you miss the November air, which is the  
  
| sauce it is to be eaten with. Accordingly, when  
| ‘Tityrus, seeing the lengthening shadows, invites  
  
   
  
Melibeens to go home and pass the night with’  
him, he promises him mild apples and soft chest-  
| nuts,—mitia poma, castanea molles. 1 fre-  
quently pluck wild apples of so rich and spicy a  
flavor that I wonder all orchardists do not get a  
| scion from that tree, and I fail not to bring home  
{ my pockets full. But perchance, when I take  
, one ont of my desk and taste it in my chamber,

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WILD APPLES. 293  
  
I find it onexpectedly crude,—sour enough to  
set a squirrel’s teeth on edge and make a jay  
scream.  
  
‘These apples have hung in the wind and frost |  
and rain till they have absorbed the qualities of  
the weather or season, and thus are highly sea-  
soned, and they pierca and sting and permeate us  
with their spirit. They must be eaten in season,  
accordingly, — that is, out-of-doors.  
  
Lo appreciate the wild and sharp flavors of  
these October fruits, it is necessary that you be  
breathing the sharp October or November air.  
‘The out-door air and exercise which the walker  
gets give a different tone to his palate, and he  
eraves a fruit which the sedentary would call  
harsh and crabbed. They must be eaten in the  
fields, when your system is all aglow with exer-  
cise, when the frosty weather nips your fingers,  
the wind rattles the bare boughs or rustles the  
few remaining leaves, and the jay is heard  
screaming around. What is sour in the house  
a bracing walk makes sweet. Some of these  
apples might be labelled, “'To be eaten in the  
wind.”  
  
Of course no flavors are thrown away; they  
are intended for the taste that is up to them.  
Some apples have two distinct flavors, and per-  
haps one-balf of them must be eaten in the  
house, the other outdoors. One Peter Whitney

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wrote from Northborough in 1782, for the Pro  
ceedings of the Boston Academy, describing an  
apple-tree in that town “producing fruit of op-  
posite qualities, part of the same apple being  
frequently sour and the other sweet ;” also some  
all sour, and others all sweet, and this diversity  
‘on all parts of the tree. -  
  
‘There is a wild apple on Nawshawtuck Hill  
in my town which bas toeme a peculiarly  
pleasant bitter tang, not perceived till it is three-  
quarters tasted. It remains on the tongue. As  
you eat it, it emells exactly like a squash-bug.  
Tt is a sort of triumph to eat and relish it.  
  
Thear that the frait of a kind of plum-tree in  
Provence is “called Prunes sibarelles, because it  
is impossible to whistle afier having eaten them,  
from their sourness.” But perhaps they were  
only eaten in the house and in summer, and if  
tried out-of-doors in a stinging atmosphere, who  
knows but you could whistle an: octave higher  
and clearer?  
  
In the fields only are the sours and bitters of  
Nature appreciated; just as the wood-chopper  
eats his meal in a sunny glade, in the middle of  
a winter day, with content, basks in a sunny ray  
there and dreams of summer in a degree of cold  
which, experienced in a chamber, would make a.  
student miserable. They who are at work  
abroad are not cold, but rather it is they who sit

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‘WILD APPLES. 295  
  
shivering in houses. As with temperatures, 60  
with flavors; as with cold and heat, so with sour  
and sweet. This natural raciness, the sours and  
Ditters which the discased palate refuses, are the  
true condiments.  
  
Let your condiments be in the condition of  
your senses. To appreciate the flavor of these  
wild apples requires vigorous and healthy senses,  
papilla firm and erect on the tongue and palate,  
not easily flattened and tamed.  
  
From my experience with wild apples, I can  
understand that there may be reason for a sav-  
age’s preferring many kinds of food which the  
civilized man rejects. ‘The former has the palate  
of an out-door man. It takes a savage or wild  
taste to appreciate a wild fruit.  
  
‘What a healthy out-of-door appetite it takes  
to relish the apple of life, the apple of the world,  
then!  
  
“Nor sit every apple I desire,  
  
‘Nor that which pleases every palate bet  
"Tis not the lasting Deuxan I require,  
  
‘Nor yet the red-cheoked Greening I request,  
Nor that which first beshrewed the namo of wile,  
‘Nor that whose beauty caused the golden strife  
No, no! briag me an apple from the tre of lif.”  
  
   
  
   
  
So there is one thought for the field, another for  
the house. I would have my thoughts, like wild  
apples, to be food for walkers, and will not war-  
rant them to be palatable, if tasted in the house.

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206 ‘WILD APPLES.  
  
‘THEIR BEAUTY.  
  
Almost all wild apples are handsome. They  
cannot be too gnarly and crabbed and rusty to  
look at. The guarliest will have somé redeem-  
ing traits even to the eye. You will discover  
some evening redness dashed or sprinkled on  
some protuberance or in some cavity. It is rare  
that the summer lete an apple go without streak-  
ing or spotting it on some part of its sphere. It  
will have some red stains, commemorating the  
mornings and evenings it has witnessed; some  
dark and rusty blotches, in memory of the clouds  
and foggy, mildewy days that have passed over  
it; and a spacious field of green reflecting the  
general face of Nature,—green even a8 the  
fields; or a yellow ground, which implies a  
milder flavor, — yellow as the harvest, or russet  
as the hills.  
  
Apples, these I mean, unspeakably fair, —ap-  
ples not of Discord, but of Concord! Yet not  
0 rare but that the homeliest may have a share.  
Painted by the frosts, some a uniform clear  
bright yellow, or red, or crimson, as if their  
spheres had regularly revolved, and enjoyed the  
influence of the sun on all sides alike,—some  
with the faintest pink blush imaginable, —some  
brindled with deep red streaks like a cow, or  
with hundreds of fine blood-red rays running  
regularly from the stem-dimple to the blossom-

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WILD APPLES. 297  
  
end, like meridional lines, on a straw-colorea  
ground,—some touched with a greenish rust,  
like a fine lichen, here and there, with crimson  
blotches or eyes more or less confluent and fiery  
when wet,—and others gnarly, and freckled or  
peppered all over on the stem side with fine  
crimson spots on a white ground, as if accident-  
ally sprinkled from the brush of Him who paints  
the autumn leaves. Othérs, again, are some-  
times red inside, perfused with a beautiful blush,  
fairy food, too beautiful to eat,—apple of the  
Hesperides, apple of the evening sky! But like  
shells and pebbles on the sea-shore, they must  
be seen as they sparkle amid the withering  
leaves in some dell in the woods, in the autum-  
nal air, or as they lie in the wet grass, and not  
when they have wilted and faded in the house.  
  
‘THE NAMING OF THEM,  
  
It would be a pleasant pastime to find suit-  
able names for the hundred varieties which go  
toa single heap at the cider-mill. Would it not  
tax a man’s invention, —no one to be named  
after a man, and all in the lingua vernacula?  
‘Who shall stand godfather at the christening of  
the wild apples? It would exhaust the Latin  
and Greek languages, if they were used, and  
make the lingua vernacula flag. We should

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298 ‘WILD APPLES.  
  
have to call in the sunrise and the sunset, the  
rainbow and the autumn woods and the wild  
flowers, and the woodpecker and the purple  
finch and the squirrel and the jay and the but-  
terfly, the November traveller and the truant  
boy, to our aid,  
  
In 1836 there were in the garden of the Lon-  
don Horticultural Society more than fourteen  
hundred distinct sorts. But here are species  
which they have not in their catalogue, not to  
mention the varieties which our Crab might  
yield to cultivation.  
  
Let us enumerate a few of these. I find my-  
self compelled, after all, to give the Latin names  
of some for the benefit of those who live where  
English is not spoken,—for they are likely to  
have a world-wide reputation.  
  
There is, first of all, the Wood-Apple (Malus  
sylvatica); the Blue-Jay Apple; the Apple which  
grows in Dells in.the Woods, (sylv-strivallis,)  
also in Hollows in Pastures (campestrivaltis) ;  
the Apple that grows in an old Cellar-Hole  
(Malus cellaris); the Meadow-Apple; the Par-  
tridge-Apple; the Truant’s Apple, (Cessatoris,)  
which no boy will ever go by without knocking  
off some, however late it may be; the Saun-  
terer’s Apple, — you must lose yourself before  
you can find the way to that; the Beauty of  
the Air (Decus Aéris); December-Eating; the

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WiLn, APPLES. 299  
  
Frozen-Thawed (gelato-soluta), good only in that  
state; the Concord Apple, possibly the same  
with the Musketaquidensis ; the Assabet Apple;  
the Brindled Apple; Wine of New England;  
the Chickaree Apple; the Green Apple (Malus  
viridis); — this has many synonymes ; in an  
imperfect state, it is the Cholera morbifera aut  
dysenterifera, puerulis dilectissima ; — the Apple  
which Atalanta stopped to pick up; the Hedge-  
Apple (Malus Sepivm); the Slug-Apple (ima-  
cea); the Railroad-Apple, which perhaps came  
from a core thrown out of the cars; the Apple  
whose Fruit we tasted in our Youth; our Par-  
ticular Apple, not to be found in any catalogue,  
— Pedestrium Solatium also the Apple where  
hangs the Forgotten Sythe; Iduna’s Apples,  
and the Apples which Loki found in the Wood;  
and a great many more I have on my list, too  
numerous to mention, — all of them good. As  
Bodeus exclaims, referring to the cultivated  
Kinds, and adapting Virgil to his case, so I,  
adapting Bodwus,—  
“Not if Thad a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths,  
  
‘An iron voiee, could I describe all the forms  
‘And reckon up all the names of these wild apples”  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
‘THE LAST GLEANING.  
  
By the middle of November the wild apples  
have lost some of their brilliancy, and have  
chiefly fallen. A great part are decayed on the

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300 WILD APPLES.  
  
ground, and the sound ones are more palatable  
than before. ‘The note of the chickadee sounds  
now more distinct, as you wander amid the old  
trees, and the autumnal dandelion is half-closed  
and tearful. But still, if you are a skilful  
gleaner, you may get many a pocket-fall even  
of grafted fruit, long after apples are supposed  
to be gone out-of-doors. I know a Blue-Pear-  
main tree, growing within the edge of a swamp,  
almost as good as wild. You would not sup-  
pose that there was any fruit left there, on the  
first survey, but you must look according to sys-  
tem. Those which lie exposed are quite brown  
‘and rotten now, or perchance a few still show  
one blooming cheek -here and there amid the  
  
Teaves. Nevertheless, with experienced eyes,  
Texplore amid the bare alders and the buckle-  
berry-bushes and the withered sedge, and in the  
crevices of the rocks, which are full of leaves,  
and pry under the fallen and decaying ferns,  
which, with apple and alder leaves, thickly strew  
the ground. For I know that they lie concealed,  
fallen into hollows long since and covered up by  
the leaves of the tree itself, proper kind of  
packing. From these lurking-places, anywhere  
within the circumference of the tree, I draw  
forth the fruit, all wet and glossy, maybe nibbled  
by rabbits and hollowed out by crickets and per-  
haps with a leaf or two cemented to it (as  
Curzon an old manuscript from a monastery's

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WILD APPLES. 301  
  
mouldy cellar), but still with a rich bloom on it,  
and at least as ripe and well kept, if not better  
than those in barrels, more crisp and lively than  
they. If these resources fail to yield anything,  
T have learned to look between the bases of the  
suckers which spring thickly from some horizon-  
tal limb, for now and then one lodges there, or  
in the very midst of an alder-clump, where they  
are covered by leaves, safe from cows which  
may have smelled them out. If I'am sharp-set,  
for I do not refuse the Blue-Pearmain, I fill my  
pockets on each side; and as I retrace my steps  
in the frosty eve, being perhaps four or five miles  
from home, I eat one first from this side, and  
‘then from that, to keep my balance,  
  
I learn. from Topsell’s Gesner, whose authority  
appears to be Albertus, that the following is the  
way in which the hedgehog collects and carries  
home his apples. He says,—“His meat is  
apples, worms, or grapes: when he findeth ap-  
ples or grapes on the earth, he rolleth himself  
upon them, until he have filled all his prickles,  
and then carrieth them home to his den, never  
bearing above one in his mouth; and if it for-  
tune that one of them fall off by the way, he  
likewise shaketh off all the residue, and wallow-  
eth upon them afresh, until they be all settled  
upon his back again. So, forth he goeth, making  
a noise like a cart-wheel; and if he have any

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302 WILD APPLES.  
  
young ones in his nest, they pull off his load  
wherewithal he is loaded, eating thereof what  
they please, and laying up the residue for the  
time to come.”  
  
THE “PROZEN-THAWED" APPLE.  
  
‘Toward the end of November, though some  
of the sound ones are yet more mellow and  
perhaps more edible, they have generally, like  
the leaves, lost their beauty, and are beginning  
to freeze. Tt is finger-cold, and prudent farmers  
get in their barrelled apples, and bring you the  
apples and cider which they have engaged; for  
it is time to put them into the cellar. Perhaps  
a few on the ground show their red cheeks  
above the early snow, and occasionally some  
even preserve their color and soundness under  
the snow throughout the winter. But generally  
at the beginning of the winter they freeze hard,  
and soon, though undecayed, acquire the color  
of a baked apple.  
  
Before the end of December, generally, they  
experience their first thawing. Those which a  
month ago were sour, crabbed, and quite un-  
palatable to the civilized taste, euch at least as  
‘were frozen while sound, let a warmer sun come  
to thaw them, for they are extremely sensitive  
to its rays, are found to be filled with a rich,

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WILD APPLES. 303  
  
sweet cider, better than any bottled cider that  
I know of, and with which I am better ac-  
quainted than with wine. All apples are good  
in this state, and your jaws are the cider-press.  
Others, which have more substance, are a sweet  
and luscious food, — in my opinion of more  
worth than the pine-apples which are imported  
from the West Indies. ‘Those which lately even  
I tasted only to repent of it,—for I am semi-  
civilized, — which the farmer willingly left on  
the tree, Iam now glad to find have the prop-  
erty of hanging on like the leaves of the young  
oaks. It is a way to keep cider sweet without  
boiling. Let the frost come to freeze them first,  
solid as stones, and then the rain or a warm  
winter day to thaw them, and they will seem to  
have borrowed a flavor from heaven through the  
medium of the air in which they hang. Or  
perchance you find, when you get home, that  
those which rattled in your pocket have thawed,  
and the ice is tuned to cider. But after the  
third or fourth freezing and thawing they will  
not be found so good.  
  
What are the imported half-ripe fruits of the  
torrid South, to this fruit matured by the cold  
of the frigid North? These are those crabbed  
apples with which I cheated my companion,  
and kept a smooth face that I might tempt him  
to.eat. Now we both greedily fill our pockets

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304 ‘WILD APPLES.  
  
with them, — bending to drink the cup and save  
our lappets from the overflowing juice, — and  
grow more social with their wine. Was there  
one that bung so high and sheltered by the  
tangled branches that our sticks could not dis-  
lodge it?  
  
It is a fruit never carried to market, that I  
am aware of, — quite distinct from the apple  
of the markets, as from dried apple and cider,  
—and it is not every winter that produces it in  
perfection.  
  
‘The era of the Wild Apple will soon be past.  
It is a fruit which will probably become extinct  
in New England. You may still wander through  
old orchards of native fruit of great extent, which  
for the most part went to the cider-mill, now all  
gone to decay. I have heard of an orchard in  
distant town, on the side of a hill, where the  
apples rolled down and lay four feet deep  
against a wall on the lower side, and this the  
owner cut down for fear they should be made  
into cider. Since the temperance reform and  
the general introduction of grafted fruit, no  
native apple-trees, such as I see everywhere in  
deserted pastures, and where the woods have  
grown up around them, are set out. I fear that  
he who walks over these fields a century hence  
will not know the pleasure of knocking off

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WILD APPLES. 305  
  
\_ wild apples. Ab, poor man, there are. many  
pleasures which he will not know! Notwith-  
standing the prevalence of the Baldwin and  
the Porter, I doubt if so extensive orchards  
are set out to-day in my town as there were  
a century ago, when those vast straggling cider-  
orchards were planted, when men both ate and  
drank apples, when the pomace-heap was the  
only nursery, and trees cost nothing but the  
trouble of setting them out, Men could afford  
then to stick a tree by every wall-side and let it,  
take its chance, I see nobody planting trees  
to-day in such out-of-the-way places, along the  
lonely roads and lanes, and at the bottom of  
dels in the wood. Now that they have grafted  
trees, and pay a price for them, they collect them  
into a plat by their houses, and fence them  
in,—and the end of it all will be that we  
shall be compelled to look for our apples” in  
a barrel,  
  
This is “The word of the Lord that came to  
Joel the son of Pethuel. \*  
  
“Hear this, ye old men,‘and give ear, all  
ye inhabitants ‘of, the land! Hath this: been  
in your days, or even in the days of your  
fathers? ... .  
  
“That which the palmer-worm hath left hath  
the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath  
  
left hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which  
0

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306 ‘WILD APPLES.  
  
the canker-worm hath left hath the caterpillar  
eaten. .  
  
« Awake, ye drunkards, and weep! and howl,  
all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine!  
for it is cut off from your mouth.  
  
“For a nation is come up upon my land,  
strong, and without number, whose teeth are  
the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek-teeth  
of a great lion,  
  
“He hath laid my vine waste, and barked  
my fig-tree; he hath made it clean bare, and  
cast it away; the branches thereof are made  
white. .  
  
“Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen! howl,  
© ye vine-dressers! . . .  
  
“The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree lan-  
guisheth; the pomegranate-tree, the palm-tree  
also, and the apple-tree, even all the trees of  
the field, are withered : because joy is withered  
away from the sons of men.”

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NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT.  
  
Cuancine to take a memorable walk by moon,  
light some years ago, I resolved to take more  
such walks, and make acquaintance with an-  
other side of nature: I have done so.  
  
According to Pliny, there is a stone in Arabia  
called Selenites, “ wherein is a white, which in-  
ereases and decreases with the moon.” My  
journal for the last year or two, has been selen-  
itic in this sense.  
  
Is not the midnight like Central Africa to  
most of us? Are we not tempted to explore  
it, — to penetrate to the shores of its lake Tchad,  
and discover the source of its Nile, perchance  
the Mountains of the Moon? Who knows  
‘what fertility and beauty, moral and natural, are  
there to be found? In the Mountains of the  
‘Moon, in the Central Africa of the night, there  
is where all Niles have their hidden heads. ‘The  
expeditions up the Nile as yet extend but to the  
Cataracts, or perchance to the mouth of the  
‘White Nile; but it is the Black Nile that con-  
cerns us.  
  
I shall be a benefactor if I conquer some

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308 NIGHT. AND MOONLIGHT.  
  
realms from the night, if I report to the gazettes  
anything transpiting about us at that season  
worthy of their attention,—if I can show men  
that there is some beauty awake while they are  
asleep, — if I add to the domains of poetry.  
  
Night is certainly more novel and less profane  
than day. I soon discovered that I was ac-  
‘quainted only with its complexion, and as for  
the moon, I had seen her only as it were through  
a crevice in a shutter, occasionally. Why not  
walk a little way in her light ?  
  
‘Suppose you attend fo the suggestions which  
the moon makes for one month, commorly in  
vain, will it not be very different from anything  
in literature or religion? But why not study  
this Sanscrit? What if one moon has come and  
gone with its world of poetry, its weird teach-  
ings, its oracular suggestions, — so divine a crea-  
ture freighted with hints for me, and I have not  
used her? One moon gone by unnoticed?  
  
I think it was Dr. Chalmers who said, eriticis-  
ing Coleridge, that for his part he wanted ideas  
which he could'see all round, and not such as he  
must look at away up in the heavens. Such a  
man, one would say, would never look at the  
moon, because she never turns her other side to us,  
‘The light which comes from ideas which have  
their orbit as distant from the earth, and which  
is no less cheering and enlightening to the be-

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NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT. 309  
  
nighted traveller than that of the moon and  
stars, is naturally reproached or nicknamed as  
moonshine by such. ‘They are moonshine, are  
they? Well, then do your night-travelling when  
‘there is n0 moon to light you; but I will be  
thankful for the light that reaches me from the  
star of least magnitude. Stars are lesser or  
greater only as they appear to us so. I will be  
thankful that I see so much as one side of a  
celestial idea, — one side of the rainbow,— and  
the sunset sky.  
  
‘Men talk glibly enough about moonshine, as  
if they knew its qualities very well, and despised  
them; as owls might talk of sunshine. None  
of your sunshine, — but this word commonly  
means merely something which they do not un-  
derstand, — which they are abed and asleep to,  
however much it may be worth their while to be  
up and awake to it.  
  
Tt must be allowed that the light of the moon,  
sufficient though it is for the pensive walker, and  
hnot disproportionate to the inner light we have,  
is very inferior in quality and intensity to that  
of the sun. But the moon is not to be judged  
alone by the quantity of light she sends to us,  
but also by her influence on the earth and its  
inhabitants. “The moon gravitates toward the  
earth, and the earth reciprocally toward the  
moon.” The poet who walks by moonlight is

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310 NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT.  
  
conscious of a tide in his thought which is to be  
referred to lunar influence, I will endeavor to  
separate the tide in my thoughts from the cur-  
rent distractions of the day. Iwould warn my  
hearers that they must not’ try my thoughts by  
a daylight standard, but endeavor to realize that,  
I speak out of the night. All depends on your  
point of view. In Drake's “Collection of Voy-  
ages,” Wafer says of some Albinoes among the  
Indians of Darien, “ They are quite white, but  
their whiteness is like that of a horse, quite dif-  
ferent from the fair or pale European, as they  
have not the least tincture of a blush or sanguine  
complexion. \* \* \* Their eyebrows are mi  
white, as is likewise the hair of their heads,  
which is very fine. \* \* \* They seldom go  
abroad in the daytime, the sun being disagree-  
able to them, and causing their eyes, which are  
weak and poring, to water, especially if it shines  
towards them, yet they see very well by moon-  
light, from which we call them moon-eyed.”  
  
Neither in our thoughts in these moonlight  
walks, methinks, is there “ the least tincture of a  
blash or sanguine complexion,” but we are in-  
tellectually and morally Albinoes,— children of  
Endymion,—such is the effect of conversing  
much with the moon.  
  
T complain of Arctic voyagers that they do  
not enough remind us of the constant peculiar

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NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT. 311  
  
dreariness of the scenery, and the perpetual twi-  
light of the Arctic night. So he whose theme  
is moonlight, though he may find it difficult,  
must, as it were, illustrate it with the light of  
the moon alone.  
  
Many men walk by day; few walk by night  
It is a very different season. Take a July night,  
for instance. About ten o’clock,— when man  
is asleep, and day fairly forgotten, — the beauty  
‘of moonlight is seen over lonely pastures where.  
cattle are silently feeding. On all sides novel-|  
ties present themselves. Instead of the sun  
there are the moon and stars, instead of the |  
wood-thrush there is the whip-poor-will, — in- |  
stead of butterflies in the meadows, fire-fies, ;  
winged sparks of fire! who would have believed :  
it? What kind of eool deliberate life dwells in |  
those dewy abodes associated with a spark of |  
fire? So man has fire in bis eyes, or blood, or '  
brain. Instead of singing birds, the half-throt- +  
tled note of a cuckoo flying over, the croaking of  
frogs, and the intenser dream of crickets. But  
above all, the wonderful trump of the bull-frog, |  
ringing from Maine to Georgia. The potato-  
vines stand upright, the corn grows apace, the |  
bushes loom, the grain-fields are boundless. On  
our open river terraces once cultivated by the |  
Indian, they appear to occupy the ground like }  
an army,— their heads nodding in the breeze. 4

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312 NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT,  
  
Small trees and shrubs are seen in the midst,  
overwhelmed as by an inundation. ‘Theshadows  
of rocks and trees, and shrubs and bills, are more  
conspicuous than the objects themselves. ‘The  
slightest imegularities in the ground are revealed  
by the shadows, and what the feet find com-  
paratively smooth, appears rough and diversified  
in consequence. For the same reason the whole  
landscape is more variegated and picturesque  
than by day. ‘The smallest recesses in the rocks  
are dim and cavernous; the fens in the wood  
  
| appear of tropical size." The sweet fern and in-  
digo in overgrown wood-paths wet you with dew  
  
[apts four bide” ‘he leaven of tie aab-sok  
  
are shining as if a liquid were flowing over them.  
  
‘The pools seen through the trees are as full of  
  
light as the sky. “The light of the day takes  
  
refuge in their bosoms,” as the Parana says of  
the ocean. All white objects are more remark-  
  
able than by day. A distant cliff looks like a  
  
phosphorescent space on a hillside. The woods  
  
are heavy and dark. Nature slumbers. You  
see the moonlight reflected from particular  
stumps in the recesses of the forest, as if she se-  
  
Iected what to shine ov. ‘These sinall fractions  
  
of her light remind one of the plaut called moon:  
  
seed,—as if the moon were sowing it in such  
places. :  
In the night the eyes are partly closed or retire

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NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT. 313  
  
into the head. Other senses take the lead. The}  
walker is guided as well by the sense of smell  
Every plant and field and forest emits its od  
now, swamp-pink in the meadow and tansy in|  
the road; and there is the peculiar dry scent of|  
corn which has begun to show its tassels. The:  
senses both of hearing and smelling are more  
alert, We hear the tinkling of rills which we  
never detected before. From time to time, high  
‘up on the sides of hills, you pass through a |  
stratum of warm air. A blast which has come  
  
up from the sultry plains of noon. It tells of |  
‘the day, of sunny noon-tide hours and banks, |  
of the laborer wiping bis brow and the bee hum- |  
ming amid flowers. It is an air in which work  
  
has been done,— which men have breathed. It  
  
circulates about from wood-side to hill-side like  
  
a dog that has lost its master, now that the sun |  
is gone. The rocks retain all night the warmth |  
of the sun which they have absorbed. And 50 ;  
does the sand. If you dig a few inches into it |  
you find a warm-bed. You lie on your back on  
  
‘a rock in a pasture on the top of come bare hill  
at midnight, and speculate on the height of the;  
starry canopy. The stars are the jewels of the |  
night, and perchance surpass anything which  
day bas to show. A companion with whom r  
was sailing one very windy but bright moon-/  
Tight night, when the stars were few and faint,’

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314 NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT.  
  
thought that a man could get along with them,  
—though he was considerably reduced in his  
circumstances, — that they were a kind of bread  
and cheese that never failed,  
  
‘No wonder that there have been astrologers,  
that some have conceived that they were per-  
sonally related to particular stars. Dubartas, as  
translated by Sylvester, says he'll  
  
«not boiove thatthe grost architect.  
With all thse fires the heavenly arches deckea  
Only for show, and with thoaeglterng shields,  
  
"T’ awake poor shepherds, watching in the fields”  
Holl “not believe thatthe least flower which pranks  
Our garden borders o our common banks,  
  
‘And the leat stone, that in her warming lap  
  
Our mother earth doth eovetously wrap,  
  
Hath woe peculiar virtue of its own,  
  
And thatthe glorious stare of heav'n have none.”  
  
   
  
   
  
And Sir Walter Raleigh well says, “ the stars  
are instruments of far greater use, than to give  
an obscure light, and for men to gaze on after  
sunset;” and he quotes Plotinus as affirming  
that they “are significant, but not efficient;”  
and also Augustine as saying, “Deus regit in-  
feriora corpora per superiora:” God rules the  
bodies below by those above. But best of all is  
this which another writer has ‘expressed: “ Sa-  
piens adjuvabit opus astrorum quemadmodum ag-  
ricola terre naluram:” a wise man assisteth

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NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT. 315  
  
the work of the stars as the husbandman help-  
eth the nature of the soil.  
  
It does not concern men who are asleep in  
their beds, but it is very important to the trav-  
eller, whether the moon shines brightly or is  
obscured. It is not easy to realize the serene  
joy of all the earth, when she commences to  
shine unobstrnctedly, unless you have often been  
abroad alone in moonlight nights. She seems  
to be waging continual war with the clouds in  
your behalf. Yet we fancy the clouds to be her  
foes also. She comes on magnifying her dan-  
gers by her light, revealing, displaying them in  
all their hugeness and blackness, then suddenly  
casts them behind into the light concealed, and  
goes her way triumphant through a small space,  
of clear sky.  
  
In short, the moon traversing, or appearing to  
traverse, the small clouds which lie in her way,  
now obscured by them, now easily dissipating  
and shining through them, makes the drama of  
the moonlight night to all watchers and night-  
travellers. Sailors speak of it as the moon eat-  
ing up the clouds. ‘The traveller all alone, the  
moon all alone, except for his sympathy, over-  
coming with incessant victory whole squadrons  
of clouds above the forests and lakes and hills.  
‘When she is obscured he so sympathizes with  
her that he could whip a dog for her relief, as  
  
   
  
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|

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316 NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT.  
  
Indians do. When she enters on a clear field of  
great extent in the heavens, and shines unob-  
structedly, he is glad. .And when she has fought  
her way through all the squadron of her foes,  
and rides majestic in a clear sky unscathed, and  
there are no more any obstructions in her path,  
he cheerfully and confidently pursues his way,  
lana rejoices in his heart, and the cricket also  
seems to express joy in its song.  
How insupportable would be the days, if the  
night with its dews and darkness did not come  
to restore the drooping world. As the shades  
begin to gather around us, our primeval instincts  
are aroused, and we steal forth from our lairs,  
like the inhabitants of the jungle, in search of  
those silent and brooding thoughts which are  
the natural prey of the intellect,  
iter says that “The earth is every day  
overspread with the veil of night for the same  
reason as the cages of birds are darkened, vi:  
that we may the more readily apprehend the  
higher harmonies of thought in the bush and  
quiet of darkness, ‘Thoughts which day turns  
into smoke and mist;stand about us in the night  
as light and flames; even as the colamn which  
fluctuates above the crater of Vesnvius, in the  
‘daytime appears a pillar of cloud, but by night  
a pillar of fire.”  
  
‘There are nights in this climate of such se-

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NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT. 317  
  
rene and majestic beauty, so medicinal and fer-  
tilizing to the spirit, that methinks a sensitive  
nature would not devote them to oblivion, and  
perhaps there is no man but would be better and  
wiser for spending them out of doors, though  
he should sleep all the next day to pay for it  
should sleep an Endymion sleep, as the ancients  
expressed it, —nights which warrant the Grecian  
epithet ambrosial, when, as in the land of Beu-  
lab, the atmosphere is charged with dewy fra-  
‘grance, and with music, and we take our repose  
and have our dreams awake,— when the moon,  
not secondary to the sun,  
«gives us his laze again,  
‘Void of its lame, and sheds a softer day.  
  
Now through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,  
‘Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime.”  
  
Diana still bunts in the New England sky.  
  
“Tn Heaven queen she is among the spheres.  
She, mistreslike, makes all things to be pure.  
Bternity in her off change she bears}  
She Beauty is; by her the fair endure.  
  
   
  
‘Time wears her not; she doth his chariot guide;  
‘Mortality below her orb is placed ;  
  
By ber the virtues of the stars down slide;  
By her is Virtuo's perfect image cast.”  
  
‘The Hindoos compare the mobn to a saintly  
being who has reached the last stage of bodily  
existence.

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318 NIGHT AND MOONLIGHT.  
  
Great restorer of antiquity, great enchanter.  
In a mild night, when the harvest or hunter's  
moon shines unobstructedly, the houses in our  
village, whatever architect they may have had  
by day, acknowledge only a master. The village  
street is then as wild as the forest. New and  
old things are confounded. I know not whether  
Tam sitting on the ruins of a wall, or on the ma-  
terial which is to compose a new one. Nature  
is an instructed and impartial teacher, spreading  
no crude opinions, and flattering none; she will  
be neither radical nor conservative. Consider  
the moonlight, so civil, yet so savage!  
  
‘The light is more proportionate to our knowl-  
edge than that of day. It is no more dusky in  
ordinary nights, than our mind’s habitual atmos-  
phere, and the moonlight-is as bright as our  
most illaminated moments are.  
  
   
  
   
  
Tn auch a night let me abroad remain  
Till morning breaks, and all's confused agai  
  
   
  
Of what significance the light of day, if it is  
not the reflection of an inward dawn ? — to what  
purpose is the veil of night withdrawn, if the  
morning reveals nothing to the soul? It is  
merely garish and glaring.  
  
‘When Ossian in his address to the sun’ ex.  
claims,  
  
“Whore has darkness its dwelling ?  
Where is the cavernous bome of the stars,

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IGHT AND MOONLIGHT. 319  
  
‘When thou quickly followest their steps,  
Pursuing them like a hunter in the sky,  
‘Thou climbing the lofty hills,  
  
‘They descending on barren mountains ?”  
  
   
  
who does not in his thought accompany the  
stars to their “cavernous home,” « descending”  
with thein “on barren mountains?”  
  
Nevertheless, even by night the sky is blue  
and not black, for we see through the shadow  
of the earth into the distant atmosphere-of day,  
where the sunbeams are revelling.  
  
THE EXD. :

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FAMILIAR LETTERS OF  
HENRY DAVID THOREAU  
  
EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES  
  
F. B, SANBORN  
  
BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY  
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INTRODUCTION.  
  
   
  
‘Tae fortune of Henry Thoreau as an author  
of books has been peculiar, and such as to indi  
cate more permanence of his name and fame  
than could be predicted of many of his contem-  
poraries. In the years of his literary activity  
(twenty-five in all), from 1837 to 1862, — when  
he died, not quite forty-five years old, —he pub-  
lished but two volumes, and those with much  
delay and difficulty in finding a publisher. But  
in the thirty-two years since his denth, nine vol-  
‘umes have been published from his manusripta  
and fugitive pieces,— the present being the  
tenth. Besides these, two biographies of Tho-  
reau have appeared in America, and two others  
in England, with numerous reviews and sketches  
of the man and his writings, — enough to make  
several volumes more, At present, the sale of  
his books and the interest in his life are greater  
than ever; and he seems to have grown early

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vi INTRODUCTION.  
into an American classic, like his Concord neigh-  
bors, Emerson and Hawthorne. Pilgrimages  
are niade to his grave and his daily haunts, as  
to theirs, —and those who come find it to be  
true, as was said by an accomplished woman  
(Miss Elizabeth Hoar) soon after his death,  
that “Concord is Henry’s monument, adorned  
with suitable inscriptions by his own hand.”  
  
‘When Horace wrote of a noble Roman fam-  
= Crescit occulto velut arbor aevo:  
  
Fama Marelli,  
  
he pointed in felicitous phrase to the only fame  
that posterity has much regarded, — the slow.  
growing, deep-rooted laurel of renown, And  
Shakespeare, citing the old English rhyming  
  
saw,  
‘Small herbs have grace,  
  
Great woods do grow apace,  
  
signified the same thing in a parable,— the pop-  
ularity and suddenness of transient things, con-  
trasted with the usefully permanent. ‘There  
were plenty of authors in Thoreau’s time (of  
whom Willis may be taken as the type) who  
would have smiled loftily to think that a rustic

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INTRODUCTION. vii  
  
from the Shawsheen and Assabet could compete  
with the traveled scholar or elegant versifier  
‘who commanded the homage of drawing-rooms  
and magazines, for the prize of lasting rémem-  
brance; yet who now are forgotten, or live a  
shadowy life in the alcoves of libraries, piping  
forth an ineffective voice, like the shades in  
Virgil's Tartarus. But Thoreau was wiser when  
he wrote at the end of his poem, “Inspiration,”  
  
Fame cannot tompt the bard  
  
Whos famous with his Gods  
  
‘Nor laurel him reward  
  
Who has his Maker's nod.  
He strove but little for glory, either immediate  
or posthumous, well knowing that it is the inevi-  
table and unpursued result of what men do or  
say, —  
  
‘Our fatal shadow that walks by us still.  
  
‘The Letters of Thoreau, though not less re-  
markable in some aspects than what he wrote  
carefully for publication, have thus far scarcely  
hhad justice done them. ‘The selection made for  
2 small volume in 1865 was designedly done to  
exhibit one phase of his character,— the most  
striking, if you will, but not the most native

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viii INTRODUCTION.  
  
or attractive. “In his own home,” says Ellery  
Channing, who knew him more inwardly than  
any other, “he was one of those characters who  
may be called “household treasures ;? always on  
the spot, with skillful eye and hand, to raise the  
best melons in the garden, plant the orchard  
with choicest trees, or act as extempore me-  
chanic; fond of the pets, his sister’s flowers, or  
sacred Tabby; kittens were his favorites, — he  
would play with them by the half-hour. No  
whim or coldness, no absorption of his time by  
public or private business, deprived those to  
whom he belonged of his kindness and affeo-  
tion. He did the duties that lay nearest, and  
satisfied those in his immediate circle; and  
whatever the impressions from tho theoretical  
part of his writings, when the matter is probed  
to the bottom, good sense and good feeling will  
be detected in it.” ‘This is preéminently true;  
and the affectionate conviction of this made his  
sister Sophia dissatisfied with Emerson’s rule of  
selection among the letters. ‘This she confided  
to me, and this determined me, should occasion  
offer, to give the world some day a fuller and  
more familiar view of our friend.

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INTRODUCTION. ix  
  
For this purpose I have chosen many letters  
‘and mere notes, illustrating his domestic and  
gossipy moods, —for that element was in his  
mixed nature, inherited from the lively maternal  
side, —and even the colloquial vulgarity (using  
the word in its strict sense of “popular speech”)  
that he sometimes allowed himself. In his last  
years he revolted a little at this turn of his  
thoughts, and, as Channing relates, “rubbed out  
the more humorous parts of his essays, origi-  
nally a relief to their sterner features, saying, ‘I  
cannot bear the levity I find ;’” to which Chan-  
ning replied that he ought to spare it, even to  
the puns, in which he abounded almost as much  
‘as Shakespeare. His friend was right, — the  
‘obvious incongruity was as natural to Thorean  
‘as the grace and French elegance of his best  
sentences. Thus I have not rejected the com-  
mon and trivial in these letters; being well as-  
sured that what the increasing number of Tho-  
reau’s readers desire is to see this piquant original  
just as he was, — not arrayed in the paradoxical  
cloak of the Stoic sage, nor sitting complacent  
in tho cynic earthenware cave of Diogenes, and  
bidding Alexander stand out of his sunshine,

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x INTRODUCTION.  
  
‘He did those acts also; but they were not the  
whole man. He was far more poet than eynic  
or stoic; he had the proud humility of those  
sects, but till more largely that unconscious  
pride which comes to the poet when he sees that  
his pursuits are those of the few and not of the  
multitude, This pereeption came early to Tho-  
reau, and was expressed in some unpublished  
verses dating from his long, solitary rambles, by  
night and day, on the seashore at Staten Island,  
where he first learned the sombre magnificence  
of Ocean. Ho feigns himself the son of what  
might well be one of Homer's fishermen, or tho  
shipwrecked seaman of Lucretius, —  
  
Seevia projectus ab undia  
(Cui tantum in vita restot transire maloram,  
  
and then goes on thus with his parable: —  
  
‘Within a humblo eot that looks to ea  
Daily I breathe this curious warm life,  
  
‘Boneath a friendly haven's sheltering loa  
‘My noiaelos day with mystery still in rife.  
  
"Tis here, they say, my simple life bogan, —  
‘And easy exedence to the tale I lend,  
  
For well I know 't ia here Tam a man, —  
‘But who will simply tall mo of the ond?

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INTRODUCTION. xi  
‘Theso eyes, froch-oponed, spied the far-off Sea,  
  
‘That like a silent godfather did stand,  
[Nor uttered one explaining word to mo,  
  
‘While introducing straight godmother Land.  
  
‘And yondor will strotchos that silent Main,  
‘With many glancing shipe besprinkled o'er:  
  
‘And earnest ail I gaze and gaze again  
‘Upon the selfeame waves and friendly shore.  
  
Infinite work my hands find there to do,  
Gathering the rolicta which the waves mpoast:  
  
Each storm doth scour the sea for something new, —  
‘And every time the strange ia the lant  
  
‘My neighbors sometimes come with lumbering cats,  
‘As if they wished my pleasant toil to share;  
  
But straight they go again to distant marta, —  
For only woods and ballast aro their care.  
  
“Only weeds and ballast?” that is exactly  
what Thoreau’s neighbors would have said he  
was gathering, for the most of his days; yet now  
he is seen to have collected something more du-  
rable and precious than they with their imple-  
ments and marketearts. If they viewed him  
with a kind of scom and pity, it must be said  
that he returned the affront; only time seems  
to have sided with the poet in the controversy  
that he maintained against his busy age.

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xii INTRODUCTION.  
  
Superiority, — moral elevation, without peev-  
ishness or condescension, —this was Thoreau’s  
distinguishing quality. He softened it with hu-  
mor, and sometimes sharpened it with indigna-  
tion but he directed his satire and his censure  
as offen against himself as against mankind ;  
men he truly loved, — if they would not obstruct  
his humble and strictly-chosen path. The let-  
ters here printed show this, if I mistake not,—  
and the many other epistles of his, still uncol-  
lected, would hardly vary the picture he has  
sketched of himself, though they would add new  
facts. Those most to be sought for are his re-  
plies to the generous letters of his one English  
‘correspondent.  
  
‘The profile-portrait engraved for this volume  
is less known than it should be,—for it alone  
of the four likenesses extant shows tho aquiline  
features as his comrades of the wood and moun-  
tain saw them,—not weakened by any effort to  
bring him to the standard of other men in garb  
or expression. The artist, Mr. Walton Ricket-  
son, knew and admired him.  
  
   
  
   
  
RBS.  
‘Conconn, Mass, March 1, 1804.

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FAMILIAR LETTERS OF THOREAU.  
  
   
  
1. YEARS OF DISCIPLINE.  
  
Ir was a happy thought of Thoreau’s friend  
Ellery Channing, himself a poet, to style our  
Concord hermit the “ poetmaturalist ;” for there  
seemed to be no year of his life, and no hour of,  
his day when Nature did not whisper some seoret  
in his ear,—so intimate was he with her from  
childhood. In another connection, speaking of  
natural beauty, Channing said, “There is Tho-  
Teau,—he knows about it; give him sunshine  
and a handful of nuts, and he has enough.” He  
was also a naturalist in the more customary  
sense, — one who studied and arranged methodi-  
cally in his mind the facts of outward nature; a  
good botanist and ornithologist, a wise student  
of insects and fishes; an observer of the winds,  
the clouds, the seasons, and all that goes to make  
up what we call “weather” and “climate.” Yet  
‘he was in heart a poet, and held all the accumu-  
lated knowledge of more than forty years not 0  
much for use as for delight. As Gray’s poor  
friend West said of himself, Like a clearfiow-

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2 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1811-1855,  
  
ing stream, he reflected the beauteous prospect  
around ;” and Mother Nature had given Thoreau  
for his prospect the meandering Indian River of  
Concord, the woodland pastures and fair lakes  
by which he dwelt or rambled most of his life.  
Born in the East Quarter of Concord, July 12,  
1817, he died in the village, May 6, 1862; he  
was there fitted for Harvard College, which he  
entered in 1883, graduating in 1837; and for  
the rest of ife was hardly away from the  
town for more than a year in all, Consequently  
his letters to his family are few, for he was  
usually among them; but when separated from  
his elder brother John, or his sisters Helen and.  
Sophia, he wrote to them, and these are the  
earliest of his letters which have been pre-  
served. Always thoughtful for others, he has  
left a few facts to aid his biographer, respecting  
his birth and early years, In his Journal of  
Devember 27, 1855, he wrote: —  
  
“Recalled this evening, with the aid of  
Mother, the various houses (and towns) in  
which I have lived, and some events of my life  
Born in the Minott house on the Virginia Rond,  
where Father occupied Grandmother's ‘thirds’,  
carrying on the farm. ‘The Catherines had the  
other half of the house,— Bob Catherine, and  
[brother] John threw up the turkeys. Lived  
there about eight months; Si Merriam the next

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BIOGRAPHICAL FACTS. 8  
  
neighbor. Uncle David [Dunbar] died when I  
was six weeks old.’ Iwas baptized in the old.  
Meeting-house, by Dr. Ripley, when I was three  
months, and did not ery. In the Red House,  
where Grandmother lived, wo had the west side  
till October, 1818, —hiting of Josiah Davis,  
agent for the Woodwards; there were uncle  
Charles and cousin Charles (Dunbar), more or  
less. According to the Day-Book first used by  
Grandfather (Thorean),? dated 1797 (his part  
cut out and then used by Father in Concord in  
1808-9, and in Chelmsford in 1818-21), Father  
hired of Proctor (in Chelmsford), and shop of  
Spaulding. In Chelmsford till March, 1821;  
last charge there about the middle of March,  
1821. Aunt Sarah taught me to walk there,  
when fourteen months old. We lived next the  
meeting-house, where they kept the powder in  
the garret. Father kept shop and painted  
signs, ete. . . «  
  
1 Hy was named David for this unelo; Dr. Ripley was the  
rinister of the whole town in 1817. ‘The Red. House stood  
sear the Emerson house on tho Lexington road the Wood-  
wards wore a wealthy family afterwards in Quiney,to which  
town Dr. Woodward loft a large bequest.  
  
\* John Thoreau, grandfather of Henry, born at St. Helis  
Jersey, April, 1754, was a tailor on board the American priva-  
teer General Lineols, November, 1779, and recognized La  
‘Terrible, French frigato, which carried John Adame from  
  
Boston to France. See Thoreau's Summer, p. 102. This John  
‘Thoreau, son of Philip, ded in Concord, 1800.

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4 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1821-1844,  
  
“In Pope's house, South End of Boston (a  
ten-footer) five or six months,— moved from  
Chelmsford through Concord, and may have  
tarried in Concord a little while.  
  
“Day-book says, ‘Moved to Pinkney Street  
(Boston), September 10, 1821, on Monday;;’  
Whitwell’s house, Pinkney Street, to March,  
1828; then brick house, Concord, to spring of  
1826 ; Davis house (next to Samuel Hoar’s) to  
May 7, 1827; Shattuck house (now W. Mun-  
roo's) to spring of 1885; Hollis Hall, Cam-  
bridge, 1838; Aunts’ house to spring of 1837.  
[This was what is now the inn called ‘Thoreau  
House.’] At Brownson’s (Canton) while teach-  
ing in winter of 1835. Went to New York with  
Father peddling in 1836.”  
  
This brings the date down to the year in which  
Henry Thoreau left college, and when the family  
letters begin. ‘The notes continue, and now  
begin to have a literary value.  
  
‘Parkman house to fall of 1844; was gradu-  
ated in 1887; kept town school a fortnight that  
year; began the big red Journal, October, 1837 ;  
found my first arrow-head, fall of 1887; wrote a  
lecture (my first) on Society, March 14, 1838,  
and read it before the Lyceum, in the Masons’  
Hall, April 11, 1888 ; went to Maine for a school  
in May, 1838; commenced school in the Park-

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BIOGRAPHICAL PACTS. 5  
  
man house! in the summer of that year; wrote an  
easay on ‘Sound and Silence’ December, 1838 ;  
fall of 1839 up the Merrimack to the White  
Mountains; ‘Aulus Persius Flaceus’ (first  
printed paper of consequence), February 10,  
1840; the Red Journal of 596 pages ended  
June, 1840; Journal of 896 pages ended Janu-  
ary 1, 1841,  
  
“Went to R, W. Emerson's in spring of  
1841 (about April 25), and stayed there till  
summer of 1843; went to William Emerson’s,  
Staten Island, May, 1843, and returned. in De-  
cember, or to Thanksgiving, 1843; made pen-  
cils in 1844 ; Texas house to August 29, 1850;  
at Walden, July, 1845, to fall of 1847; then at  
R. W. Emerson's to fall of 1848, or while he  
was in Europe; then in the Yellow house (re-  
formed) till the present.”  
  
4 "Thin had been the abode of old Deacon Parkman, a grand-  
uncle of the late Francin Parkman th historian, and ton of  
the Weethorough clergyman from whom this distinguished  
family descends, Deaoon Patkman wan a merchant in Con-  
cord, and lived in what wat thon a good hou. It stood in  
the middle of the village, where the Public Library now is  
‘Tho Texas” house was built by Henry Thoreaa and his  
father John; i wan named from a wction of the wilage then  
  
   
   
  
   
  
called “Texas,” because a little remote from the churches and  
sohoola; perhaps the same odd fancy that had bestowed the  
‘ame of “Virginia” on tho road of Thoreaa's birthplace.  
  
   
  
‘The “ Yallow hone reformed” wan small eotage rebuilt  
and enlarged by the Thoreaus in 1850; in this, on the main  
street, Henry and his father and mother died.

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6 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1100-1781,  
  
‘As may be inferred from this simple record of  
‘the many mansions, chiefly small ones, in which  
he had spent his first thirty-eight years, there  
was nothing distinguished in the fortunes of  
‘Thoreau's family, who were small merchants,  
artisans, or farmers, mostly. On the father’s  
side they were from the isle of Jersey, where @  
French strain mingled with his English or Sean-  
dinavian blood; on the other side he was of  
Scotch and English descent, counting Jones,  
Danbar, and Burns among his feminine ances-  
tors. Liveliness and humor came to him from  
his Seotch connection ; from father and grand-  
father he inherited a grave steadiness of mind  
rather at variance with his mother’s vivacity.  
‘Manual dexterity was also inherited ; so that he  
practiced the simpler mechanic arts with ease  
and skill; his mathematical training and his  
outdoor habits fitted him for a land-surveyor ;  
and by that art, as well as by pencil-making, lee-  
turing, and writing, he paid his way in the world,  
and left a small income from his writings to those  
who survived him. He taught pupils also, as  
did his brother and sisters; but it was not an  
occupation that he long followed after John’s  
death in 1842, With these introductory state-  
ments we may proceed to Thoreau's first corre-  
spondence with his brother and sisters.  
  
‘As an introduction to the correspondence, and

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21.0] COMMENCEMENT CONFERENCE. 7  
  
a key to the young man’s view of life, a passage  
may be taken from Thoreau’s “ Part” at his col-  
lege commencement, August 16, 1837. He was  
one of two to hold what was called a “Confer-  
ence” on The Commercial Spirit,” —his alter-  
native or opponent in the dispute being Henry  
Vose, also of Concord, who, in later years, was  
a Massachusetts judge. Henry Thoreau, then  
just twenty, said: —  
  
“The characteristic of our epoch is perfoct  
freedom, — freedom of thought and action. The  
indignant Greek, the oppressed Pole, the jealous  
American assert it. The skeptic no less than  
the believer, the heretic no less than the faithful  
child of the Church, have begun to enjoy it. It  
hhas generated an unusual degree of energy and  
activity ; it has generated the commercial spirit.  
Man thinks faster and freer than ever before.  
He, moreover, moves faster and freer. He is  
‘more restloss, because he is more independent  
than ever. The winds and the waves are not  
enough for him; he must needs ransack the  
bowels of the earth, that he may make for  
himself a highway of iron over its surface.  
  
“Indeed, could one examine this bechive of  
  
2 Daring the greater past of his collage coure he sigaed  
Aimoelf D-H. Thora, an he was christened (David Henry);  
bot being constantly called “ Henry,” he put thia name fat  
  
about the time he left college, and was seldom afterwards  
Jknown by the former initials

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8 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. usr,  
  
ours from an observatory among the stars, he  
would pereeive an unwonted degree of bustle in  
these later ages. ‘There would be hammering  
and chipping in one quarter; baking and brew-  
ing, buying and selling, money-changing and  
speechmaking in another. What impression  
would he receive from so general and impartial  
survey. Would it appear to him that mankind  
used this world as not abusing it? Doubtless  
he would first be struck with the profuse beauty  
of our orb; he would never tire of admiring its  
varied zones and seasons, with their changes of  
living. He could not but notice that restless  
animal for whose sake it was contrived; but  
where he found one man to admire with him his  
fair dwelling-place, the ninety and nine would be  
scraping together a little of the gilded dust upon  
its surface... . We are to look chiefly for the  
origin of the commercial spirit, and the power  
that still cherishes and sustains it, in a blind and  
unmanly love of wealth. Wherever this exists,  
it is too sure to become the ruling spirit; and,  
as a natural consequence, it infuses into all our  
thoughts and affections a degree of its own selfish-  
ness; we become selfish in our patriotism, selfish  
in our domestic relations, selfish in our religion.  
  
Let men, true to their natures, cultivate the  
moral affections, lead manly and independent  
lives; let them make riches the means and not

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1.2] COMMENCEMENT CONFERENCE. 9  
  
the end of existence, and we shall hear no more  
of the commercial spirit. ‘The sea will not stag-  
nate, the earth will be as green as ever, and the air  
as pure. ‘This curious world which we inhabit  
is more wonderful than it is convenient; more  
beautiful than it is useful; it is more to be  
admired and enjoyed than used. The order of  
things should be somewhat reversed ; the seventh  
should be man’s day of toil, wherein to earn his,  
living by the sweat of his brow; and the other  
six his Sabbath of the affections and the soul, —  
in which to range this widespread garden, and  
drink in the soft influences and sublime revela-  
tions of Nature. . . . The spirit we are consider.  
ing is not altogether and without exception bad.  
‘We rejoice in it as one more indication of the  
entire and universal freedom that characterizes  
the age in which we live, — as an indication that  
the human race is making one more advanee in  
that infinite series of progressions which awaits  
it. We glory in those very excesses which are  
a source of anxiety to the wise and good; as an  
evidence that man will not always be the slave  
of matter, — but erelong, casting off those earth-  
born desires which identify him with the brute,  
shall pass the days of his sojourn in this his  
nether Paradise, as becomes the Lord of Crea  
tion.” ?  
  
1 The impression made on ono classmate and former room-

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10 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ssn,  
  
‘This passage is noteworthy as showing how  
early the philosophic mind was developed in  
‘Thoreau, and how much his thought and expres-  
sion were influenced by Emerson's first book, —  
  
ato (“chum”) of Thoreau, by this utterance, will be seen  
by this fragmont of a letter from James Richardson of Ded-  
Tham (afterwards Reverend J. Richardson), dated Dedham,  
September 7, 1887: —  
  
“Faux Tuonzav,— After you had finished your part in  
‘he Performances of Commencement (the tone and sentiment of  
‘which, by the way, Iiked much, as being of a sound philogo-  
phy), Thardly saw you again at all. Neither at Mr. Quincy's  
Tovoo, neither at any of our classmates’ evening entertainments,  
id Tfind you; though for the purpose of taking « farewell,  
and leaving you some memento of an old chum, as well as on  
aattors of businea, Imuch wished to seo your face once more.  
OF course you must be present at our October meeting, —  
notice of the time and place for which will be given ia the  
newspapers. I hear that you arv comfortably located, in your  
native town, as the guardian of its children, in the immediate  
vicinity, I suppose, of one of our mort distinguished apost  
of the fature, RW. Emerson, and situated under the minis-  
ty of our old friend Reverend Barzillai Frost, to whom please  
make my remembrances. I heard from you, also, that Con-  
cond Academy, latcly under the caro of Mr. Phinoas Allon of  
Northild, in now vacant of a preceptor; should Mr. Hoar  
find it dificult to got w acholar colleg-dietinguished, perhape  
hhe would take up with one, who, though in many respects a  
critical thinker, and a careful philosopher of language among  
other things, has never distinguished himself in his class as a  
rogular attendant on colloge studies and rales. If wo, could  
you do me the kindness to mention my name to him as of one  
Intending to make teaching his profeson, at least fora part  
of hin life. Tf recommendations aro necessary, President  
Quincy has offred me one, and I can easily get others.”

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ar.%]) EMERSON AND THOREAU. 11.  
  
“Nature.” But the soil in which that germina  
ting seed fell was naturally prepared to receive  
it; and the wide diversity between the master  
and the disciple soon began to appear. In 1863,  
reviewing Thoreau’s work, Emerson said, “That  
oaken strength which I noted whenever he  
walked or worked, or surveyed wood-lots, — the  
same unhesitating hand with which a field.  
laborer aceosts a piece of work which I should  
shun as a waste of strength, Henry shows in his  
literary task. He has muscle, and ventures on  
and performs feats which I am forced to decline.  
In reading him I find the same thoughts, the  
same spirit that is in me; but he takes a step  
beyond, and illustrates by excellent images that  
which I should have conveyed in a sleepy gener-  
alization.” True as this is, it omits one point of  
difference only too well known to Emerson, —  
the controversial turn of Thoreau'’s mind, in  
which he was so unlike Emerson and Aleott,  
and which must have given to his youthful utter-  
ances in company the air of something requiring  
an apology.  
  
‘This, at all events, seems to have been the  
feeling of Helen Thoreau, whose pride in her  
  
2 This eldest of the children of John ‘Thoreau and Cynthia  
Dunbar was born October 22, 1812, and died June 14, 1849,  
  
Heer grandmother, Mary Jones of Weston, Mass, belonged to  
‘8 Tory family, and several of the Jones’ brothers served as  
  
‘officers in the British army against General Washington.

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12 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. issr,  
  
Drother was such that she did not wish to see  
him misunderstood. A pleasing indication of  
both these traits is seen in the first extant letter  
of Thoreau to this sister. I have this in an  
autograph copy made by Mr. Emerson, when he  
‘was preparing the letters for partial publication,  
soon after Henry's death. ‘For some reason he  
did not insert it in his volume; but it quite de-  
serves to be printed, as indicating the period  
when it was clear to Thoreau that he must think  
for himself, whatever those around him might  
think.  
  
70 HELEN THOREAU (AT TAUNTON).  
Coxcono, Ostober 27, 1887.  
  
‘Dear Hexen, — Please you, let the defendant  
say a few words in defense of his long silence.  
You know we have hardly done our own deeds,  
thought our own thoughts, or lived our own lives  
hitherto. For a man to act himself, he must be  
perfectly free ; otherwise he is in danger of los-  
ing all sense of responsibility or of self-respect.  
‘Now when such a state of things exists, that the  
sacred opinions one advances in argument are  
apologized for by his friends, before his face,  
lest his hearers receive a wrong impression of  
the man, —when such gross injustice is of fre-  
quent occurrence, where shall we look, and not  
Took in vain, for men, deeds, thoughts? As

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an.) T0 HELEN THOREAU. 18  
  
well apologize for the grape that it is sour, or  
the thunder that it is noisy, or the lightning that,  
it tarries not.  
  
Further, letter-writing too often degenerates  
into a communicating of facts, and not of truths ;  
of other men’s deeds and not our thoughts, What  
are the convulsions of a planet, compared with  
the emotions of the soul? or the rising of a  
thousand suns, if that is not enlightened by a  
ray?  
  
Your affectionate brother,  
Henry.  
  
Tt is presumed the tender sister did not: need  
a sesond lesson; and equally that Henry did not  
see fit always to write such letters as he praised  
above, —for he was quite ready to give his cor  
respondents facts, no less than thoughts, espe-  
cially in his family letters.  
  
Next to this epistle, chronologically, comes  
one in the conventional dialect of the American  
Indian, as handed down by travelers and ro-  
mancers, by Jefferson, Chateaubriand, Lewis,  
Clarke, and Fenimore Cooper. John Thoreau,  
Henry’s brother, was born in 1815 and died  
January 11, 1842, He was teaching at Taun-  
ton in 1887.

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14 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ssn,  
  
‘TO JOHN THOREAU (AT TAUNTON).  
(tn aa from ove Indian to another)  
Mosturaquio, 202 Sommers, two Moons eleven Sunt  
sine the coming ofthe Pale Faces  
(November 11,1837)  
  
‘Tanatawan, Sachimaussan, to his brother  
sachem, Hopeful of Hopewell, — hoping that he  
is well: —  
  
Brother: It is many suns that I have not seen  
the print of thy moccasins by our councilires  
the Great Spirit has blown more leaves from  
the trees, and many clouds from the land of  
‘snows have visited our lodge; the earth has be-  
come hard, like a frozen buffalo-skin, so that the  
trampling of many herds is like the Great Spir-  
it’s thunder; the grass on the great fields is like  
the old man of many winters, and the small  
song-sparrow prepares for his flight to the land  
whence the summer comes.  
  
Brother: I write these things because I know  
that thou lovest the Great Spirit's creatures,  
and wast wont to sit at thy lodgedoor, when the  
maize was green, to hear the bluebird’s song.  
So shalt thou, in the land of spirits, not only  
find good hunting grounds and sharp arrow.  
heads, but much musie of binds,  
  
Brother: I have been thinking how the Pale  
Faces have taken away our lands, — and was a

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ron] TO JOHN THOREAU. 15  
  
woman. You are fortunate to have pitched your  
wigwam nearer to the great salt lake, where the  
Pale Face can never plant com,  
  
Brother: I need not tell thee how we hunted  
on the lands of the Dundees,—a great war-  
chief never forgets the bitter taunts of his ene-  
mies. Our young men called for strong water;  
they painted their faces and dug up the hatchet,  
But their enemies, the Dundees, were women ;  
they hastened to cover their hatchets with wam-  
pum. Our braves are not many; our enemies  
took a few strings from the heap their fathers  
left them, and our hatchets are buried. But not  
Tahatawan’s ; heart is of rock when the  
Dundees sing,— his hatchet cuts deep into the  
Dundee braves.  
  
Brother: There is dust on my moccasins; I  
have journeyed to the White Lake, in the coun-  
‘tay of the Ninares1 ‘The Long-knife has been  
  
1 White Pood in the ditrict called “Nine Acre Come,” is  
hore meant; tho Lee-vite”” were a family then living on  
Lave Hl, ‘Nanshawtock is anther name for thie hl, where  
the old Tehatavan lived at times, befrw tho English settled  
in Concord in September, 163." ‘The real date of tha leter  
in November 11-14, 1897 and Between ita two dates the Maaaa-  
chusetia tate election was held. "The" great council howe”  
‘rau the Bort Stato House, to which the Concord people were  
slecting depatie; the Eaglo-Bouk” named below was doubt-  
  
leas Samuel Hoar, the first citizen of the town, and for a time  
Ha was the

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16 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. Liss,  
  
there, — like a woman I paddled his war-canoo,  
But the spirits of my fathers were angered the  
waters were ruffled, and the Bad Spirit troubled  
the air.  
  
‘The hearts of the Lee-vites are gladdened;  
the young Peacock has returned to his lodge at  
Naushawtuck. He is the Medicine of his tribe,  
but his heart is like the dry leaves when the  
whirlwind breathes. He has come to help  
choose new chiefs for the tribe, in the great  
Couneil-house, when two suns are past. —There  
is no seat for Tahatawan in the council-house.  
He lets the squaws talk,—his voice is heard  
above the warwhoop of his tribe, piercing the  
hearts of his foes; his legs are stiff, he cannot  
sit.  
  
Brother: Art thou waiting for the spring, that  
the geese may fly low over thy wigwam? Thy  
arrows are sharp, thy bow is strong. Has Ana-  
‘wan killed all the eagles? ‘The crows fear not  
the winter. Tahatawan’s eyes are sharp—he  
can track a snake in the grass, he knows a  
friend from a foe; he weleomes a friend to his  
lodge though the ravens croak.  
  
Brother: Hast thou studied much in the medi-  
cine-books of the Pale-Faces? Dost thou un-  
derstand the long talk of the Medicine whose  
words are like the music of the mocking-bird ?  
But our chiefs have not ears to hear him; they

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n.20) T0 JOHN THOREAU. 17  
  
listen like squaws to the council of old men, —  
they understand not his words. But, Brother,  
he never danced the wardanee, nor heard the  
warwhoop of his enemies. He was a squaw; he  
stayed by the wigwam when the braves were out,  
and tended the tame buffaloes.  
  
Fear not; the Dundees have faint hearts and  
much wampum. When the grass is green on  
the great fields, and the small titmouse returns  
‘again, we will hunt the buffalo together.  
  
Our old men say they will send the young  
chief of the Karlisles, who lives in the green  
wigwam and is a great Medicine, that his word  
may be heard in the long talk which the wise  
men are going to hold at Shawmut, by the salt  
lake. He is a great talk, and will not forget  
the enemies of his tribe.  
  
‘14th Sun. The fire has gone out in the coun-  
cilthouse. The words of our old men have been  
like the vaunts of the Dundees. The Eagle  
Beak was moved to talk like a silly Pale-Face,  
and not as becomes a great war-chief in a coun-  
cil of braves. The young Peacock is a woman  
among braves ; he heard not the words of the  
‘old men, — like a squaw he looked at his medi-  
cine-paper The young chiof of the green wig-  
  
tA  
  
   
  
sate sarcasm on young B., who could not fuiah his  
in town-meeting without looking at hia notes. Tho al  
Ttsion tothe “Bedicine whee words are Like the muse of the

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18 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 837,  
  
wam has hung up his moccasins; he will not  
leave his tribe till after the buffalo have come  
down on to the plains.  
  
Brother: This is a long talk, but there is  
much meaning to my words; they are not like  
the thunder of canes when the lightning smites  
them. Brother, I have just heard thy talk and  
am well pleased ; thou art getting to be a great  
Medicine. ‘The Great Spirit confound the ene-  
mies of thy tribe,  
  
‘TamaTawan.  
‘His mark (a bow and arrow).  
  
This singular letter was addressed to John  
‘Thoreau at Taunton, and was so carefully pre-  
served in the family that it must have had value  
in their eyes, as recalling traite of the two Tho-  
reau brothers, and also events in the village  
life of Concord, more interesting to the young  
people of 1837 than to the present generation,  
Some of its parables are easy to read, others  
quite obscure, The annual state election was  
an important event to Henry Thoreau then, —  
more 80 than it afterwards appeared; and he  
‘mocking-bind” is hard to explain; it may mean Edward Ever  
tt, then governor of Massachusetts, or, posbly, Emerson,  
‘howe lectures Dogan to attract notion in Boston and Cam.  
Tridge. It can hardly mean Wendell Philips, toogh his  
relodions eloquence had lately been heard in attacks upon  
slavery.

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zr.20.] HENRY AND JOHN THOREAU. 19  
  
was certainly on the Whig side in polities, like  
most of the educated youths of Concord. His  
“young chief of the Karlisles” was Albert Nel-  
son, son of a Carlisle physician, who began to  
practice law in Concord in 1886, and was after-  
wards chief justice of the Superior Court. He  
was defeated at the election of 1837, as candi-  
ate of the Whigs for representative in the  
state legislature, by a Democrat. Henry Vose,  
above named, writing from “Butternuts,” in  
New York, three hundred miles west of Concord,  
October 22, 1837, said to Thoreau: “You envy  
my happy situation, and mourn over your fate,  
which condemns you to loiter about Concord  
and grub among clamshells [for Indian relies].  
If this were your only source of enjoyment while  
in Concord, — but I know that it is not. I well  
remember that ‘antique and fishlike’ office of  
Major Nelson (to whom, and to Mr. Dennis,  
and Bemis, and John Thoreau, I wish to be re-  
membered) ; and still more vividly do I remem-  
ber the fairer portion of the community in ©.”  
‘This indicates a social habit in Henry and John  
Thoreau, which the Indian “talk” also implies.  
‘Tahatawan, whom Henry here impersonated,  
was the mythical Sachem of Musketaquid (the  
Algonquin name for Concord River and region),  
whose fishing and hunting lodge was on the hill  
Naushawtuck, between the two rivers so much

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20 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1888,  
  
navigated by the Thoreaus, In 1887 the two  
brothers were sportsmen, and went shooting over  
the Concord meadows and moors, but of course  
the“ buffalo” was a figure of speech; they never  
shot anything larger than a raccoon. A few  
years later they gave up killing the game.  
  
‘70 sJoHN THOREAU (AT TAUNTON).  
  
Coxconn, February 10, 1858,  
  
Dear Joun,— Dost expect to elicit a spark  
from so dull a steel as myself, by that flinty  
subject of thine? ‘Truly, one of your copper  
percussion caps would have fitted this nail-head  
better.  
  
Unfortunately, the “Americana”? has hardly  
‘two words on the subject. ‘The process is very  
simple. The stone is struck with a mallet so as,  
to produce pieces sharp at one end, and blunt at  
the other, These are laid upon a steel line  
(probably a chisel’s edge), and again struck  
with the mallet, and flints of the required size  
  
4 Americana in this not, isthe old Encyclopedia Americana,  
‘which had heen edited from the German Conversatione-Lezicom,  
‘and other sources, by Dr. Francis Lieber, T. G. Bradford, and  
  
   
  
‘pons and utensils, very common about Taunton in the region  
formerly controlled by King Philip.

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=] T0 JOHN THOREAU. 21  
  
are broken off. 4 skillful workman may make  
‘a thousand in a day.  
  
So much for the “Americana.” Dr. Jacob  
Bigelow in his “Technology” says, “ Gunflints  
are formed by a skillful workman, who breaks  
them out with a hammer, a roller, and steel  
chisel, with small, repeated strokes.”  
  
‘Your ornithological commission shall be exe-  
cuted. When are you coming home?  
  
Your affectionate brother,  
Henry D. Troreav.  
  
0 JOHN THoREAU (An TAUNTON).  
Coxcono, March 17, 188,  
  
Dear Joux,— Your box of relies came safe  
to hand, but was speedily deposited on the car-  
pet, I assure you. What could it be? Some  
declared it must be Taunton herrings : “Just  
nose it, sir!” So down we went onto our knees,  
and commenced smelling in good earnest, —  
now horizontally from this corner to that, now  
perpendicularly from the carpet up, now diago-  
nally, —and finally with a sweeping movement  
describing the circumference. But it availed  
not. Taunton herring would not be smelled.  
So we e'en proceeded to open it vi et chisel.  
‘What an array of nails! Four nails make a  
quarter, four quarters a yard,—i faith, this  
ism't cloth measure! Blaze away, old boy!

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22 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (8,  
  
Clap in another wedge, then! There, softly!  
she begins to gape. Just give that old stick-  
ler, with a black hat on, another hoist. Aye,  
we ll pare his nails for him! Well done, old  
fellow, there ’sa breathing-hole for you. “Drive  
it in!” eries one; “ Nip it off!” cries another.  
Bo easy, I say. What’s done may be undone.  
Your richest veins don't lie nearest the surface.  
Suppose we sit down and enjoy the prospect,  
for who knows but we may be disappointed ?  
When they opened Pandora's box, all the con-  
tents escaped except Hope, but in this case hope  
is uppermost, and will be the first to escape  
when the box is opened. However, the general  
voice was for kicking the coverlid off.  
  
‘The relies have been arranged numerically  
onatable. When shall we set up housekeep-  
ing? Miss Ward thanks you for her share of  
the spoils; also accept many thanks from your  
‘humble servant “ for yourself.”  
  
T have a proposal to make. Suppose by the  
time you are released we should start in com-  
pany for the West, and there either establish a  
school jointly, or procure ourselves separate sit-  
uations. Suppose, moreover, you should get  
ready to start previous to leaving Taunton, to  
save time. Go J must, at all events. Dr. Jar-  
‘vis enumerates nearly a dozen schools which I  
could have, — all such as would suit you equally

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mr. 20) TO JOHN THOREAU, 23  
  
   
  
well} I wish you would write soon about  
It is high season to start. ‘The canals are now  
open, and traveling comparatively cheap. I  
think T can borrow the cash in this town.  
‘There ’s nothing like trying.  
  
Brigham wrote you a few words on the 8th,  
which father took the liberty to read, with the  
advice and consent of the family. He wishes  
you to send him those (numbers) of the “ Li-  
brary of Health” received since 1888, if you  
are in Concord; otherwise, he says you need  
not trouble yourself about it at present. He is  
in C., and enjoying better health than usual.  
But one number, and that you have, has been  
received.  
  
‘The bluebirds made their appearance the 14th  
day of March; robins and pigeons have also  
been seen. Mr. Emerson has put up the blue-  
bird box in due form. All send their love.  
  
‘From your aff. br.  
H. D. Trorav.  
  
([Posteript by Holen Thoreas.]  
Dear Jonn,— Will you have the kindness  
  
2 Dr. Edward Jarvis, bom in Coneord (1808), had gone to  
Louisville, Ky. in April, 1837, and was thriving thore as a  
physician. Hl knew the’Thoreaus well, and gave them good  
Ihopes of eucoess in Ohio or Kentacky as teachers. The plan  
was soon abandoned, and Henry went to Maino to find  
‘school, but without muccess. Soe Sanborn's Thoreaw, p 57-

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Br YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (ss,  
  
to inquire at Mr. Marston’s for an old singing-  
‘book I left there, —the “Handel and Haydn  
Collection,” without a cover? Have you ever  
got those red handkerchiefs? Much love to  
the Marstons, Crockers, and Muenschers. Mr.  
Josiah Davis has failed. Mr. and Mrs. Howe  
have both written again, urging my going to  
Roxbury ; which I suppose I shall do. What  
day of the month shall you return ?  
Hess.  
  
One remark in this letter calls for attention,  
—that concerning the “ bluebird box” for Mr.  
Emerson. In 1853 Emerson wrote in his jour-  
nal: “Long ago I wrote of Gifts, and neglected  
capital example, John Thoreau, Jr., one day  
puta bluebird’s box on my barn, — fifteen years  
ago it must be,—and there it still is, with  
every summer a melodious family in it, adorning  
the place and singing his praises. There’s a  
gift for you,— which cost the giver no money,  
but nothing which he bought could have been  
0 good. I think of another, quite inestimable.  
John Thoreau knew how much I should value a  
head of little Waldo, then five years old. He  
came to me and offered to take him to a daguer-  
reotypist who was then in town, and he (Tho-  
reau) would see it well done. He did it, and  
brought me the daguerre, which T thankfully

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zr.20) 70 JOHN THOREAU. 25  
  
paid for. A few months after, my boy died;  
and I have sinco to thank John ‘Thorean for  
that wise and gentle piece of friendship.”  
  
Little Waldo Emerson died January 27, 1842,  
and John Thoreau the same month ; so that this  
taking of the portrait must have been but a few  
months before his own death, January 11. Henry  
‘Thoreau was then living in the Emerson family.  
  
‘To JOHN THOREAU (AT WEST ROXBURY).  
  
Coxconn, July 8 1888  
  
Dear Joux,— We heard from Helen today,  
and sho informs us that you are coming home  
by the first of August. Now I wish you to  
write and let me know exactly when your vaca-  
tion takes place, that I may take one at the  
same time. I am in school from 8 to 12 in the  
morning, and from 2 to 4 in the afternoon.  
After that I read a little Greek or English, or,  
for variety, take a stroll in the fields. We  
have not had such a year for berries this long  
time,—the earth is actually blue with them.  
High blueberries, three kinds of low, thimble-  
and raspberries constitute my diet at present.  
(Take notice, —I only diet between meals.)  
Among my deeds of charity, I may reckon the  
picking of a chorry-tree for two helpless single  
ladies, who live under the hill; but i’ faith, it  
was robbing Peter to pay Paul, —for while I

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26 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. iss,  
  
wwas exalted in charity towards them, I had no  
merey on my own stomach. Be advised, my  
love for currants continues.  
  
‘The only addition that I have made to my  
stock of ornithological information is in the  
shape not of a Fring. Melod.,—but surely a  
melodious Fringilla, — the F. Juncorum, or  
rushsparrow. I had long known him by note,  
but never by name.  
  
Report says that Elijah Stearns is going to  
take the town school. I have four scholars, and  
‘one more engaged. Mr. Fenner left. town yes-  
terday. Among occurrences of ill omen may be  
mentioned the falling out and cracking of the  
inseription stone of Concord Monument. Mrs.  
Lowell and children are at Aunts’. Peabody  
(a college classmate) walked up last Wednes-  
day, spent the night, and took a stroll in the  
woods,  
  
Sophia says I must leave off and pen a few  
lines for her to Helen: 0 good-by. Love from  
all, and among them your aff. brother,  
  
HD. T.  
  
The school shove mentioned as begun by  
Henry Thoreau in this summer of 1838 was  
  
2 "This was the old mooument of the Fightin 1775, forthe  
dedication of which Emerson wrote his hymn, “By the rode  
beige.” ‘This was sung by Thorets, among others, to. dhe  
tne of O18 Hundred.

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an. 21] TO HELEN THOREAU. aT  
  
joined in by John, after finishing his teaching  
at West Roxbury, and, was continued for several  
years. It was in this school that Louisa Aleott  
and her sister received some instruction, after  
their father removed from Boston to Concord,  
in the spring of 1840. It was opened in the  
Parkman house, where the family then lived,  
and soon after was transferred to the building  
of the Concord Academy,! not far off. John  
Thorean taught the English branches and math-  
ematics; Henry taught Latin and Greek and  
the higher mathematics, —and it was the cus  
tom of both brothers to go walking with their  
pupils one afternoon each week. It is asa pro-  
fessional schoolmaster that Henry thus writes to  
his sister Helen, then teaching at Roxbury, after  
a like experience in Taunton.  
  
   
  
TO HELEN THORRAU (AT ROXBURY).  
Coxcono, October 6, 1833,  
  
Dear Hetex,—I dropped Sophia's letter  
into the box immediately on taking yours out,  
else the tone of the former had been changed.  
  
T have no acquaintanee with “Cleaveland’s  
First Lessons,” though I have peeped into his  
abridged grammar, which I should think very  
well calculated for beginners, —at least for such  
  
2 For twenty-five years (1900-01) the house of Ellery Chan-  
hing, and now of Charles Emerson, nephew of Waldo Emerson.

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28 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1888,  
  
as would be likely to wear out one book before  
they would be prepared for the abstruser parts  
of grammar. Ahem!  
  
As no one can tell what was the Roman pro-  
nunciation, each nation makes the Latin con.  
form, for the most. part, to the rules of its own  
Tanguage ; so that with us of the vowels only A  
has a peculiar sound. In the end of a word of  
more than one syllable it is sounded like “ah,”  
as pennah, Lyliah, Hannah, ete., without re-  
gard to case ; but “da” is never sounded “ dak,”  
Decause it is a monosyllable. All terminations  
ines, and plural cases in 08, as you know, are  
pronounced long, —as homines (hominese), do-  
‘minos (dominose), or, in English, Johnny Vose.  
For information, soe Adams’ “Latin Gram-  
mar,” before the Rudiments.  
  
‘This is all law and gospel in the eyes of the  
world; but remember I am speaking, as it were,  
inthe third person, and should sing quite a dif-  
ferent tune if it were I that made the quire.  
However, one must occasionally hang his harp  
on the willows, and play on the Jew’s harp, in  
such a strange country as this.  
  
‘One of your young ladies wishes to study  
mental philosophy, hey? Well, tell her that  
she has the very best text-book that I know of  
in her possession already. If she do not be-  
lieve it, then she should have bespoken another

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ar2) 10 HELEN THOREAU. 29  
  
better in another world, and not have expected  
to find one at “Little & Wilkins.” But if she  
wishes to know how poor an apology for a men-  
tal philosophy men have tacked together, syn-  
thetically or analytically, in these latter days, —  
how they have squeezed the infinite mind into  
a compass that would not nonplus a surveyor of  
Eastern Lands —making Imagination and Mem-  
ory to lie still in their respective apartments  
like ink-stand and wafers in a lady’s escritoire,  
—why let her read Locke, or Stewart, or Brown.  
‘The fact is, mental philosophy is very like Pov-  
erty, which, you know, begins at home ; and in.  
deed, when it goes abroad, it is poverty itself.  
  
Chorus. I should think an abridgment of  
one of the above authors, or of Abercrombie,  
would answer her purpose. It may set her  
athinking. Probably there are many systems  
in the market of which I am ignorant.  
  
As for themes, say first “Miscellaneous  
Thoughts.” Sot one up to a window, to note  
what passes in the street, and make her com-  
ments thereon; or let her gaze in the fire, or  
into a corner where there is a spider's web, and  
philosophize, moralize, theorize, or what not.  
‘What their hands find to putter about, or their  
minds to think about, that let them write about,  
To say nothing of advantage or disadvantage of  
this, that, or the other, let them set down their

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30 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1810,  
  
ideas at any given season, preserving the chain  
of thought as complete as may be.  
  
This is the style pedagogical. I am much  
obliged to you for your piece of information,  
Knowing your dislike to a sentimental letter, I  
remain  
  
‘Your affectionate brother,  
HD. T.  
  
‘The next letter to Helen carries this pedagogi-  
cal style a little farther, for it is in Latin, ad-  
dressed “Ad Helenam L. Thoreau, Roxbury,  
‘Mass..” and postmarked “Concord, Jan. 25”  
(4840).  
  
   
  
170 HELEN THOREAU (AT ROXBURY).  
  
Conconoesx, Dee. Kal, Po Am ecexte  
  
‘Cana Sonor, — Est magnus acervus nivis ad  
limina, et frigus intolerabile intus. Coelum ip-  
sum ruit, credo, et terram operit, Sero stratum  
Tinquo et mature repeto; in fenestris multa  
pruina prospectum absumit; et hie miser seribo,  
non currente calamo, nam digiti mentesque tor-  
pescunt. Canerem eum Horatio, si vox non  
faucibus haeserit, —  
  
   
  
‘Vids ut alta set nive eandidare  
Nawshawtuct, nee jam sustincant onus  
  
   
  
lamina constiterint acto?

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2] 0 HELEN THOREAU. a1  
Dissolve frigasligna super fo  
Largo reponens, te  
Sed olim, Musa mutata, ot lactiore pleetro,  
[Noque jam stabolis gaudet pocus, aut arator ign,  
[Nec prata canis abicant prinin;  
Jam Cytherea chores dncit Vents imminente Iona,  
  
Quam turdus ferrugineus ver reduxerit, tu,  
spero, linques curas scholasticas, et, negotio re-  
ligato, desipere in loco audebis; aut mecum in-  
ter sylvas, aut super scopulos Pulchri-Portus,  
aut in eymba super lacum Waldensem, muleens  
fluctus manu, aut speciem miratus sub undas.  
  
Bulwerius est mihi nomen incognitum,—unus  
ex ignobile valgo, nec refutandus nee Iaudandus.  
Certe alicui nonnullam honorem habeo qui in-  
sanabili cacoethe scribendi teneatur.  
  
Specie flagrantis Lexingtonis non somnia de-  
turbat? At non Vuleanum Neptunumque cul-  
emus, cum superstitioso groge. Natura curat  
animaleulis aeque ac hominibus; cum serena,  
tum procellosa, amica est.  
  
Si amas historiam et fortia facta heroum, non  
depone Rollin, precor; ne Clio offendas nune,  
nee illa det veniam olim. Quos libros Latinos  
legis? legis, inquam, non studes. Beatus qui  
potest suos libellos tractare, et saepe perlegere,  
sine metu domini urgentis! ab oti injurioso  
procul est: suos amicos et vocare et dimittere  
quandocunque velit, potest. Bonus liber opus

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32 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1810,  
  
nobilissimum hominis. Hine ratio non modo  
cur legeres, sed cur tu quoque seriberes ; neo  
lectores earent; ego sum. Si non librum medi-  
taris, libellum certe. Nihil posteris proderit te  
spirasse, et vitam nune leniter nune aspere  
egisse ; sed cogitasse praecipue et scripsisse.  
Vercor ne tibi pertaesum hujus epistolae sits  
neenon alma lux caret,  
  
Majoreaque cadunt altis do montibus umbrae.  
  
Quamobrem vale,—imo valete, et requiescatis  
placide, Sorores.  
H. D, Taoreavs.  
‘Memento seribere !  
  
Cana Sorta, — Samuel Niger erebris aegro-  
tationibus, quae agilitatem et aequum animum  
abstulere, obnoxius est; iis temporibus ad cel-  
lam descendit, et multas horas (ibi) manet.  
  
Flores, ah erudelis pruina! parvo leti diserim-  
ine sunt. Cactus frigore ustus est, gerania vero  
adhue vigent.  
  
Conventus sociabiles hac hieme reinstituti fu-  
ere. Conveniunt (?) ad meum domum mense  
quarto vel quinto, ut tu hic esse possis. Mater-  
tera Sophia cum nobis remanet; quando urbem  
revertet non scio. Gravedine etiamnum, sed  
non tam aegre, laboramus.  
  
‘Adolescentula E. White apud pagum paulis-

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a2] 10 HELEN THOREAU. 38  
  
per moratur. Memento seribere intra duas heb-  
domedas.  
‘Te valere desiderium est  
‘Tui Matris,  
C. THorsavs,  
  
   
  
P.S. Epistolam die soli  
mus. (Amanuense, I. D. T.)  
  
proxima expecta  
  
Barring a few slips, this is a good and lively  
piece of Latin, and noticeable for its thought as  
well as its learning and humor. The poets were  
evidently his favorites among Latin authors.  
Shall we attempt a free translation, such as  
‘Thoreau would give?  
  
‘VERNACULAR. VERSION.  
Conconn, January 23, 1840,  
  
Dear Sisren, —There is a huge snowdrift at  
the door, and the cold inside is intolerable. The  
very sky is coming down, I guess, and covering  
up the ground. I turn ont late in the morning,  
and go to bed early; there is thick frost on the  
windows, shutting out the view; and here I write  
in pain, for fingers and brains are numb. I  
would chant with Horace, if my voice did not  
stick in my throat, —  
  
   
  
See how Nashawtuck, deop in snow,  
Stands glittering, while Uhe bending woods

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34 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE, 080,  
  
Searee bear their burden, and the foods  
Fool arctic winter stay their flow.  
  
Pile onthe frewood, melt the eld,  
Spare nothing, ote.  
  
But soon, changing my tune, and with a cheer-  
fuller note, I'll say, —  
  
[No longer the Hock hnddles wp in the stall, the plowman Benda  
over the fire,  
  
No longer frat whitens the meadow 5  
  
But the goddem of love, while the moon shines above,  
  
Seta us dancing in light and in shadow.  
  
‘When Robin Redbreast brings back the  
springtime, I trust that you will lay your school-  
duties aside, cast off care, and venture to be gay  
now and then ; roaming with me in the woods,  
or climbing the Fairhaven cliffs,—or else, in  
my boat on Walden, let the water kiss your  
hand, or gaze at your image in the wave.  
  
Bulwer is to me a name unknown,—one of  
the unnoticed crowd, attracting neither blame  
nor praise. ‘To be sure, I hold any one in some  
esteem who is helpless in the grasp of the writ-  
ing demon,  
  
Does not the image of the Lexington afire  
trouble your dreams?! But we may not, like  
tho superstitious mob, blame Vulean or Neptune,  
—noither fire nor water was in fault, Nature  
  
4 The steamer Lexington lately burnt oo Long Island Sound,  
‘with Dr. Follen on board.

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wr. 2.) TO HELEN THOREAU. 35  
  
takes as much care for midgets as for mankind ;  
sho is our friend in storm and in calm.  
  
If you like history, and the exploits of the  
brave, don’t give up Rollin, I beg; thus would  
you displease Clio, who might not forgive you  
hereafter. What Latin are you reading? I  
mean reading, not studying. Blessed is the man  
who can have his library at hand, and oft peruse  
the books, without the fear of a taskmaster! he  
is far enough from harmful idleness, who can  
call in and dismiss these friends when he pleases.  
‘An honest book’s the noblest work of Man.  
There's a reason, now, not only for your read-  
ing, but for writing something, too. You will  
not lack readers, —here am I, for one. If you  
‘cannot compose a volume, then try a tract. It  
will do the world no good, hereafter, if you  
merely exist, and pass life smoothly or roughly ;  
but to have thoughts, and write them down, that  
helps greatly.  
  
T fear you will tire of this epistle; the light  
of day is dwindling, too, —  
  
‘And longer fall the shadows of the hill  
  
Therefore, good-by; fare ye well, and sleep  
in quiet, both my sisters! Don't forget to write.  
  
H. D. Tuorzau.

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86 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1800,  
  
POSTSCRIPT. (BY MRS. THOREAU.)  
  
Dear Sornta,— Sam Black (the cat) is liable  
to frequent attacks that impair his agility and  
good-nature ; at such times he goes down cellar,  
and stays many hours, Your flowers —O, the  
cruel frost! are all but dead; the cactus is with-  
ered by cold, but the geraniums yet flourish.  
‘The Sewing Circle has been revived this winter ;  
they meet at our house in April or May, so that  
you may then be here. Your Aunt Sophia re-  
mains with us,—when she will return to the  
city I don't know. We still suffer from heavy  
colds, but not so much. Young Miss E. White  
is staying in the village a little while (is making  
a little visit in town). Don’t forget to write  
within two weeks. We expect a letter next  
Sunday.  
  
‘That you may enjoy good health is the prayer  
of Your mother,  
  
C. Thoreau.  
  
GL D. T. was the scribe).  
  
Cats were always an important branch of the  
Thoreaus’ domestic economy, and Henry was  
more tolerant of them than men are wont to be.  
Flowers were the specialty of Sophia, who, when  
T knew her, from 1855 to 1876, usually had a  
small conservatory in a recess of the dining-

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=r2] 10 HELEN THOREAU. 87  
  
room. At this time (1840) she seems to have  
been aiding Helen in her school. ‘The next let-  
ter, to Helen, is of a graver tone: —  
  
70 HELEN THOREAU (AT ROXBURY).  
Coxconn, June 18, 140,  
  
Dean Heten, —That letter to John, for  
which you had an opportunity doubtless to sub-  
stitute a more perfect communication, fell, as  
was natural, into the hands of his “transeen-  
dental brother,” who is his proxy in such cases,  
having been commissioned to acknowledge and  
receipt all bills that may be presented. But  
what ’s in a name? Perhaps it does not matter  
whether it be John or Henry. Nor will those  
same six months have to be altered, I fear, to  
suit his case as well. But methinks they have  
not passed entirely without intercourse, provided  
we have been sincere though humble worship  
ers of the same virtue in the mean time. Cer-  
tainly it is better that we should make ourselves  
quite sure of such a communion as this by the  
only course which is completely free from suspi-  
cion,—the coincidence of two earnest and as-  
piring lives, — than run the risk of a disappoint  
ment by relying wholly or chiefly on so meagre  
and uncertain a means as speech, whether writ-  
ten or spoken, affords. How often, when we  
have been nearest each other bodily, have we

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38 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. —\_ (1840,  
  
really been farthest off! Our tongues were the  
witty foils with which we fenced each other off.  
Not that we have not met heartily and with  
profit as members of one family, but it was a  
small one surely, and not that other human fam:  
ily. We have met frankly and without conceal-  
ment ever, as befits those who have an i  
tive trust in one another, and the scenery of  
whose outward lives has been the same, but  
never as prompted by an earnest and affection.  
ate desire to probe deeper our mutual natures.  
Such intercourse, at least, if it has ever been,  
hhas not condesconded to the vulgarities of oral  
‘communication, for the ears are provided with  
no lid as the eye is, and would not have been  
deaf to it in sleep. And now glad am I, if I  
am not mistaken in imagining that some such  
transcendental inquisitiveness has traveled post  
thither, — for, as I observed before, where the  
bolt hits, thither was it aimed, — any arbitrary  
divection notwithstanding.  
  
‘Thus much, at least, our Kindred tempera-  
‘ment of mind and body —and long family-arity  
—have done for us, that we already find our-  
selves standing on a solid and natural footing  
with respect to one another, and shall not have  
to waste time in the o often unavailing endeavor  
to arrive fairly at this simple ground.  
  
Let us leave trifles, then, to accident; and

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xr. 22) TO HELEN THOREAU. 89  
  
polities, and finanee, and such gossip, to the mo-  
‘ments when diet and exercise are cared for, and  
speak to each other deliberately as out of one  
infinity into another,—you there in time and  
space, and I here. For beside this relation, all  
books and doctrines are no better than gossip or  
the tuning of a spit.  
Equally to you and Sophia, from  
Your affectionate brother,  
H. D. Tuoreav.  
  
‘We come now to the period when Thoreau  
entered on more intimate relations with Emer-  
son. There was a difference of fourteen years  
in their ages, which had hitherto separated them  
intellectually ; but now the young scholar, thinker,  
and naturalist had so fast advanced that he  
could meet his senior on more equal terms, and  
each became essential to the other. With all his  
prudence and common sense, in which he sur-  
passed most men, Emerson was yet lacking in  
some practical faculties; while Thoreau was the,  
‘most practieal and handy person in all matters  
of every-day life,—a good mechanic and gar  
doner, methodical in his habits, observant and  
kindly in the domestic world, and attractive to  
children, who now were important members of  
the Emerson household. He was therefore in-  
vited by Emerson to make his house a home, —

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40 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. fuss,  
  
looking after the garden, the business affairs,  
and performing the office of a younger brother,  
ora grown-up son. ‘The invitation was accepted  
in April, 1841, and Thoreau remained in the  
family, with frequent absences, until he went in  
May, 1843, to reside with Mr. William Emer-  
son, near New York, as the tutor of his sons.  
During these two years much occurred of deep  
moment to the two friends. Young Waldo Em.  
erson, the beautiful boy, died, and just before,  
John Thoreau, the sunny and hopeful brother,  
whom Henry seems to have loved more than any  
human being. ‘These tragedies brought the be-  
reaved nearer together, and gave to Mrs. Emer-  
son in particular an affection for Thoreau, and  
a trust in him which made the intimate life of  
the household move harmoniously, notwithstand-  
ing the independent and eccentric genius of  
‘Thoreau.  
  
‘To MRS. LUCY BROWN? (AT PLYMOUTH).  
Coxconn, July 2, 1841.  
  
\* Dear Frrenp,—Don't think I need any  
prompting to write to you; but what tough  
  
2 Mrs, Brown wan the elder sstor of Mra. R. W, Emerson  
and of the eminent chemist and geologist, Dr. Charlee. Jack-  
son, of Plymouth and Boston. She lived fora time in Mrs  
‘Thoreau's family, and Thoveas'a early verses, Sic Vita, were  
  
thrown into her window there by the young post, wrapped  
round a cluster of violet.

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=] TO MRS. LUCY BROWN. 41  
  
earthenware shall I put into my packet to travel  
over so many hills, and thrid so many woods,  
as lie between Concord and Plymouth? ‘Thank  
fortune it is all the way down hill, so they will  
get safely carried ; and yet it seems asiif it were  
writing against time and the sun to send a letter  
east, for no natural force forwards it, You  
should go dwell in the West, and then I would  
deluge you with letters, as boys throw feathers  
into the air to see the wind take them. should  
rather faney you at evening dwelling far away  
Dehind the serene curtain of the West, — tho  
home of fair weather, — than over by the chilly  
sources of the east wind.  
  
What quict thoughts have you nowadays  
which will float on that east wind to west, for  
so we may make our worst servants our car-  
riers, —what progress made from can’t to can,  
in practice and theory? Under this category,  
you remember, we used to place all our philoso-  
phy. Do you have any still, startling, well mo-  
ments, in which you think grandly, and speak  
with emphasis? Don't take this for sarcasm,  
for not in a year of the gods, I fear, will such  
a golden approach to plain speaking revolve  
again. But away with such fears; by a fow  
miles of travel we have not distanced each oth-  
er’s sincerity.  
  
I grow savager and savager every day, as if

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42 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. isa,  
  
fed on raw meat, and my tameness is only the  
repose of untamableness, I dream of looking  
abroad summer and winter, with free gaze, from  
some mountain-side, while my eyes revolve in  
an Egyptian slime of health, —I to be nature  
looking into nature with such easy sympathy as  
the blueeyed grass in the meadow looks in the  
face of the sky. From some such recess I  
would put forth sublime thoughts daily, as the  
plant puts forth leaves. Now.a-nights I go on  
to the hill to see the sun set, as one would go  
home at evening ; the bustle of the village has  
run on all day, and left me quite in the rear;  
but I see the sunset, and find that it ean wait  
for my slow virtue.  
  
But I forget that you think more of this  
human nature than of this nature I praise.  
‘Why won't you believe that mine is more human  
than any single man or woman can be? that in  
it, in the sunset there, are all the qualities that  
can adorn a household, and that sometimes, in  
a fluttering leaf, one may hear all your Chris-  
tianity preached.  
  
You see how unskillful a letter-writer I am,  
thus to have come to the end of my sheet when  
hardly arrived at the beginning of my story. I  
‘was going to be soberer, I assure you, but now  
have only room to add, that if the fates allot

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=.) TO MRS. LUCY BROWN. 43  
  
you a serene hour, don’t fail to communicate  
some of its serenity to your friend,  
Hewry D, Tnoreav.  
  
No, no. Improve so rare a gift for yourself,  
and send me of your leisure.  
  
0 MRS. LUCY nROWN (AP PLYMOUTH).  
Coxcon>, Wednesday evening,  
‘September , [1841]  
  
Dear Frtev,— Your note came wafted to  
my hand like the first leaf of the Fall on the Sep-  
tember wind, and I put only another interpreta-  
tion upon its lines than upon the veins of those  
which are soon to be strewed around me. It is  
nothing but Indian Summer here at present. I  
mean that any weather seems reserved expressly  
for our late purposes whenever we happen to be  
fulfilling them. I do not know what right I  
have to so much happiness, but rather hold it  
‘in reserve till the time of my desert.  
  
‘What with the crickets and the crowing of  
cocks, and the lowing of kine, our Concord life  
is sonorous enough. Sometimes I hear the cock  
bestir himself on his perch under my feet, and  
crow shrilly before dawn; and T think I might  
have been born any year for all the phenomena:  
T know. We count sixteen eggs daily now,  
when arithmetic will only fetch the hens up to

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44 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE, (1841,  
  
thirteen ; but the world is young, and we wait  
to see this eccentricity complete its period.  
  
‘My verses on Friendship are already printed  
in the “Dial ;” not expanded, but reduced to  
completeness by leaving out the long lines,  
which always have, or should have, a longer or  
at least another sense than short ones.  
  
Just now I am in the mid-sea of verses, and  
they actually rustle around me as the leaves  
would round the head of Autumnus himself  
should he thrust it up through some vales which  
I kmow; but, alas! many of them are but  
crisped and yellow leaves like his, I fear, and  
will deserve no better fate than to make mould  
for new harvests. I see the stanzas rise around  
me, verse upon verse, far and near, like the  
mountains from Agiocochook, not all having a  
terrestrial existence as yet, even as some of them  
may be clouds; but I fancy I see the gleam of  
some Sebago Lake and Silver Cascade, at whose  
well I may drink one day. I am as unfit for  
any practical purpose —I mean for the further-  
ance of the world’s ends — as gossamer for ship-  
timber; and I, who am going to be a pencil-  
maker to-morrow,! can sympathize with God  
Apollo, who served King Admetus for a while  
on earth, But I believe he found it for his ad-  
  
2 Thin business of pons-making had become the fanily  
  
‘read-winner, and Honry Thoreau worked at it and Kindred  
arts by intorvals for the next twenty years

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21%] 70 MRS. LUCY BROWN. 45,  
  
vantage at last, —as Iam sure I shall, though  
I shall hold the nobler part at least out of the  
service.  
  
Don’t attach any undue seriousness to this  
threnody, for I love my fate to the very core  
and rind, and could swallow it without paring  
it, I think. You ask if I have written any more  
poems? Excepting those which Vulean is now  
forging, I have only discharged a few more bolts  
into the horizon, — in all, three hundred verses,  
—and sent them, as I may say, over the moun-  
tains to Miss Fuller, who may have occasion to  
remember the old rhyme :—  
  
“Thee acipen goda  
  
CComen mid than lade  
  
"Throo hundred enihtan.”  
But these are far more Vandalic than they. In  
this narrow sheet there is not room even for one  
thought to root itself. But you must consider  
this an odd leaf of a volume, and that volume  
  
Your friend,  
Henry D, Tnorgav.  
  
‘To MRS. LUCY BRowN (AT PLYMOUTH).  
Conconn, October 5, 1841  
  
‘Dear Farexn, —I send you Williams's \* let-  
  
ter as the last remembrancer to one of those  
  
“whose acquaintance he had the pleasure to  
  
1 1. Williams, who had lived in Concord, bat now wrote  
from Buffalo, N. ¥.

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46 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE, su,  
  
form while in Concord.” It came quite unex-  
pectedly to me, but I was very glad to receive  
it, though I hardly know whether my utmost  
sincerity and interest can inspire a sufficient  
answer to it. I should like to have you send it  
back by some convenient opportunity.  
  
Pray let me know what you are thinking  
about any day,—what most nearly concerns  
you. Last winter, you know, you did more than.  
your share of the talking, and I did not com-  
plain for want of an opportunity. Imagine  
your stove-door out of order, at least, and then  
while I am fixing it you will think of enough  
things to say.  
  
‘What makes the value of your life at pres-  
ent? what dreams have you, and what realiza-  
tions? You know there is a high tableland  
which not even the east wind reaches. Now  
can’t we walk and chat upon its plane still, as if  
there were no lower latitudes? Surely our two  
destinies are topies interesting and grand enough  
for any occasion.  
  
I hope you have many gleams of serenity and  
health, or, if your body will grant you no posi-  
tive respite, that you may, at any rate, enjoy  
your sickness occasionally, as much as I used to  
tell of. But here is the bundle going to be  
done up, s0 accept a “ good-night ” from  
  
Henry D. Tuoxeav.

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ar.) TO MRS. LUCY BROWN. aT  
  
‘To Ms, Lucy Brown (aT PLYMOUTH).  
Concono, March 2, 1842  
  
Dear Frienp,— I believe I have nothing  
new to tell you, for what was news you have  
learned from other sources. I am much the  
same person that I was, who should be so much  
better; yet) when T realize what has transpired,  
and the greatness of the part I am unconsciously  
acting, I am thrilled, and it seems as if there  
were none in history to match it.  
  
‘Soon after John’s death I listened to a music-  
box, and if, at any time, that event had seemed  
inconsistent with the beauty and harmony of the  
universe, it was then gently constrained into the  
placid course of nature by those steady notes, in  
mild and unoffended tone echoing far and wide  
under the heavens. But I find these things  
more strange than sad to me. What right have  
I to grieve, who have not ceased to wonder?  
We feel at first as if some opportunities of kind-  
ness and sympathy were lost, but learn after-  
ward that any pure grief is ample recompense  
for all. That is, if we are faithful; for a great  
grief is but sympathy with the soul that dis  
poses events, and is as natural as the resin on  
Arabian trees. Only Nature has a right to  
grieve perpetually, for she only is innocent.  
Soon the ice will melt, and the blackbirds sing

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48 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE, (164,  
  
along the river which he frequented, as pleas-  
antly as ever. The same everlasting serenity  
will appear in this face of God, and we will not  
be sorrowful if he is not.  
  
‘We are made happy when reason can discover  
no occasion for it. The memory of some past  
moments is more persuasive than the experience  
of present ones. There have been visions of  
such breadth and brightness that these motes  
were invisible in their light.  
  
T do not wish to see John ever again, —I mean  
him who is dead,— but that other, whom only  
he would have wished to see, or to be, of whom  
he was the imperfect representative. For we are  
not what we are, nor do we treat or esteem each  
other for such, but for what we are capable of  
being.  
  
As for Waldo, he died as the mist rises from  
the brook, which the sun will soon dart his rays  
through. Do not the flowers die every autumn ?  
He had not even taken root here. I was not  
startled to hear that he was dead ; it seemed the  
most natural event that could happen. His fine  
organization demanded it, and nature gently  
yielded its request. Tt would have been strange  
if he had lived. Neither will nature manifest  
any sorrow at his death, but soon the note of the  
lark will be heard down in the meadow, and  
fresh dandelions will spring from the old stocks  
where he plucked them last summer.

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2.25] TO MRS. LUCY BROWN. 49  
  
T have been living ill of late, but am now  
doing better. How do you live in that Plymouth  
world, nowadays?! Please remember me to  
Mary Russell. You must not blame me if I do  
talk to the clouds, for I remain  
  
‘Your friend,  
Henry D. Tnorzav.  
  
70 MES. LUCY BROWN (AT PLYMOUTH).  
Coxcono, January 24, 1948,  
  
Dear Frtenp,— The other day I wrote you  
  
a ketter to go in Mrs. Emerson’s bundle, but, as  
  
1 Mrs. Brown, to whom this letor and several others of the  
years 1841-43 were written, lived by turns in Plymouth, ber  
native place, and in Concord, where she often visited Mra  
Emerton at the time when Thoreau wat an inmate of the  
Emerson houschold. In the oaely part of 1843 sho was in  
Plymouth, and her sister was sending her nowspapers and  
‘other things, from time to time. ‘The incidont of tho music-  
‘bor, mentioned above, occurred at the Old Manse, where Haw-  
‘home was living fom the summer of 1842 until the spring of  
1845, and was often visited by Thoreau and Ellery Channing.  
In the lotter following, this incident is recalled, and with it  
the agreeable gift by Richard Fuller (a younger brother of  
Margaret Fuller and of Ellen, the wife of Hllery Channing,  
‘who came to reside in Concord about these years, and aoon  
Deeame Thoreau’ mowt intimate friend), which waa w music.  
Yor for the Thoreaus. ‘They were all fond of musi and  
‘enjoyed it even inthis mechanical form,— one evidence of the  
simple conditions of life in Concord then. ‘The noto of thanks  
‘to young Fuller, who had been, perhaps, a pupil of Thoreau,  
follows this letter to Mrs. Brown, though carlicr in date. Mary  
Rowell afterwards became Mra. Marston Watson,

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50 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (183,  
  
it seemed unworthy, I did not send it, and now,  
to atone for that, I'am going to send this, whether  
it be worthy or not. I will not venture upon  
news, for, as all the household are gone to bed,  
T cannot learn what has boon told you. Do you  
read any noble verses nowadays? or do not verses  
still seem noble? For my own part, they have  
‘been the only things I remembered, or that  
which occasioned them, when all things else  
were blurred and defaced. All things have put  
on mourning but they; for the elegy itself is  
some victorious melody or joy escaping from the  
wreck.  
  
It is a relief to read some true book, wherein  
all are equally dead,—equally alive. I think  
the best parts of Shakespeare would only be  
enhanced by the most thrilling and affecting  
events. Ihave found it so, And so much the  
more, as they are not intended for consolation.  
  
‘Do you think of coming to Concord again? I  
shall be glad to see you. I should be glad to  
know that I could see you when I would.  
  
‘We always seem to be living just on the brink  
of a pure and lofty intercourse, which would  
make the ills and trivialness of life ridiculous.  
‘After each little interval, though it be but for  
the night, we are prepared to meet each other as  
gods and goddesses.  
  
T sccm to have dodged all my days with one

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a1] TO MRS. LUCY BROWN. BL  
  
‘or two persons, and lived upon expectation, —as  
if the bud would surely blossom; and so I am  
content to live.  
  
‘What means the fact, — which is so common,  
so universal, —that some soul that has lost all  
hope for itself can inspire in another listening  
soul an infinite confidence in it, even while it is  
expressing its despair ?  
  
T am very happy in my present environment,  
though actually mean enough myself, and so, of  
course, all around me; yet, Lam sure, we for the  
‘most part are transfigured to one another, and are  
that to the other which we aspire to be ourselves.  
‘The longest course of mean and trivial intereourso  
may not prevent my practicing this divine cour.  
tesy to my companion. Notwithstanding all I  
hear about brooms, and scouring, and taxes, and  
housekeeping, I am constrained to livea strangely  
mixed life, —as if even Valhalla might have its  
kitchen. We are all of us Apollos serving some  
Admetus.  
  
T think I must have some Muses in my pay  
that I know not of, for certain musical wishes of  
mine are answered as soon as entertained. Last  
summer I went to Hawthorne's suddenly for the  
express purpose of borrowing his musie-box, and  
almost immediately Mrs. Hawthorne proposed to  
Tend it to me. ‘The other day I said I must go  
to Mrs. Barrett's to hear hers, and, lo! straight

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2 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 1889,  
  
way Richard Fuller sent me one for a present  
from Cambridge. It is a very good one, I  
should like to have you hear it. I shall not  
have to employ you to borrow for mo now.  
Goodnight.  
‘From your affectionate friend,  
H.D.T.  
  
30 RICHARD ¥. FULLER (ar CAMBRIDGE).  
Coxconn, January 16, 148  
  
Dear Rrowarp,—I need not thank you for  
your present, for I hear ite musie, which seems  
to be playing just for us two pilgrims marching  
over hill and dale of a summer afternoon, up  
those long Bolton hills and by those bright Har-  
vard lakes, such as I see in the placid Lucerne  
‘on the lid; and whenever I hear it, it will recall  
happy hours passed with its donor.  
  
When did mankind make that foray into na-  
ture and bring off this booty? For cortainly it  
is but history that some rare virtue in remote  
times plundered these strains from above and  
‘communicated them to men, Whatever we may  
think of it, it is a part of the harmony of the  
spheres you have sent mo; which has conde-  
scended to serve us Admetuses, and I hope I  
‘may so behave that this may always be the tenor  
of your thought for me.  
  
If you have any strains, the conquest of your

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a.%] TO MRS. LUCY BROWN. 53  
  
own spear or quill, to accompany these, let the  
winds waft them also to me.  
  
I write this with one of the “primaries” of  
my osprey’s wings, which I have preserved over  
my glass for some state occasion, and now it  
offers.  
  
‘Mrs. Emerson sends her love.  
  
70 wns. LUCY BROWN (AT PLYMOUTH).  
Concono, Friday evening,  
anuary 25, 184%.  
  
Dear Fatenp, — Mrs. Emerson asks me to  
write you a letter, which she will put into her  
bundle to-morrow along with the “‘Tribunes” and  
“Standards,” and miscellanies, and what not, to  
make an assortment. But what shall I write?  
You live a good way off, and I don’t know that  
I have anything which will bear sending so far.  
But Iam mistaken, or rather impatient when I  
say this, —for we all have a gift to send, not  
only when the year begins, but as long as inter-  
est and memory last. I don’t know whether you  
have got the many I have sent you, or rather  
whether you were quite sure where they came  
from. I mean the letters I have sometimes  
launched off eastward in my thought; but if  
you have been happier at one time than another,  
think that then you received them. But this  
that I now send you is of another sort. It will

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54 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 549,  
  
go slowly, drawn by horses over muddy roads,  
and lose much of its little value by the way.  
You may have to pay for it, and it may not  
make you happy after all. But what shall be  
my new-year’s gift, then? Why, I will send  
you my still fresh remembranee of the hours I  
have passed with you here, for I find in the re-  
membrance of them the best gift you have left  
tome. We are poor and sick creatures at best  
but we can have well memories, and sound and  
healthy thoughts of one another still, and an in-  
tercourse may be remembered which was without  
blur, and above us both.  
  
Perhaps you may like to know of my estate  
nowadays. As usual, I find it harder to account,  
for the happiness I enjoy, than for the sadness  
which instructs me occasionally. If the little of  
this last which visits me would only be sadder,  
it would be happier. One while I am vexed by  
‘a sense of meanness ; one while I simply wonder  
at the mystery of life; and at another, and at  
another, seem to rest on my oars, as if propelled  
by propitious breezes from I know not what  
quarter. But for the most part I am an idle,  
inefficient, lingering (one term will do as well  
as another, where all are true and none true  
enough) member of the great commonwealth,  
who have most need of my own charity, —if I  
could not be charitable and indulgent to myself,

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a7.%.) TO MRS. LUCY BROWN. 55  
  
perhaps as good a subject for my own satire as  
any. You see how, when I come to talk of my-  
self, I soon run dry, for I would fain make that  
‘@ subject which can be no subject for me, at  
least not till I have the grace to rule myself.  
  
T do not venture to say anything about your  
griefs, for it would be unnatural for me to speak:  
as if I grieved with you, when I think I do not.  
Tf I were to see you, it might be otherwise. But  
I know you will pardon the trivialness of this  
letter; and I only hope—as I know that you  
have reason to be so—that you are still happier  
than you are sad, and that you remember that  
the smallest seed of faith is of more worth than  
the largest fruit of happiness. I have no doubt  
that out of S—’s death you sometimes draw  
sweet consolation, not only for that, but for  
long-standing griefs, and may find some things  
made smooth by it, which before were rough.  
  
T wish you would communicate with me, and  
not think me unworthy to know any of your  
thoughts. Don’t think me unkind because I  
have not written to you. I confess it was for so  
oor a reason as that you almost made a princi-  
ple of not answering. I could not speak truly  
with this ugly fact in the way; and perhaps I  
wished to be assured, by such evidence as you  
could not voluntarily give, that it was a kind-  
ness, For every glance at the moon, does sho

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56 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1848,  
  
not send me an answering ray? Noah would  
hardly have done himself the pleasure to release  
his dove, if she had not been about to come back  
to him with tidings of green islands amid the  
waste,  
  
But these are far-fetched reasons. I am not  
speaking directly enough to yourself now ; so let  
me say directly  
  
From your friend,  
Henry D. Tuoreav.  
  
Exactly when correspondence began between  
Emerson and Thoreau is not now to be ascer-  
tained, since all the letters do not soem to have  
been preserved. Their acquaintance opened  
while Thoreau was in college, although Emer-  
son may have seen the studious boy at the town  
school in Concord, or at the “Academy” there,  
while fitting for college. But they only came to  
know each other as sharers of the same thoughts  
‘and aspirations in the autumn of 1837, when, on  
hearing a new lecture of Emerson’s, Helen Tho-  
reau said to Mrs. Brown, then living or visiting  
in the Thoreau family, “Hemy has a thought  
very like that in his journal” (which he had  
newly begun to keep). Mrs. Brown desired to  
see the passage, and soon bore it to her sister,  
Mrs. Emerson, whose husband saw it, and asked  
Mrs. Brown to bring her young friend to see

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r.25.] THOREAU AND EMERSON. 81  
  
him. By 1838 their new relation of respect was,  
established, and Emerson wrote to a correspond-  
ent, “I delight much in my young friend, who  
seems to have as free and erect a mind as any I  
have ever met.” A year later (Aug. 9, 1839), he  
wrote to Carlyle, “I have a young poet in this  
village, named Thoreau, who writes the truest  
verses.” Indeed, it was in the years 1839-40  
that he seems to have written the poems by which  
he is best remembered. Thoreau told me in his  
last illness that he had written many verses and  
destroyed many,— this fact he then regretted,  
although he had done it at the instance of Em-  
exson, who did not praise them. But, said he,  
“they may have been better than we thought  
them, twenty years ago.”  
  
‘The earliest note which I find from Emerson”  
to Thoreau bears no date, but must have been  
written before 1842, for at no later time could  
the persons named in it have visited Concord  
together. Most likely it was in the summer of  
1840, and to the same date do I assign a note  
asking Henry to join the Emersons in a party  
to the Cliffs (scopuli Pulehri-Portus), and to  
bring his flute, — for on that pastoral reed Tho-  
reau played sweetly. The first series of letters  
from Thoreau to Emerson begins early in 1843,  
about the time the letters just given were writ-  
ten to Mrs. Brown, In the first he gives thanks

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58 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. \_{1888,  
  
to Emerson for the hospitality of his house in  
the two preceding years; a theme to which he  
returned a few months later, — for I doubt not  
the lovely sad poem called “The Departure”  
was written at Staten Island soon after his leav-  
ing the Emerson house in Concord for the more  
stately but less congenial residence of William  
Emerson at Staten Island, whither he betook  
himself in May, 1843. This first letter, how-  
ever, was sent from the Coneord home to Waldo  
Emerson at Staten Island, or perhaps in New  
York, where he was that winter giving a course  
of lectures.  
  
Tn- explanation of the passages concerning  
Bronson Alcott, in this letter, it should be said  
that he was then living at the Hosmer Cottage,  
in Concord, with his English friends, Charles  
Lane and Henry Wright, and that he had re-  
fused to pay a tax in support of what he consid-  
ered an unjust government, and was arrested by  
the constable, Sam Staples, in consequence.  
  
10 B. W. EMERSON (AT NEW YORK).  
Coxcons January 24, 1843.  
  
Dear Frrzxp,— The best way to correct a  
  
mistake is to make it right. I had not spoken  
  
of writing to you, but as you say you are about  
  
to write to me when you get my letter, I make  
  
haste on my part in order to got yours the sooner.

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1.35] TO R. W. EMERSON. cs)  
  
I don’t well know what to say to earn the forth-  
coming epistle, unless that Edith takes rapid  
strides in the arts and sciences—or music and  
natural history—as well as over the carpet;  
that she says “ papa” less and less abstractedly  
every day, looking in my face,—which may  
sound like a Rane des Vaches to yourself. And  
Ellen declares every morning that “papa may  
come home to-night ;” and by and by it will  
have changed to such positive statement as that  
‘papa came home Zarks night.”  
  
Elizabeth Hoar still fits about these clearings,  
and I meet her here and there, and in all houses  
‘but her own, but as if I were not the less of her  
family for all that. T have made slight acquaint  
ance also with one Mrs. Lidian Emerson, who  
almost persuades me to be a Christian, but I  
fear I as often lapse into heathenism. Mr.  
O'Sullivan? was here thtee days. I met him at  
the Atheneum [Concord], and went to Haw-  
thorne’s [at the Old Manse] to tea with him.  
He expressed a great deal of interest in your  
poems, and wished me to give him a list of  
them, which I did; he saying he did not know  
but he should notice them. He is a rather puny-  
looking man, and did not strike me, We had  
nothing to say to one another, and therefore we  
  
   
  
2 Biitor of the Democratic Review, for which Hawthorne,  
Emerson, Thoreau, and Whittier all wrote, more or less

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60 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (188,  
  
said a great deal! He, however, made a point  
of asking me to write for his Review, which I  
shall be glad to do. He is, at any rate, one of  
the not-bad, but does not by any means take you  
by storm, —no, nor by calm, which is the best  
way. He expects to see you in New York. After  
tea I carried him and Hawthorne to the Lyceum.  
  
‘Mr. Aleott has not altered much since you  
Jeft. I think you will find him much the same  
sort of person. With Mr. Lane I have had one  
regular chat i Ja George Minott, which of course  
was greatly to our mutual grati- and edification ;  
and, as two or three as regular conversations  
have taken place since, I fear there may have  
been a precession of the equinoxes. Mr. Wright,  
according to the last accounts, is in Lynn, with  
uncertain aims and prospects, — maturing slowly,  
perhaps, as indeed are all of us. I suppose they  
have told you how near Mr. Aleott went to the  
jail, but I can add a good anecdote to the rest.  
‘When Staples came to collect Mrs. Ward’s taxes,  
my sister Helen asked him what he thought Mr.  
Alcott meant,— what his idea was,—and he  
answered, “I vum, I believe it was nothing but  
principle, for I never heerd a man talk hon-  
ester.”  
  
There was a lecture on Peace by a Mr. Spear  
ought he not to be beaten into a ploughshare?),  
the same evening, and, as the gentlemen, Lane

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a3) TO R. W. EMERSON. 61  
  
and Alcott, dined at our house while the matter  
was in suspense, — that is, while the constable  
was waiting for his receipt from the jailer, —  
we there settled it that we, that is, Lane and  
myself, perhaps, should agitate the State while  
Winkelried lay in durance. But when, over the  
audience, I saw our hero's head moving in the  
free air of the Universalist church, my fire all  
went out, and the State was safe as far as I was  
concerned. But Lane, it seems, had cogitated  
and even written on the matter, in the afternoon,  
and s0, out of courtesy, taking his point of de-  
parture from the Spear-man’s lecture, he drove  
gracefully in medias ree, and gave tho affair a  
very good setting out ; but, to spoil all, our mar-  
tyr very characteristically, but, as artists would  
say, in bad taste, brought up the rear with  
“My Prisons,” which made us forget Silvio  
Pellico himself.  
  
‘Mr. Lane wishes me to ask you to see if there  
is anything for him in the New York office, and  
pay the charges. Will you tell me what to do  
with Mr. [Theodore] Parker, who was to lecture  
February 15th? Mrs. Emerson says my letter  
is written instead of one from her.  
  
At the end of this strange letter I will not  
‘write — what alone I had to say —to thank you  
and Mrs, Emerson for your long kindness to me.  
It would be more ungrateful than my constant

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62 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1845,  
  
thought. I have been your pensioner for nearly  
two years, and still left free as under the sky.  
It has been as free a gift as the sun or the sum-  
‘mer, though I have sometimes molested you with  
‘my mean acceptance of it, —I who have failed  
to render even those slight services of the hand  
which would have been for a sign at least ; and,  
by the fault of my nature, have failed of many  
‘better and higher services. But I will not trou-  
ble you with this, but for once thank you as well  
‘as Heaven.  
‘Your friend, H.D.T.  
  
‘Mrs. Lidian Emerson, the wife of R. W. Em-  
erson, and her two danghters, Ellen and Edith,  
are named in this first letter, and will be fre-  
quently mentioned in the correspondence. At  
this date, Edith, now Mrs. W. H. Forbes, was  
fourteen months old. Mr. Emerson’s mother,  
Madam Ruth Emerson, was also one of the  
household, which had for a little more than  
seven years occupied the welldmown house un-  
der the trees, east of the village.  
  
30 RW. EMERSON (AT NEW YORK).  
Conconn, Febraary 10, 1845.  
  
Dear Frienp,—I have stolen one of your  
  
own sheets to write you a letter upon, and I  
  
hope, with two layers of ink, to turn it into a

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ar) TO R. W. EMERSON. 68  
  
comforter. If you like to receive a letter from  
me, too, Iam glad, for it gives me pleasure to  
write, But don’t let it come amiss; it must  
fall as harmlessly as leaves settle on the land-  
scape. I will tell you what we are doing this  
now. Supper is done, and Edith — the dessert,  
perhaps more than the dessert — is brought in,  
or even comes in per se; and round she goes,  
now to this altar, and then to that, with her  
monosyllabic invocation of “oe,” “oe.” Tt  
makes me think of “ Langue d’oc.” She must  
belong to that province. And like the gypsies  
she talks a language of her own while she un-  
derstands ours. While she jabbers Sanserit,  
Parsee, Pehlvi, say “ Edith go bah!” and bah”  
it is. No intelligence passes between us. She  
Imows. It is a capital joke, — that is the reason  
she smiles so. How well the secret is kept! she  
never descends to explanation. It is not buried  
like a common secret, bolstered up on two sides,  
but by an eternal silence on the one side, at  
least, Tt has been long kept, and comes in from  
the unexplored horizon, like a blue mountain  
range, to end abruptly at our door one day.  
Don't stumble at this steep simile.) And now  
she studies the heights and depths of nature  
(On shoulders whirled in some econtrie orbit  
  
ust by old Prestum’s tomples and the perch  
‘Where Time doth plume his wings.

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64 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 1983,  
  
And now she runs the race over the carpet, while  
all Olympia applauds, — mamma, grandma, and  
uncle, good Grecians all, —and that dark-hued  
barbarian, Partheanna Parker, whose shafts go  
through and through, not backward! Grand.  
mamma smiles over all, and mamma is wonder-  
ing what papa would say, should she descend on  
Carlton House some day. ‘Larks night” ’s  
abed, dreaming of “pleased faces” far away.  
But now the trumpet sounds, the games are  
over; some Hebe comes, and Edith is trans-  
lated. I don’t know where ; it must be to some  
cloud, for I never was there.  
  
Query: what becomes of the answers Edith  
thinks, but cannot express? She really gives  
you glances which are before this world was.  
You ean’t feel any difference of age, except that  
you have longer legs and arms.  
  
‘Mrs. Emerson said I must tell you about do-  
mestic affairs, when I mentioned that I was going  
to write. Perhaps it will inform you of the state  
of all if I only say that I am well and happy  
in your house here in Concord.  
  
Your friend, Henry.  
  
Don't forget to tell us what to do with Mr.  
Parker when you write next. I lectured this  
week. It was as bright a night as you could  
wish. I hope there were no stars thrown away  
‘on the occasion.

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wr. 25.) TO R. W. EMERSON. 65  
  
[A part of the same letter, though bearing  
a date two days later, and written in a wholly  
different style, as from one sage to another, is  
this postseript.]  
  
February 12,1843.  
  
Dear Frienp,—As the packet still tarries,  
I will send you some thoughts, which I have  
lately relearned, as the latest public and private  
news.  
  
How mean are our relations to one another!  
‘Let us pause till they are nobler. A little silence,  
a little rest, is good. It would be sufficient em-  
ployment only to cultivate true ones.  
  
‘The richest gifts we can bestow are the least  
marketable. We hate the kindness which we  
understand. A noble person confers no such  
gift as his whole confidence: none so exalts the  
giver and the receiver; it produces the truest  
gratitude. Perhaps it is only essential to friend-  
ship that some vital trust should have been re-  
posed by the one in tho other. I feel addressed  
and probed even to the remote parts of my being  
when one nobly shows, even in trivial things, an  
implicit faith in me. When such divine com-  
modities are so near and cheap, how strange that  
it should have to be each day's discovery! A  
threat or a curse may be forgotten, but this mild  
trust translates me, I am no more of this earth ;

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66 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ts,  
  
it acts dynamically ; it changes my very sub-  
stance. I cannot do what before I did. T can-  
not be what before I was. Other chains may  
bo broken, but in the darkest night, in the re-  
motest place, I trail this thread. ‘Then things  
cannot happen. What if God were to confide  
in us for a moment! Should we not then be  
gods?  
  
How subtle a thing is this confidence! No-  
thing sensible passes between ; never any conse-  
quences are to be apprehended should it be mis-  
placed. Yet something has transpired. A new  
behavior springs; the ship carries new ballast  
in her hold. A sufficiently great and generous  
trust could never be abused. It should bo canse  
to lay down one’s life,—which would not be to  
lose it. Can there be any mistake up there?  
Don’t the gods know where to invest their  
wealth? Such confidence, too, would be recip-  
rocal. When one confides greatly in you, he  
will feel the roots of an equal trust fastening  
themselves in him. When such trust has been  
received or reposed, we dare not speak, hardly  
to see each other; our voices sound harsh and  
untrustworthy. We are as instruments which  
the Powers have dealt with. Through what  
straits would we not carry this little burden of  
a magnanimous trust! Yet no harm could pos-  
sibly come, but simply faithlessmess. Not a

Page-9574

ar. 05.) TO R. W. EMERSON. 67  
  
feather, not a straw, is intrusted ; that packet  
is empty. It is only committed to us, and, as it  
were, all things are committed to us.  
  
‘The kindness I have longest remembered has  
been of this sort, — the sort unsaid; so far be-  
hind the speaker's lips that almost it already  
lay in my heart. It did not have far to go to  
be communicated. The gods eannot misunder-  
stand, man cannot explain. We communicate  
like the burrows of foxes, in silence and dark-  
ness, under ground. We are undermined by  
faith and love. How much more full is Nature  
where we think the empty space is than where  
we place the solids! —full of fluid influences,  
Should we ever communicate but by these? The  
spirit abhors a vacuum more than Nature.  
‘There is a tide which pierces the pores of the  
air. These aerial rivers, let us not pollute their  
currents. What meadows do they course  
through? How many fine mails there are  
which traverse their routes! He is privileged  
who gets his letter franked by them.  
  
T believe these things.  
  
Heyry D. Troreav.  
  
Emerson replied to these letters in two epis-  
tes of dates from February 4 to 12, 1843, —  
in the latter asking Thoreau to aid him in edit-  
ing the April number of the “Dial,” of which

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68 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. L883,  
  
he had taken charge. Among other things,  
Emerson desired a manuscript of Charles Lane,  
Aleott’s English friend, to be sent to him in  
New York, where he was detained several weeks  
by his lectures. He added: “Have we no  
news from Whecler? Has Bartlett none?”  
OF these persons, the first, Charles Stearns  
Wheeler, a college classmate of Thoreau, and  
later Greck tutor in the college, had gone to  
Germany, —where he died the next summer, —  
and was contributing to the quarterly “ Dial.”  
Robert Bartlett, of Plymouth, a townsman of  
‘Mrs. Emerson, was Wheeler's intimate friend,  
with whom he corresponded. To this editorial  
  
} An interesting fact in connection with Thoreau and  
Wheeler (whovo home was in Lincoln, four miles southeast of  
Concord) is related by Ellery Channing in a uote to mo. Tt  
seems that Wheeler had boilt for himself, or hired from a  
farmer, a rough woodland study near Flint's Pond, half way  
from Lincoln to Concord, which he occupied fora short time  
in 1841-42, and where Thoreau and Channing visited him.  
(Mr. Channing wrote me in 1883: “Stearas Wheeler built  
‘shanty "on Flint’s Pond for the purpose of economy, for par  
chasing Grook books and going abroad to study. Whether  
Mr. Thoreau asited him to build this shanty I cannot say,  
Dut I think he may have; algo that he spent six weeks with  
a  
  
tive to follow the example of others, if good to him, itis very  
probable this undertaking of Stearns Wheeler, whom he re-  
‘garded (a8 I think I have heand him aay) heroie character,  
suggested hia own experiment on Walden. I believe I visited  
‘this shanty with Mr. Thoresa. It was very plain, with banks  
of straw, and builtin tho Trish manner. I think Mr. Wheeler

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a.) TO R. W. EMERSON. 69  
  
request Thoreau, who was punctuality itself, ro-  
plied at once.  
  
‘TO R. W. EMERSON (AT NEW YORK).  
Concono, Fobraary 15, 1843,  
  
‘My pear Farenp, —I got your letters, one  
yesterday and the other today, and they have  
made me quite happy. As a packet is to go in  
the morning, I will give you a hasty account of  
the “Dial.” I called on Mr. Lane this after-  
noon, and brought away, together with an abun-  
dance of good-will, first, a bulky catalogue of  
‘books without commentary, — some eight hun-  
dred, I think he told me, with an introduction  
filling one sheet, —ten or a dozen pages, say,  
though I have only glanced at them; second,  
  
swat aa good a mechani as Mr. Thorean, and built this shanty  
forhis own use. Tho object of these two experiments was  
‘quite unlike, excopt in the common purpose of economy, Tt  
seoms to me highly probable that Mz. Wheeler's experiment  
suggested Mr. Thoreau’s, as ho was a man he almost wor:  
shiped. But [could not understand what relation Mr. Low-  
‘ell had to this fact, if it bo one. Students, in all parts of the  
‘arth, have parsued a similar course from matives of economy,  
and to carry out somo special atudy. Mz, Thorean wished to  
study birds, flowers, and the stone ago, just at Mr. Wheeler  
wished to study Grock. And Mr. Hotham came next from  
just the same motivo of economy (necessity) and to study the  
Bible. The prudential sides of all throe were the same.”  
Mz, Hotham was the young theslogical student who dwelt in  
‘cabin by Walden in 1860-70.

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70 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 848,  
  
a review — twenty-five or thirty printed pages  
—of Conversations on the Gospels, Record of  
a School, and Spiritual Culture, with rather  
copious extracts. However, it is a good sub-  
ject, and Lane says it gives him satisfaction.  
I will give ita faithful reading directly. [These  
were Alcott’s publications, reviewed by Lane.]  
And now I come to the little end of the horn;  
for myself, I have brought along the Minor  
Greek Poets, and will mine there for a serap or  
two, at least. As for Etzler, I don’t remember  
any “ rude and snappish speech ” that you made,  
and if you did it must have been longer than  
anything I had written; however, here is the  
book still, and I will try. Perhaps T have some  
few scraps in my Journal which you may choose  
to print. ‘The translation of the Aischylus I  
should like very well to continue anon, if it  
should be worth the while. As for poetry, I  
have not remembered to write any for some  
time; it has quite slipped my mind; but some-  
times I think I hear the mutterings of the thun-  
der. Don’t you remember that last summer we  
heard a low, tremulous sound in the woods and  
over the hills, and thought it was partridges or  
rocks, and it proved to be thunder gone down  
the river? But sometimes it was over Wayland  
way, and at last burst over our heads. So we'll  
not despair by reason of the drought. You see

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er, 25.) TO R. W. EMERSON. ma  
  
it takes a good many words to supply the place  
of one deed ; a hundred lines toa cobweb, and  
but one cable to a man-of.war. The “ Dial”  
cease needs to be reformed in many particulars.  
‘There is no news from Wheeler, none from  
Bartlett.  
  
‘They all look well and happy in this house,  
where it gives me much pleasure to dwell.  
  
‘Yours in haste, Hever.  
  
PS.  
Wednesday evening, Febraary 16.  
  
‘Dear Frtexp, — I have time to write a fow  
words about the “Dial.” I have just received  
the three first signatures, which do not yet com-  
plete Lane’s piece. He will place five hundred  
copies for sale at Munzoe’s bookstore. Wheeler  
has sent you two full sheets — more about the  
German universities — and proper names, which  
will have to be printed in alphabetical order for  
convenience; what this one has done, that one  
is doing, and the other intends to do. Ham-  
mer-Purgstall (Von Hammer) may be one, for  
aught I kmow. However, there are two or  
three things in it, as well as names. One of  
the books of Herodotus is discovered to be out  
of place. He says something about having sent  
to Lowell, by the last steamer, a budget of lit.  
erary news, which he will have communicated to

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2 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (843,  
  
you ere this. Mr. Alcott has a letter from He.  
rand,‘ and a book written by him,—the Life  
of Savonarola,— which he wishes to have re  
published here. Mr. Lane will write a notice  
of it. (The latter says that what is in the New  
‘York post-office may be directed to Mr. Alcott.)  
‘Miss [Elizabeth] Peabody has sent a “ Notice  
to the readers of the ‘Dial,’” which is not  
good.  
  
‘Mr. Chapin lectured this evening, and so  
rhetorically that I forgot my duty and heard  
very little. I find myself better than I have  
been, and am meditating some other method of  
paying debts than by lectures and writing, —  
which will only do to talk about. If anything  
of that “other” sort should come to your ears  
in New York, will you remember it for me?  
  
‘Excuse this scrawl, which I have written over  
the embers in the dining-room, I hope that you  
live on good terms with yourself and the gods.  
  
‘Yours in haste, Henry.  
  
   
  
‘Mr. Lane and his lucubrations proved to be  
tough subjects, and the next letter has more to  
say about them and the “Dial.” Lane had  
undertaken to do justice to Mr. Aleott and his  
‘books, as may still be read in the pages of that  
  
1 An Knglish critic and poetaster. Soe Memoir of Bronson  
Alea, pp. 22-318.

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er 25) 70 R. W. EMERSON. 3  
  
April number of the Transeendentalist quar-  
terly.  
  
‘70 Re W. EMERSON (AT NEW YORK).  
Coxcono, February 2, 1843.  
  
Mr pear Friexp, —I have read Mr. Lane's  
review, and can say, speaking for this world and  
for fallen man, that “it is good for us.” As  
they say in geology, time never fails, there is  
always enough of it, so I may say, criticism  
nover fails; but if I go and read elsewhere, T  
say it is good, — far better than any notice Mr.  
Alcott has received, or is likely to receive from  
another quarter. It is at any rate “the other  
side,” which Boston needs to hear. I do not  
send it to you, because time is precious, and  
because I think you would accept it, after all.  
After speaking briefly of the fate of Goothe  
and Carlyle in their own countries, he says,  
“To Emerson in his own circle is but slowly  
accorded a worthy response ; and Aleott, al-  
most utterly neglected,” ete. I will strike out  
what relates to yourself, and correcting somo  
verbal faults, send the rest to the printer with  
‘Lane's initials.  
  
‘The catalogue needs amendment, I think. It  
wants completeness now. It should consist of  
such books only as they would tell Mr. [F. H.]  
Hedge and [Theodore] Parker they had got

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4 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 1883,  
  
omitting the Bible, the classies, and much be-  
sides, —for there the incompleteness begins.  
But you will be here in season for this.  
  
It is frequently easy to make Mr. Lane more  
universal and attractive; to write, for instance,  
“universal ends” instead of “the universal  
end,” just as we pull open the petals of a flower  
with our fingers where they are confined by its  
own sweets. Also he had better not say “ books  
designed for the nucleus of a Home University,”  
until he makes that word “home” ring solid  
and universal too, This is that abominable dia-  
lect. He had just given me a notice of George  
Bradford’s Fénelon for the Record of the  
Months, and speaks of extras of the Review and  
Catalogue, if they are printed, — even a hun-  
dred, or thereabouts. How shall this be ar-  
ranged? Also he wishes to use some manu-  
seripts of his which are in your possession, if  
you do not. Can I get them?  
  
T think of no news to tell you. It is a serene  
summer day here, all above the snow. ‘The hens  
steal their nests, and I steal their eggs still, as  
formerly, This is what I do with the hands.  
Ah, labor, — it is a divine institution, and con-  
versation with many men and hens.  
  
Do not think that my letters require as many  
special answers. I get one as often as you write  
to Concord. Concord inguires for you daily, as

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21.05] TO R. W. EMERSON. cc  
  
do all the members of this house. You must  
make haste home before wo have settled all the  
great questions, for they are fast being disposed.  
of. But I must leave room for Mrs. Emerson.  
  
‘Mrs. Emerson’s letter, after speaking of other  
matters, gave a lively sketch of Thoreau at one  
of Aleott’s Conversations in her house, which  
may be quoted as illustrating the young Nature-  
worshiper’s position at the time, and the more  
humane and socialistic spirit of Alcott and Lane,  
who were soon to leave Concord for their exper-  
iment of communistic life at “ Fruitlands,” in  
the rural town of Harvard.  
  
“Last evening we had the ‘Conversation,’  
though, owing to the bad weather, but few at-  
tended. ‘The subjects wore: What is Prophecy?  
Who is a Prophet? and The Love of Nature.  
Mr. Lane decided, as for all time and the race,  
that this same love of nature—of which Henry  
[Thoreau] was the champion, and Elizabeth  
Hoar and Lidian (though L. disclaimed possess-  
ing it herself) his faithful squiresses— that this  
love was the most subtle and dangerous of sins;  
a refined idolatry, much more to be dreaded than  
gross wickednesses, because the gross sinner  
would be alarmed by the depth of his degrada-  
tion, and come up from it in terror, but the un-  
happy idolaters of Nature were deceived by the

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6 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ss,  
  
refined quality of their sin, and would be the last  
to enter the kingdom. Henry frankly affirmed  
to both the wise men that they were wholly defi  
cient in the faculty in question, and therefore  
could not judge of it. And Mr. Alcott as  
frankly answered that it was because they went  
beyond the mere material objects, and were filled  
with spiritual love and perception (as Mr. T.  
‘was not), that they seemed to Mr. Thoreau not  
to appreciate outward nature, I am very heavy,  
and have spoiled a most excellent story. I have  
given you no idea of the scene, which was ineffa-  
bly comic, though it made no laugh at the time 5  
I scarcely laughed at it myself,—too deeply  
amused to give the usual sign. Henry was brave  
and noble; well as I have always liked him, he  
still grows upon me.”  
  
Before going to Staten Island in May, 1848,  
‘Thoreau answered a letter from the same Rich-  
ard Fuller who had made him the musical gift  
in the previous winter. He was at Harvard  
College, and desired to know something of Tho-  
reau’s pursuits there, — concerning which Chan-  
ning says in his Life:! “He was a respectable  
  
1 Thora, the Poet-Natralit. With Memorial Verses By  
William Ellory Channing (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1878).  
‘Thin volume, in some respects tho best biography of Thorea,  
fa now quite rare. Among the Memorial Verse are thowe  
  
writin by Channing for his friend's funeral; at which, also,  
Mz, Aleott read Thorenu's poom of Sympathy.

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2.9] TO RICHARD F. FULLER. 1  
  
student, having done there a bold reading in  
English poetry, — even to some portions or the  
whole of Davenant’s ‘ Gondibert.’” ‘This, Tho-  
eau does not mention in his letter, but it was  
one of the things that attracted Emerson’s no-  
tice, since he also had the same taste for the  
Elizabethan and Jacobean English poets. An  
English youth, Henry Headley, pupil of Dr.  
Parr, and graduate of Oxford in 1786, had pro-  
ceded Thoreau in this study of poets that had  
become obsolete; and it was perhaps Headley's  
volume, “Select Beauties of Ancient English  
Poetry, with Remarks by the late Henry Head-  
ley,” published long after his death,? that served  
Thoreau as a guide to Quarles and the Fletch-  
ers, Daniel, Drummond, Drayton, Habington,  
and Raleigh, — poets that few Americans had  
heard of in 1833.  
  
   
  
‘To RICHARD ¥. FULLER (AT CAMBRIDGE).  
Conconn, April 2, 1848,  
Dear RicHanp,—I was glad to receive a  
letter from you so bright and cheery. You  
speak of not having made any conquests with  
your own spear or quill as yet; but if you are  
tempering your spearhead during these days,  
1 Hoadley died at the ago of twonty-thres, in 1788. His  
  
posthumous book was edited in 1810 by Rev. Henry Kett, and  
‘Published in London by John Sharp.

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8 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE, (88s,  
  
and fitting a straight and tough shaft thereto,  
will not that suffice? We are more pleased to  
consider the hero in the forest cutting cornel or  
ash for his spear, than marching in triumph  
with his trophies. ‘The present hour is always  
wealthiest when it is poorer than the future  
‘ones, as that is the pleasantest site which affords  
the pleasantest prospects.  
  
‘What you say about your studies furnishing  
you with a “mimic idiom” only, reminds me  
that we shall all do well if we learn so much as,  
to talk, —to speak truth, The only fruit which  
even much living yields seems to be often only  
some trivial suecess,—the ability to do some  
slight thing better. We make conquest only of  
husks and shells for the most part, —at least  
apparently,— but sometimes these are cinnamon  
and spices, you know. Even the grown hunter  
you speak of slays a thousand buffaloes, and  
brings off only their hides and tongues. What  
immense sacrifices, what hecatombs and holo-  
causts, the gods exact for very slight favors!  
How much sincore life before we can even utter  
‘one sincere word.  
  
‘What I was learning in college was chiefly, I  
think, to express myself, and I see now, that as  
tho old orator prescribed, Ist, action; 2d, ac-  
tion; 8d, action; my teachers should have pre-  
scribed to me, Ist, sincerity; 2d, sincerity ; 84,

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0%] TO RICHARD F. FULLER. 19  
  
sincerity. The old mythology is incomplete  
without a god or goddess of sincerity, on whose  
altars we might offer up all the products of our  
farms, our workshops, and our studies. It  
should be our Lar when we sit on the hearth,  
and our Tutelar Genius when we walk abroad.  
‘This is the only panacea. I mean sincerity in  
our dealings with ourselves mainly; any other  
is comparatively easy. But. I must stop before  
I get to 17thly. I believe I have but one text  
and one sermon.  
  
‘Your rural adventures beyond the West Cam-  
bridge hills have probably lost nothing by dis-  
tance of time or space. I used to hear only the  
sough of the wind in the woods of Concord,  
when I was striving to give my attention to a  
page of Calculus. But, depend upon it, you will  
love your native hills the better for being sepa-  
rated from them.  
  
T expect to leave Concord, which is my Rome,  
and its people, who are my Romans, in May,  
and go to New York, to be a tutor in Mr. Wil-  
liam Emerson's family. So I will bid you good  
by till I see you or hear from you again.  
  
Going to Staten Island, early in May, 1848,  
‘Thoreau’s first care was to write to his “Ro-  
mans, countrymen, and lovers by the banks of  
the Musketaquid,” — beginning with his mother,

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80 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 1883,  
  
his sisters, and Mrs. Emerson. ‘To Sophia and  
‘Mrs. E. he wrote May 22,—to Helen, with a  
few touching verses on his brother John, the  
next day; and then he resumed the correspond-  
ence with Emerson. Tt seems that one of his  
errands near New York was to make the ao-  
quaintanee of literary men and journalists in  
the city, in order to find a vehicle for publica-  
tion, such as his neighbor Hawthorne had finally  
found in the pages of the “Democratic Review.”  
For this purpose Thoreau made himself known,  
to Henry James, and other friends of Emerson,  
and to Horaeo Greeley, then in the first: fresh-  
ness of his success with the “Tribune,” —a  
newspaper hardly more than two years old then,  
but destined to a great career, in which several  
of the early Transcendentalists took some part.  
  
70 iis FATHER AND MoTuER (AT coxcoRD).  
Casruzrox, Srarex Istaxp, May 11,1845,  
  
Dear Morner anp Frrexps ar Home, —  
‘We arrived here safely at ten o'clock on Sun-  
day morning, having had as good a passage as  
usual, though we ran aground and were de-  
tained a couple of hours in the Thames River,  
till the tide came to our relief. At length wo  
curtseyed up to a wharf just the other side of  
their Castle Garden, — very ineurious about  
them and their city. I believe my vacant looks,

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41.25] TO HIS FATHER AND MOTHER. 81  
  
absolutely inaccessible to questions, did at length  
satisfy an army of starving cabmen that I did  
not want a hack, cab, or anything of that sort  
as yet. It was the only demand the city made  
on us; as if a wheeled vehicle of some sort were  
the sum and summit of a reasonable man’s  
wants, “Having tried the water,” they seemed  
to say, “will you not return to the pleasant se-  
curities of land carriage? Else why your boat's  
prow turned toward the shore at last?” ‘They  
are a sadlooking set of fellows, not. permitted  
to come on board, and I pitied them. ‘They had  
been expecting me, it would seem, and did really  
wish that I should take a cab; though they did  
not seem rich enough to supply me with one.  
  
Tt was a confused jumble of heads and soiled  
coats, dangling from flesh-colored “faces, — all  
swaying to and fro, as by a sort of undertow,  
while each whipstick, true as the needle to the  
pole, still preserved that level and direction in  
which its proprietor had dismissed his forlorn  
interrogatory. They took sight from them,—  
the lash being wound up thereon, to prevent your  
attention from wandering, or to make it concen-  
tro upon its object by the spiral line, They be-  
gan at first, perhaps, with the modest, but rather  
confident inguiry, “Want a cab, sir?” but as  
their despair increased, it took the affirmative  
tone, as the disheartened and irresolute are apt

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82 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1843,  
  
to do: “You want a cab, sir,” or even, “You  
want a nice cab, sir, to take you to Fourth  
Street.” The question which one had bravely  
and hopefully begun to put, another had the  
tact to take up and conclude with fresh empha-  
sis, —twirling it from his particular whipstick  
as if it had emanated from his lips—as the sen-  
timent did from his heart. Each one could  
truly say, “‘Them’s my sentiments.” But it was  
a sad sight.  
  
Tam seven and a half miles from New York,  
and, as it would take half a day at least, have  
not been there yet. I have already run over no  
small part of the island, to the highest hill, and  
some way along the shore. From the hill di-  
rectly behind the house I ean see New York,  
Brooklyn, Long Island, the Narrows, through  
which vessels bound to and from all parts of the  
world chiefly pass, —Sandy Hook and the High-  
lands of Neversink (part of the coast of New  
Jersey) —and, by going still farther up the  
bill, the Kill van Kull, and Newark Bay. From  
the pinnacle of one Madame Grimes’ house, the  
other night at sunset, I could see almost round  
the island. Far in the horizon there was a fleet  
of sloops bound up the Hudson, which seemed  
to be going over the edge of the earth and in  
view of these trading ships, commerce seems  
  
quite imposing.

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47.25] TO HIS FATHER AND MOTHER. 83  
  
But it is rather derogatory that your dwelling-  
place should be only a neighborhood to a great  
city, —to live on an inclined plane. I do not like  
their cities and forts, with their morning and  
evening guns, and sails flapping in one’s eye. I  
want a whole continent to breathe in, and a good  
deal of solitude and silence, such as all Wall  
Street cannot buy,—nor Broadway with its  
wooden pavement, I must live along the beach,  
on the southern shore, which looks direetly out,  
to sea, —and see what that great parade of water  
‘means, that dashes and roars, and has not: yet  
wet me, as long as I have lived.  
  
‘I must not know anything about my condition  
and relations here till what is not permanent is  
worn off. I have not yet subsided. Give me  
time enough, and I may like it. All my inner  
‘man heretofore has been a Concord impression ;  
‘and here come these Sandy Hook and Coney  
Island breakers to meet and modify the former ;  
but it will be long before I can make nature  
look as innocently grand and inspiring as in  
Concord. Your affectionate son,  
  
Heney D. Tuoreau.

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84 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE, 93,  
  
‘70 SOPHIA THOREAU (AT CONCORD).  
  
Casrieton, Staten Island, May 22, 1843.  
  
Dear Soriia,—I have had a severe cold  
ever since I came here, and have been confined  
to the house for the last week with bronchitis,  
though I am now getting out, so I have not seen  
much in the botanical way. The cedar seems to  
be one of the most common trees here, and the  
fields are very fragrant with it. There are also  
the gum and tulip tres. ‘The latter is not very  
common, but is very large and beautiful, having  
flowers as lange as tulips, and as handsome. It  
is not time for it yet.  
  
‘The woods are now full of a large honeysuckle  
in full bloom, which differs from ours in being  
red instead of white, so that at first I did not  
know its genus. The painted cup is very com-  
mon in the meadows here. Peaches, and espo-  
cially cherries, seem to grow by all the fences.  
‘Things are very forward here compared with  
Concord. Tho apricots growing out of doors  
are already as large as plums. ‘The apple, pear,  
peach, cherry, and plum trees have shed their  
blossoms. The whole island is like a garden,  
and affords very fine seenery.  
  
In front of the house is a very extensive wood,  
beyond which is the sea, whose roar I can hear  
all night long, when there is a wind; if easterly

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=.25] TO SOPHIA THOREAU. 85  
  
winds have prevailed on the Atlantic, ‘There  
are always some vessels in sight—ten, twenty,  
or thirty miles off—and Sunday before last  
there were hundreds in long procession, stretch-  
ing from New York to Sandy Hook, and far  
beyond, for Sunday is a lucky day.  
  
T went to New York Saturday before last. A  
walk of half an hour, by half a dozen houses  
along the Richmond Road, — that is the road that  
leads to Richmond, on which we live, — brings  
me to the village of Stapleton, in Southfield,  
where is the lower dock; but if I prefer I can  
walk along the shore three quarters of a mile  
farther toward New York to the quarantine vil-  
lage of Castleton, to the upper dock, which the  
boat leaves five or six times every day, a quarter  
of an hour later than the former place. Farther  
on is the village of New Brighton, and farther  
still Port Richmond, which villages another  
steamboat visits.  
  
In New York I saw George Ward, and also  
Giles Waldo and William Tappan, whom I can  
describe better when T have seen them more.  
‘They are young friends of Mr. Emerson. Waldo  
came down to the island to see me the next day.  
Talso saw the Great Western, the Croton water  
works, and the picture gallery of the National  
Academy of Design, But I have not had time  
to see or do much yet.

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86 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ss,  
  
Tell Miss Ward I shall try to put my micro-  
scope to a good use, and if I find any new and  
preservable flower, will throw it into my common-  
place book. Garlic, the original of the common  
onion, grows here all over the fields, and during  
its season spoils the cream and butter for the  
market, as the cows like it very much,  
  
‘Tell Helen there are two schools of late estab-  
lished in the neighborhood, with large prospects,  
or rather designs, one for boys and another for  
girl. The latter by a Miss Errington, and  
though it is only small as yet, I will keep my  
ears open for her in such directions. The en-  
couragement is very slight.  
  
I hope you will not be washed away by the  
Trish sea.  
  
‘Tell Mother I think my cold was not wholly  
owing to imprudence. Perhaps I was being  
acclimated.  
  
‘Tell Father that Mr. Tappan, whose son I  
know,—and whose clerks young Tappan and  
‘Waldo are,—has invented and established a  
new and very important: business, which Waldo  
thinks would allow them to burn ninety-nine out  
of one hundred of the stores in New York, which  
now only offset and cancel one another. Tt is a  
kind of intelligence office for the whole country,  
with branches in the principal cities, giving  
information with regard to the credit and affairs

Page-9594

ar 2) 10 HELEN THOREAU. 87  
  
of every man of business of the country. Of  
course it is not popular at the South and West.  
Tt is an extensive business and will employ a  
great many clerks.  
  
Love to all —not forgetting aunt and aunts —  
and Miss and Mrs. Ward.  
  
On the 23d of May he wrote from Castleton  
to his sister Helen thus : —  
  
Dear Hexen, — In place of something fresher,  
I send you the following verses from my Journal,  
written some time ago: —  
  
Brother, where dost thou dwell?  
‘What wun shines for theo now ?  
‘Dost thon indeed fare well  
‘Aa wo wiahod here below?  
  
‘What season didst thoa find ?  
°E was winter here.  
  
‘Are not the Fates more ind  
‘Than they appear?  
  
Is thy brow clear again,  
  
‘Aa in thy youthful yeass?  
‘And was that ugly pain  
  
"Tho summit of thy fours??  
  
+ Am allusion to the strange and painful death of Jobn  
‘Thorous, by lockjaw. He had slightly wounded himself ia  
shaving, and tho cut became inflamed and brought on that  
Jhideous and deforming malady, of which, by sympathy, Henry  
also partook, though he recovered.

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88  
  
YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ss,  
  
‘Yot thou wast cheery ail;  
‘They could not quench thy fro  
‘Thou didat abide their wil,  
‘And then retire.  
  
‘Where chiefly shall I look.  
‘To feel thy presenco near?  
Along. the neighboring brooke  
‘May I thy voice still hear?  
  
Dost thou sil haunt the brink  
OF yonder river's tide?  
  
And may T ever think  
‘That thou art hy my side?  
  
   
  
‘What bird wilt thon employ  
‘To bring mo word of thee?  
  
For it would give them joy, —  
"'T would give them liberty,  
  
‘To serve their former lord  
‘With wing and minstrels.  
  
   
  
‘They've slowlier built their nest  
‘Since thou axt gone  
‘Theie lively labor rests  
  
‘Whereis the finch, the thrush  
used to hear ?  
  
Ab, they could well abide  
‘The dying your.  
  
   
  
Now they no more return,  
T hear them not;  
  
‘They have remained to mourn;  
‘Or ela forgot

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ar. 25) TO MRS. EMERSON. 89  
  
As the first letter of Thoreau to Emerson was  
to thank him for his lofty friendship, so now the  
first letter to Mrs. Emerson, after leaving her  
house, was to say similar things, with a passing  
allusion to her love of flowers and of gardening, in  
which she surpassed all his acquaintanee in Con-  
cord, then and afterward. A letter to Emerson  
followed, touching on the “Dial” and on several  
of his new and old acquaintance. “Rockwood  
Hoar” is the person since known as judge and  
cabinet officer, —the brother of Senator Hoar,  
and of Thoreau’s special friends, Elizabeth and  
Edward Hoar. Channing is the poet, who had  
lately printed his first volume, without finding  
many readers.  
  
‘70 MRS, EMERSON (AT CONCORD).  
(Caemixrox, Staten Island, May 22, 1848,  
  
‘My pear Frrexp,—I believe a good many  
conversations with you were left in an unfinished  
state, and now indeed I don’t know where to  
take them up. But I will resume some of the  
unfinished silence, I shall not hesitate to know  
you. I think of you as some elder sister of  
mine, whom I could not have avoided, —a sort  
of lunar influence, —only of such age as the  
moon, whose time is measured by her light. You  
must know that you represent to me woman, for  
T have not traveled very far or wide, — and what

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90 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (883,  
  
if Thad? I like to deal with you, for I believe  
you do not lie or steal, and these are very rare  
Virtues, I thank you for your influence for two  
years. Twas fortunate to be subjected to it, and  
am now to remember it. It is the noblest gift,  
we can make; what signify all others that can  
be bestowed? You have helped to keep my life  
“on loft,” as Chaucer says of Griselda, and in a  
better sense, You always seemed to look down  
at me as from some elevation —some of your  
high humilities— and I was the better for hav-  
ing to look up. I felt taxed not to disappoint  
your expectation; for could there be any acci-  
dent s0 sad as to be respected for something bet-  
ter than we are? It was a pleasure even to go  
away from you, as it is not to meet some, as it  
apprised me of my high relations ; and such a  
departure is a sort of further introduetion and  
meeting. Nothing makes the earth seem so spa-  
cious as to have friends at a distance ; they make  
the latitudes and longitudes.  
  
‘You must not think that fate is so dark there,  
for even here I can see a faint reflected light  
over Concord, and I think that at this distance I  
can better weigh the value of a doubt there.  
Your moonlight, as T have told you, though it is  
a reflection of the sun, allows of bats and owls  
and other twilight birds to flit therein. But I  
am very glad that you can elevate your life with

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7.25] 10 MRS. EMERSON. OL  
  
a doubt, for I am sure that it is nothing but an  
insatiable faith after all that deepens and dark-  
ens its current. And your doubt and my confi-  
dence are only a difference of expression.  
  
Thave hardly begun to live on Staten Island  
yet; but, like the man who, when forbidden to  
tread on English ground, carried Seottish ground  
in his boots, Learry Concord ground in my boots  
and in my hat, — and am I not made of Coneord  
dust? T cannot realize that it is the roar of the  
sea I hear now, and not the wind in Walden  
woods. I find more of Concord, after all, in the  
prospect of the sea, beyond Sandy Hook, than in  
the fields and woods.  
  
If you were to have this Hugh the gardener  
for your man, you would think a new dispensa-  
tion had commenced. He might put a fairer  
aspect on the natural world for you, or at any  
rate a screen between you and the almshouse.  
‘There is a beautiful red honeysuckle now in  
blossom in the woods here, which should be  
transplanted to Concord ; and if what they tell  
me about the tulip-tree be true, you should have  
that also. I have not seen Mrs. Black yet, but  
Tintend to call on her soon. Have you estab-  
lished those simpler modes of living yet? — “In  
the full tide of successful operation?”  
  
Tell Mrs. Brown that I hope she is anchored  
in a secure haven and derives much pleasure

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92 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1843,  
  
still from reading the poets, and that her con-  
stellation is not quite set from my sight, though  
it is sunk so low in that northern horizon. Tell  
Elizabeth Hoar that her bright present did  
“carry ink safely to Staten Island,” and was 2  
conspicuous object in Master Haven’s inventory  
of my effects. Give my respects to Madam  
Emerson, whose Concord face I should be glad  
to see here this summer; and remember me to  
the rest of the houschold who have had vision of  
me. Shake a day-day to Edith, and say good  
night to Ellen for me. Farewell.  
  
TO R, W. EMERSON (AT CONCORD).  
Casmuxrox, Sraren Iasaxp, May 28,  
  
‘My pra Frtexp,— I was just going to write  
to you when I reccived your letter. I was wait-  
ing till I had got away from Concord. I should  
have sent you something for the “ Dial” before,  
but I have been sick ever since T came here,  
rather unaccountably, — what with a cold, bron-  
chitis, acclimation, ete., still unaecountably. I  
send you some verses from my journal which  
will help make a packet. I have not time to  
correct them, if this goes by Rockwood Hoar.  
If Tan finish an account of a winter's walk in  
Concord, in the midst of a Staten Island sum-  
mer, — not so wise as true, I trust, — I will send  
it to you soon.

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an] 70 R. W. EMERSON. 93  
  
T have had no later experiences yet. You  
must not count much upon what I ean do or  
learn in New York. I feel a good way off here;  
and it is not to be visited, but seen and dwelt in.  
T have been there but once, and have been con-  
fined to the house since. Everything there dis-  
appoints me but the crowd; rather, I was dis-  
appoiited with the rest before T came. I have  
no eyes for their churches, and what else they  
find to brag of. Though I know but little about  
Boston, yet what attracts me, in a quiet way,  
seems much meaner and more pretending than  
there, — libraries, pictures, and faces in the  
street. You don't know where any respecta-  
bility inhabits. It is in the crowd in Chatham  
Street. The crowd is something new, and to be  
attended to. It is worth a thousand Trinity  
Churehes and Exchanges while it is looking  
at them, and will run over them and trample  
them under foot one day. There are two things  
T hear and am aware I live in the neighborhood  
of, —the roar of the sea and the hum of the  
city. Ihave just come from the beach (to find  
your letter), and I like it much, Everything  
‘there is on a grand and generous scale, —sea-  
‘weed, water, and sand ; and even the dead fishes,  
hhorses, and hogs have a rank, luxuriant odor;  
great shad-nets spread to dry; erabs and horse-  
shoes crawling over the sand ; clumsy boats, only

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of YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (198s,  
  
for service, dancing like seafowl over the surf,  
and ships afar off going about their business.  
  
‘Waldo and Tappan earried me to their Eng-  
lish alehouse the first Saturday, and Waldo  
spent two hours here the next day. But Tap-  
pan I have only seen. I like his looks and the  
sound of his silence. ‘They are confined every  
day but Sunday, and then Tappan is obliged to  
observe the demeanor of a church-goer to pre-  
vent open war with his father.  
  
Tam glad that Channing has got settled, and  
that, too, before the inroad of the Irish. I have  
read his poems two or three times over, and par-  
tially through and under, with new and increased  
interest and appreciation. Tell him I saw a  
man buy a copy at Little & Brown's. He may  
have been a virtuoso, but we will give him the  
credit. What with Alcott and Lane and Haw-  
thorne, too, you look strong enough to take New  
York by storm. Will you tell L., if he asks,  
that T have been able to do nothing about the  
books yet?  
  
Believe that I have something better to write  
you than this. Itwould be unkind to thank you  
for particular deeds.

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ro) 70 R. W. EMERSON. 95  
  
‘10 R, W. EMERSON (AT concorD).  
Seaman Totano, Jane 8, 1883,  
  
Dear Frtexp,—I have been to see Henry  
‘James, and like him very much. It was a great  
pleasure to meethim, It makes humanity seem  
more erect and respectable. I never was more  
kindly and faithfully catechised. It made me  
respect myself more to be thought worthy of  
such wise questions. He is a man, and takes  
his own way, or stands still in his own place.  
I know of no one so patient and determined to  
have the good of you. It is almost friendship,  
such plain and human dealing. I think that he  
will not write or speak inspiringly ; but he is a  
refreshing, forward-looking and forward-moving  
man, and he has naturalized and humanized New  
York for me. He actually reproaches you by  
his respect for your poor words. I had three  
hours’ solid talk with him, and he asks me to  
make free use of his house. He wants an ex-  
pression of your faith, or to be sure that it is  
faith, and confesses that his own treads fast upon  
‘the neck of his understanding. He exclaimed,  
at some careless answer of mine, “Well, you  
‘Transcendentalists are wonderfully consistent. I  
must get hold of this somehow!” He likes Car-  
Iyle’s book;! but says that it leaves him in an  
  
2 Past and Preset

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96 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ses,  
  
excited and unprofitable state, and that Carlyle  
is so ready to obey his humor that he makes the  
least vestige of truth the foundation of any sue  
perstructure, not keeping faith with his better  
genius nor truest readers.  
  
I met Wright on the stairs of the Society  
Library, and W. H. Channing and Brisbane on  
the steps. The former (Channing) is a concave  
‘man, and you see by his attitude and the lines  
of his face that he is retreating from himself and  
from yourself, with sad doubts. Tt is like a fair  
mask swaying from the drooping boughs of some  
tree whose stem is not seen, He would break  
with a conchoidal fracture, You feel as if you  
would like to see him when he has made up’ his  
mind to run all the risks. To be sure, he doubts  
because he has a great hope to be disappointed,  
but he makes the possible disappointment of too  
much consequence. Brisbane, with whom I did  
not converse, did not impress me favorably. He  
looks like a man who has lived in a cellar, far  
gone in consumption. I barely saw him, but he  
did not look as if he could let Fourier go, in any  
case, and throw up his hat. But I need not  
have come to New York to write this.  
  
T have seen Tappan for two or three hours,  
and like both him and Waldo; but I always see  
those of whom I have heard well with a slight  
disappointment. ‘They are so much better than

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125.) TO R. W. EMERSON. oT  
  
the great herd, and yet the heavens are not  
shivered into diamonds over their heads. Per-  
sons and things fit so rapidly through my brain  
nowadays that I can hardly remember them.  
‘They seem to be lying in the stream, stemming  
the tide, ready to go to sea, as steamboats when  
they leave the dock go off in the opposite direc-  
tion first, until they are headed right, and then  
begins the steady revolution of the paddle-  
wheels ; and they are not quite cheerily headed  
anywhither yet, nor singing amid the shrouds  
as they bound over the billows. There is a cer-  
tain youthfulness and generosity about them,  
very attractive ; and Tappan’s more reserved  
and solitary thought commands respect.  
  
‘After some ado, I discovered. the residence of  
‘Mrs. Black, but there was palmed off on me, in  
her stead, a Mrs. Grey (quite an inferior color),  
who told me at last that she was not Mrs. Black,  
but her mother, and was just as glad to see me  
as Mrs. Black would have been, and so, for-  
sooth, would answer just as well. Mrs. Black  
hhad gone with Edward Palmer to New Jersey,  
and would return on the morrow.  
  
I don’t like the city better, the more I see it,  
but worse. Iam ashamed of my eyes that be-  
hold it. It is a thousand times meaner than I  
could have imagined. It will be something to  
hhate,—that's the advantage it will be to me;

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98 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 14s,  
  
and even the best people in it are a part of it,  
and talk coolly about it. ‘The pigs in the street  
are the most respectable part of the population.  
‘When will the world learn that a million men  
are of no importance compared with one man?  
But I must wait for a shower of shillings, or at  
least a slight dew or mizsling of sixpences, be-  
fore I explore New York very far.  
  
‘The sea-beach is the best thing I have seen,  
It is very solitary and remote, and you only re-  
member New York occasionally. The distances,  
too, along the shore, and inland in sight of it,  
are unaccountably great and startling. The sea  
seems very near from the hills, but it proves a  
long way over the plain, and yet you may be  
wet with the spray before you can believe that  
you are there. ‘The far seems near, and the  
near far. Many rods from the beach, I step  
aside for the Atlantic, and I see men drag up  
their boats on to the sand, with oxen, stepping  
about amid the surf, as if it were possible they  
might draw up Sandy Hook.  
  
T do not feel myself especially serviceable to  
the good people with whom I live, except as in-  
flictions are sanctified to the righteous. And so,  
too, must I serve the boy. T ean look to the  
Latin and mathematics sharply, and for the rest  
behave myself. But I cannot be in his neigh-  
borhood hereafter as his Educator, of course, but

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a5) TO R. W. EMERSON. 99  
  
‘as the hawks fly over my own head. Iam not  
attracted toward him but as to youth generally.  
He shall frequent me, however, as much as he  
ean, and I'll be I.  
  
Bradbury! told me, when T passed through  
Boston, that he was coming to New York the  
following Saturday, and would then settle with  
me, but he has not made his appearance yet.  
Will you, the next time you go to Boston, pre-  
sent that order for me which I left with you?  
  
If I say less about Waldo and Tappan now,  
it is, perhaps, because I may have more to say  
by and by. Remember me to your mother and  
‘Mrs, Emerson, who, I hope, is quite well. I  
shall be very glad to hear from her, as well as  
from you. I have very hastily writte’ out  
something for the “Dial,” and send it only be-  
cause you are expecting something, — though  
something better. It seems idle and Howittish,  
but it may be of more worth in Concord, where  
it belongs. In great haste. Farewell.  
  
1 Of the publishing hous of Bradbury & Soden, in Boston,  
which had taken Nathan Hale's Bast Mscllny off hia  
hands, snd had published in it, wth promian of payment, Tho-  
sean’ Walk to Wachusett. But much tne had passed, and  
{he dabt was not paid hence tho lac of  
Tings’? which tho lottor laments. Emerson's reply given the  
first nows of tho actual bogining of Alctt's short-lived para-  
  
digo at Fruitlands, and dwells with interest on the affairs of  
tho rural and lettered cizele at Concord.

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100 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1843,  
  
70 MIS FATHER AND MOTHER (AT coNcoRD).  
Cagruerow, June 8, 1845.  
  
Dear Parents, —T have got quite well now,  
and like the lay of the land and the look of the  
sea very much,—only the country is so fair  
that it seems rather too much as if it wore made  
to be looked at. I have been to New York four  
or five times, and have run about the island a  
good deal.  
  
George Ward, when I last saw him, which  
was at his house in Brooklyn, was studying the  
Daguerreotype process, preparing to set up in  
that line. The boats run now almost every hour  
from 8 A.M. toT P.M, back and forth, so that  
T eah get to the city much more easily than  
before. Ihave seen there one Henry James, a  
lame man, of whom I had heard before, whom I  
like very much; and he asks me to make free  
use of his house, which is situated in a pleasant  
part of the city, adjoining the University. I  
have met several people whom I knew before,  
and among the rest Mr. Wright, who was on his  
way to Niagara.  
  
T feel already about as well acquainted with  
New York as with Boston, —that is, about as  
little, perhaps. It is large enough now, and  
they intend it shall be larger still. Fifteenth  
Street, where some of my new acquaintance live,

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2.2] TO HIS FATHER AND MOTHER. 101  
  
is two or three miles from the Battery, where  
the boat touches, —clear brick and stone, and  
no “give” to the foot; and they have laid out,  
thongh not built, up to the 149th street above.  
T had rather see a brick for a specimen, for my  
part, such as they exhibited in old times. You  
see it is “quite a day’s training” to make a few  
calls in different parts of the city (to say no-  
thing of twelve miles by water and land, — i. ¢.,  
not brick and stone), especially if it does not  
rain shillings, which might interest omnibuses  
in your behalf, Some omnibuses are marked  
“Broadway —Fourth Street,” and they go no  
farther ; others “ Eighth Street,” and so on, —  
and s0 of the other principal streets. (This let-  
ter will be circumstantial enough for Helen.)  
This is in all respects a very pleasant resi-  
dence,—much more rural than you would ex-  
pect of the vicinity of New York. There are  
woods all around. We breakfast at half past  
six, Iunch, if we will, at twelve, and dine or sup.  
at five; thus is the day partitioned off. From  
nine to two, or thereabouts, I am the schoolmas-  
ter, and at other times as much the pupil as T  
can be. Mr. and Mrs. Emerson are not indeed  
of my kith or kin in any sense; but they are ir-  
reproachable and kind. I have met no one yet  
‘on the island whose acquaintance I shall culti-  
vate—or hoe round —unless it be our neighbor,

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102 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ass,  
  
Captain Smith, an old fisherman, who catches  
the fish called moss-bonkers"—so it sounds—  
and invites me to come to the beach, where he  
spends the week, and see him and his fish.  
  
Farms are for sale all around here, and so,  
suppose men are for purchase. North of us live  
Peter Wandell, Mr. Mell, and Mr. Disosway  
(don't mind the spelling), as far as the Clove  
road; and south, John Britton, Van Pelt, and  
Captain Smith, as far as the Fingerboard road.  
Behind is the hill, some 250 feet high, on the -  
side of which we live; and in front the forest  
and the sea,—the latter at the distance of a  
mile and a half.  
  
‘Tell Helen that Miss Errington is provided  
with assistance. ‘This were a good place as any  
to establish a school, if one could wait a little.  
Families come down here to board in the sum-  
‘mer, and three or four have been already estab-  
lished this season.  
  
As for money matters, I have not sot my  
traps yet, but I am getting my bait ready.  
Pray, how does the garden thrive, and what  
improvements in the pencil line? I miss you  
all very much. Write soon, and send a Concord  
paper to  
  
‘Your affectionate son,  
Henny D. Txorgav.

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er) TO MRS. EMERSON. 108  
  
‘The traps of this sportsman were magazine  
articles, —but the magazines that would pay  
much for papers were very few in 1843. One  
such had existed in Boston for a short time, —  
the “Miscellany,” — and it printed a good paper  
of Thoreau’s, but the pay was not fortheoming.  
His efforts to find publishers more liberal in  
New York were not successful. But he contin-  
ued to write for fame in the “Dial,” and helped  
to edit that.  
  
70 MRS. EMERSON.  
  
Stamey Iocan, Jano 2, 1848,  
  
My very pear Frrenp,—I have only read  
a page of your letter, and have come out to the  
top of the hill at sunset, where I can see the  
ovean, to prepare to read the rest. It is fitter  
that it should hear it than the walls of my cham-  
ber. ‘The very crickets here seem to chirp around  
me as they did not before. I feol as if it were  
agreat daring to go on and read the rest, and  
then to live accordingly. ‘There are more than  
thirty vessels in sight going to sea. Tam almost  
afraid to look at your letter. I see that it will  
make my life very steep, but it may lead to fairer  
prospects than this.  
  
‘You seem to me to speak out of a very clear  
and high heaven, where any one may be who  
stands so high, Your voice seems not a voice,

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104 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 84s,  
  
but comes as much from the blue heavens as  
from the paper.  
  
My dear friend, it was very noble in you to  
write me so trustful an answer. It will do as  
well for another world as for this; such a voice  
is for no particular time nor person, but it makes  
him who may hear it stand for all that is lofty  
and true in humanity. The thought of you will  
constantly elevate my life; it will be something  
always above the horizon to behold, as when T  
look up at the evening star. I think I know  
your thoughts without seeing you, and as well  
here as in Concord. You are not at all strange  
to me.  
  
I could hardly believe, after the lapse of one  
night, that Ihad such a noble letter still at hand  
to read, — that it was not some fine dream. I  
looked at midnight to be sure that it was real.  
T feel that I am unworthy to know you, and yet  
they will not permit it wrongfully.  
  
I, perhaps, am more willing to deceive by  
appearances than you say you are; it would not  
be worth the while to tell how willing; but I  
have the power perhaps too much to forget my  
meanness as soon as seen, and not be incited by  
permanent sorrow. My actual life is unspeak-  
ably mean compared with what I know and see  
that it might be. Yet the ground from which I  
see and say this is some part of it. It ranges

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er) 70 MRS. EMERSON. 105  
  
from heaven to earth, and is all things in an  
hour. The experience of every past moment  
Dut belies the faith of each present. We never  
conceive the greatness of our fates. Are not  
these faint flashes of light which sometimes  
obscure the sun their certain dawn?  
  
‘My friend, I have read your letter as if I was  
not reading it. After each pause I conld defer  
the rest forever. ‘The thought of you will be a  
new motive for every right action. You are  
another human being whom I know, and might  
not our topic be as broad as the universe?  
‘What have we to do with petty rumbling news?  
‘We have our own great affairs. Sometimes in  
Concord I found my actions dictated, as it were,  
by your influence, and though it led almost to  
trivial Hindoo observances, yet it was good and  
elevating. ‘To hear that you have sad hours is  
not sad to mo. I rather rejoice at the richness  
of your experience. Only think of some sad-  
ness away in Pekin,—unseen and unknown  
there. What a mine it is! Would it not  
weigh down the Celestial Empire, with all its  
gay Chinese? Our sadness is not sad, but our  
cheap joys. Let us be sad about all we see and  
are, for so we demand and pray for better. It  
is the constant prayer and whole Christian re-  
ligion. I could hope that you would get well  
soon, and have a healthy body for this world,

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106 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1843,  
  
but I know this cannot be; and the Fates, after  
all, are the accomplishers of our hopes. Yet I  
do hope that you may find it a worthy straggle,  
and life seem grand still through the clouds.  
  
‘What wealth is it to have such friends that we  
cannot think of them without elevation! And  
we can think of them any time and anywhere,  
and it costs nothing but the lofty disposition. I  
cannot tell you the joy your letter gives me, which  
will not quite cease till the latest time. Let me  
accompany your finest thought.  
  
Isend my love to my other friend and brother,  
whose nobleness I slowly recognize.  
  
Henry.  
  
70 MRS. THOREAU (AT CONCORD).  
  
Searny Ieuan, Sly 7, 1888,  
  
Dear Morner, — I was very glad to get your  
letter and papers. Tell father that circumstan-  
tial letters make very substantial reading, at any  
vate. I like to know even how the sun shines  
and garden grows with you. I did not get my  
‘money in Boston, and probably shall not at all.  
‘Tell Sophia that I have pressed some blossoms  
‘of the tulip-tree for her. They look somewhat  
like white lilies. The magnolia, too, is in blossom  
hore.  
  
Pray, have you the seventeen-year locust in  
Concord? The air here is filled with their din.

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25) TO MRS, THOREAU. 107  
  
‘They come out of the ground at first in an imper-  
fect state, and, crawling up the shrubs and plants,  
the perfect insect bursts out through the back.  
‘They are doing great damage to the fruit and  
forest trees. The latter are covered with dead  
twigs, which in the distance look like the blos-  
soms of the chestnut. They bore every twig of  
last year’s growth in order to deposit their eggs  
in it, Ina few weeks the eggs will be hatched,  
and the worms fall to the ground and enter it,  
and in 1860 make their appearance again. I  
conversed about their coming this season before  
they arrived. They do no injury to the leaves,  
but, beside boring the twigs, suck their sap for  
sustenance. Their din is heard by those who  
sail along the shore from the distant woods, —  
Phare-rach. Phare-raoh. ‘They are departing  
now. Dogs, eats, and chickens subsist mainly  
upon them in some places.  
  
Thave not been to New York for more than  
three weeks. I have had an interesting letter  
from Mr. Lane,! deseribing their new prospects.  
‘My pupil and I are getting on apace. He is  
remarkably well advanced in Latin, and is well  
advancing.  
  
Your letter has just arrived. Iwas not aware  
that it was so long since I wrote home; I only  
  
vis with the Aleotts, Seo Sanborn's Thoreau,

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108 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1848,  
  
knew that I had sent five or six letters to the  
town. It is very refreshing to hear from you,  
though it is not all good news. But T trust that  
Stearns Wheeler is not dead. I should be slow  
to believe it. He was made to work very well  
in this world. ‘There need be no tragedy in his  
death.  
  
‘The demon which is said to haunt the Jones  
family, hovering over their eyelids with wings  
steeped in juice of poppies, has commenced an-  
other campaign against me. Iam “clear Jones”  
in this respect at least. But he finds little encour-  
agement in my atmosphere, I assure you, for I  
do not once fairly lose myself, except in those  
hours of truce allotted to rest by immemorial  
custom. However, this skirmishing interferes  
sadly with my literary projects, and I am apt to  
think it a good day’s work if I maintain a sol-  
dier’s eye till nightfall. Very well, it does not  
matter much in what wars we serve, whether in  
the Highlands or the Lowlands. Everywhere  
we get soldiers’ pay still.  
  
Give my love to Aunt Louisa, whose benig-  
nant face I sometimes see right in the wall, as  
naturally and necessarily shining on my path as  
some star of unaccountably greater age and  
higher orbit than myself. Let it be inquired  
hy her of George Minott, as from me,—for she  
sees him, —if he has seen any pigeons yet, and

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an.25) TO R. W. EMERSON. 109  
  
tell him there are plenty of jack-anipes here. As  
for William P., the “ worthy young man,” —as  
I live, my eyes have not fallen on him yet.  
  
Thave not had the influenza, though here are  
its headquarters, —unless my first week’s cold  
was it. Tell Helen I shall write to her soon. I  
have heard Lucretia Mott. This is badly writ-  
ten; but the worse the writing the sooner you  
get it this time from  
  
Your affectionate son,  
HD.  
  
TO R. W. EMERSON (AT CONCORD).  
Srarna Tatano, Joly 8 184%  
  
Dean Frrenps,—I was very glad to hear  
your voices from so far. I do not believe there  
are eight hundred human beings on the globe.  
It is all a fable, and T cannot but think that you  
speak with a slight outrage and disrespect of  
Concord when you talk of fifty of them. ‘There  
are not so many. Yet think not that I have left  
all behind, for already I begin to track my way  
over the earth, and find the cope of heaven ex-  
tending beyond its horizon, — forsooth, like the  
roofs of these Dutch houses. My thoughts re-  
vert to those dear hills and that river which so  
fills up the world to its brim,— worthy to be  
named with Mincius and Alpheus, — still drink-  
ing its meadows while I am far away. How can

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110 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. as,  
  
it run heedless to the sea, as if I were there to  
countenance it? George Minott, too, looms up  
considerably, —and many another old familiar  
face, These things all look sober and respecta-  
ble, They are better than the environs of New  
York, I assure you.  
  
Tam pleased to think of Channing as an in-  
habitant of the gray town. Seven citios con-  
tended for Homer dead. Tell him to remain at  
least long enough to establish Concord’s right  
and interest in him. I was beginning to know  
the man. In imagination I see you pilgrims  
taking your way by the red lodge and the eabin  
of the brave farmer man, so youthful and hale,  
to the still cheerful woods. And Hawthorne,  
too, I remember as one with whom I sauntered,  
in old heroic times, along the banks of the Sca-  
mander, amid the ruins of chariots and heroes.  
‘Tell him not to desert, even after the tenth year.  
Others may say, “Are there not the cities of  
Asia?” But what are they? Staying at home  
is the heavenly way.  
  
And Elizabeth Hoar, my braye townswoman,  
to be sung of poets, —if I may speak of her  
whom I do not know. Tell Mrs. Brown that I  
do not forget her, going her way under the stars  
through this chilly world, —I did not think of  
the wind, —and that I went a little way with  
her. Tell her not to despair. Concord’s little

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25) TO R. W. EMERSON, 11  
  
arch does not span all our fate, nor is what  
transpires under it law for the universe.  
  
‘And least of all are forgotten those walks in  
the woods in ancient days,— too sacred to be  
idly remembered, — when their aisles were per-  
vaded as by a fragrant atmosphere. ‘They still  
seem youthful and cheery to my imagination as  
Sherwood and Barnsdale,—and of far purer  
fame. ‘Those afternoons when we wandered o'er  
‘Olympus, —and those hills, from which the sun  
was seen to set, while still our day held on its  
way.  
  
“At tat he rome and twitched his mantle blues  
‘Tomorrow to fresh woods, and pantures new.”  
  
   
  
I remember these things at midnight, at rare  
intervals. But know, my friends, that I a good  
deal hate you all in my most private thoughts,  
as the substratum of the little love I bear you.  
‘Though you are a rare band, and do not make  
half use enough of one another.  
  
T think this is a noble number of the Dial.”  
Tt perspires thought and feeling. I can speak  
of it now a little like a foreigner. Be assured  
that it is not written in vain, — it is not for me.  
T hear its prose and its verse. They provoke  
  
2 Emerson also was satisfied with it for once, and wrote ta  
‘Thoreau: “Our Dial thrives well enough in theae weeks, 1  
print W. E, Channing's ‘Letter ortho frst ons, but ho does  
  
not care to have them named as his for a while. They are  
‘very agroeablo reading.”

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12 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1989,  
  
and inspire me, and they have my sympathy. I  
hear the sober and the earnest, the sad and the  
cheery voices of my friends, and to me it is a  
long letter of encouragement and reproof ; and  
no doubt so it is to many another in the land.  
So don’t give up the ship. Methinks the verse  
is hardly enough better than the prose. I give  
my vote for the Notes from the Journal of a  
Scholar, and wonder you don’t print them faster.  
T want, too, to read the rest of the “Poet and  
the Painter.” Miss Fuller’s is a noble piece, —  
rich, extempore writing, talking with pen in  
hand. It is too good not to be better, even. In  
writing, conversation should be folded many  
times thick. It is the height of art that, on the  
first perusal, plain common sense should appear ;  
on the second, severe truth; and on a third,  
beauty ; and, having these warrants for its depth.  
and reality, we may then enjoy the beauty for  
evermore. The sea-piece is of the best that is’  
going, if not of the best that is staying. You  
have spoken a good word for Carlyle. As for  
the “ Winter's Walk,” I should be glad to havo  
it printed in the “Dial” if you think it good  
enough, and will criticise it; otherwise send it  
to me, and I will dispose of it.  
  
T have not been to New York for a month,  
and so have not seen Waldo and Tappan. James,  
hhas been at Albany meanwhile. You will know

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#2] TO HELEN THOREAU. 118  
  
that I only deseribe my personal adventures with  
people; but I hope to see more of them, and  
judge them too. Iam sorry to learn that Mrs.  
‘Emerson is no better. But let her know that  
the Fates pay a compliment to those whom they  
make sick, and they have not to ask, “ What have  
I done?”  
  
Remember me to your mother, and remember  
‘me yourself as you are remembered by  
  
H.D.T.  
  
Thad a friendly and cheery letter from Lane  
‘a month ago.  
  
To HELEN THOREAU (AT ROXHURY).  
Seanma Inca, Jay 21, 1813.  
  
Dear Hevex,—I am not in such haste to  
write home when I remember that I make my  
readers pay the postage, But I believe I have  
not taxed you before.  
  
T have pretty much explored this island, in-  
land, and along the shore, finding my health  
inclined me to the peripatetic philosophy. I  
have visited telegraph stations, Sailors’ Smug  
Harbors, Seaman's Retreats, Old Elm-Trees,  
where the Huguenots landed, Britton’s Mills,  
and all the villages on the island. Last Sunday  
I walked over to Lake Island Farm, eight or  
nine miles from here, where Moses Prichard

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114 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (543,  
  
lived, and found the present occupant, one Mr.  
Davenport, formerly from Massachusetts, with  
three or four men to help him, raising sweet  
potatoes and tomatoes by the acre. Tt seemed a  
cool and pleasant retreat, but a hungry soil. As  
Iwas coming away, I took my toll out of the  
soil in the shape of arrow-heads, which may after  
all be the surest crop, certainly not affected by  
drought.  
  
Tam well enough situated here to observe one  
aspect of the modern world at least. I mean  
the migratory, — the Western movement. Six-  
teen hundred immigrants arrived at quarantine  
ground on the 4th of July, and more or less  
every day since I have been here. I see them  
‘occasionally washing their persons and clothes :  
‘or men, women, and children gathered on an  
isolated quay near the shore, stretching their  
limbs and taking the air; the children running  
races and swinging on this artificial piece of the  
land of liberty, while their vessels are under-  
going purification. ‘They are detained but a  
day or two, and then go up to the city, for the  
most part without having landed here.  
  
In the city, Ihave seen, since I wrote last,  
W. H. Channing, at whose home, in Fifteenth  
Street, I spent a few pleasant hours, discussing  
the all-absorbing question “what to do for the  
  
race.” (He is sadly in earnest about going up

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an.%] | TO HELEN THOREAU. 115  
  
the river to rusticate for six weeks, and issues a  
new periodical called “The Present” in Sep-  
tember.) Also Horace Greeley, editor of the  
“Tribuno,” who is cheerfully in earnest, at his  
office of all work, a hearty New Hampshire boy  
as one would wish to meet, and says, “ Now be  
neighborly,” and believes only, or mainly, first,  
in the Sylvania Association, somewhere in Penn-  
sylvania ; and, secondly, and most of all, in a  
new association to go into operation soon in New  
Jersey, with which he is connected. Edward  
Palmer came down to see me Sunday before  
last. As for Waldo and Tappan, we have  
strangely dodged one another, and have not met  
for some weeks.  
  
I believe I have not told you anything about  
Luvretia Mott. It was a good while ago that  
I heard her at the Quaker Church in Hester  
Street. She is a preacher, and it was adver-  
tised that she would be present on that day. I  
liked all the proceedings very well, their plainly  
greater harmony and sincerity than elsewhere.  
‘They do nothing in a hurry. Every one that  
walks up the aisle in his square coat and ex-  
pansive hat has a history, and comes from a  
house toa house. ‘The women come in one after  
another in their Quaker bonnets and handker-  
chiefs, looking all like sisters or so many chick-  
adees. At length, after a long silence — wait-

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116 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE, (1888,  
  
ing for the Spirit— Mrs. Mott rose, took off  
her bonnet, and began to utter very deliberately  
what the Spirit suggested. Her self-possession  
was something to see, if all else failed; but it  
did not, Her subject was, “The Abuse of the  
Bible,” and thence she straightway digressed to  
slavery and the degradation of woman. It was  
a good speoch, — transcendentalism in its mild-  
est form. She sat down at length, and, after a  
long and decorous silence, in which some seemed  
to be really digesting her words, the elders shook  
hands, and the meeting dispersed. On the whole,  
T liked their ways and the plainness of their  
meeting-house. It looked as if it was indeed  
made for service.  
  
I think that Stearns Wheeler has left a gap  
in the community not easy to be filled. ‘Though  
he did not exhibit the highest qualities of the  
scholar, he promised, in a remarkable degree,  
many of the essential and rarer ones ; and his  
patient industry and energy, his reverent love  
of letters, and his proverbial accuracy, will cause  
him to be associated in my memory even with  
many venerable names of former days, It was  
not wholly unfit that so pure a lover of books  
should have ended his pilgrimage at the great  
bookmart of the world. I think of him as  
healthy and brave, and am confident that if he  
had lived, he would have proved useful in more

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5] 10 MRS. THOREAU. 117  
  
ways than I can describe, He would have been  
authority on all matters of fact, and a sort of  
connecting link between men and scholars of  
different walks and tastes. The literary enter-  
prises he was planning for himself and friends  
remind me of an older and more studious time.  
So much, then, remains for us to do who sur-  
vive. Love to all. Tell all my friends in Con-  
cord that I do not send my love, but retain it  
still.  
Your affectionate brother.  
  
20 MRS, THOREAU (AT CONCORD).  
Searex Ista, Angust 0, 184,  
  
Dear Morter,— As Mr. William Emerson  
is going to Concord on Tuesday, I must not omit  
sending a line by him, — though I wish I had  
something more weighty for so direct a post. I  
believe I directed my last letter to you by mis-  
takes but it must have appeared that it was  
addressed to Helen, At any rate, this is to you  
without mistake.  
  
Lam chiefly indebted to your letters for what  
Thave learned of Concord and family news, and  
am very glad when I get one. I should have  
liked to be in Walden woods with you, but not  
with the railroad. I think of you all very  
often, and wonder if you are still separated  
from me only by so many miles of earth, or

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118 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. ss,  
  
so many miles of memory, This life we live  
is a strange dream, and I don't believe at  
all any account men give of it. Methinks I  
should be content to sit at the backdoor in Con-  
cord, under the poplar-tree, henceforth forever.  
Not that I am homesick at all, —for places are  
strangely indifferent to me,—but Concord is  
still a eynosure to my eyes, and I find it hard  
to attach it, even in imagination, to the rest of  
the globe, and tell where the seam is.  
  
I fancy that this Sunday evening you are  
poring over some select book, almost transcen-  
dental perchance, or else “ Burgh’s Dignity,”  
or Massillon, or the “Christian Examiner.”  
Father has just taken one more look at the gar-  
den, and is now absorbed in Chaptelle, or read-  
ing the newspaper quite abstractadly, only look-  
ing up occasionally over his spectacles to see  
how the rest are engaged, and not ‘to miss any  
newer news that may not be in the paper. Helen  
has slipped in for the fourth time to learn the  
very latest item. Sophia, I suppose, is at Ban-  
gor; but Aunt Louisa, without doubt, is just  
flitting away to some good meeting, to save the  
credit of you all.  
  
It is still a cardinal virtue with me to keep  
awake. I find it impossible to write or read  
except at rare intervals, but am, generally speak-  
ing, tougher than formerly. I could make a

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2. 25,] 70 MRS. THOREAU. 119  
  
pedestrian tour round the world, and sometimes  
think it would perhaps be better to do at once  
the things I can, rather than be trying to do  
what at present I cannot do well. However, I  
shall awake sooner or later.  
  
I have been translating some Greek, and  
reading English pootry, and a month ago sent a  
paper to the “Democratic Review,” which, at  
Tength, they were sorry they could not accept;  
but they could not adopt the sentiments. How-  
ever, they were very polite, and earnest that I  
should send them something else, or reform  
that.  
  
I go moping about the fields and woods here  
as I did in Concord, and, it seems, am thought  
to be a surveyor, —an Eastern man inquiring  
narrowly into the condition and value of land,  
ete., here, preparatory to an extensive specula-  
tion. One neighbor observed to me, in a mys  
terious and half inquisitive way, that he sup-  
posed I must be pretty well acquainted with the  
state of things; that I kept pretty close; he  
didn’t seo any surveying instruments, but per-  
haps I had them in my pocket.  
  
T have received Helen’s note, but have not  
heard of Frisbie Hoar yet! She is a faint  
hearted writer, who could not take the responsi.  
  
1 At present Senator Hoar of Massachusetts, but then in  
‘Harvard College.

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120 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1888,  
  
bility of blotting one sheet alone. However, I  
  
like very well the blottings I get. Tell her I  
  
have not seen Mrs. Child nor Mrs. Sedgwick.  
Love to all from your affectionate son.  
  
‘TO R. W. EMERSON (AT CONCORD).  
Stare Intanp, Augut 7, 184%  
  
‘My pear Frrenp,—I fear I have nothing  
to send you worthy of so good an opportunity.  
Of New York I still know but little, though  
‘out of so many thousands there are no doubt  
‘many units whom it would be worth my while  
to know. Mr. James? talks of going to Ger  
‘many soon with his wife to learn the language.  
He says he must know it; can never learn it  
here ; there he may absorb it and is very anxious  
to learn beforehand where he had best locate  
himself to enjoy the advantage of the highest  
culture, learn the language in its purity, and not  
exceed his limited means. I referred him to  
Longfellow. Perhaps you can help him.  
  
T have had a pleasant talk with Channing;  
and Grecley, too, it was refreshing to meet.  
‘They were both much pleased with your crit  
cism on Carlyle, but thought that you had over-  
looked what chiefly concerned them in the book,  
—its practical aim and merits.  
  
T have also spent some pleasant hours with  
  
3 Henry Jame, Senior.

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26) 70 R. W. EMERSON. 121  
  
‘Waldo and Tappan at their counting-room, or  
rather intelligence office.  
  
T must still reckon myself with the innumer-  
able army of invalids, —undoubtedly in a fair  
field they would rout the well, —though I am  
tougher than formerly. Methinks I could paint  
the sleepy god more truly than the poets have  
done, from more intimate experience. Indeed,  
T have not kept my eyes very steadily open to  
the things of this world of late, and hence have  
little to report concerning them. However, I  
trust the awakening will come before the last  
trump,—and then perhaps I may remember  
some of my dreams,  
  
T study the aspects of commerce at its Nar-  
rows here, where it passes in review before me,  
and this seems to be beginning at the right end  
to understand this Babylon, Ihave made avery  
rude translation of the Seven against Thebes,  
and Pindar too I have looked at, and wish he  
was better worth translating. I believe even  
the best things are not equal to their fame.  
Perhaps it would be better to translate fame  
itself, — or is not that what the poets themselves  
do? However, I have not done with Pindar  
yet. I sont a long article on Etzler’s book to  
the “ Demoeratic Review” six weeks ago, which  
at length they have determined not to accept,  
as they could not subscribe to all the opinions,

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122 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1843,  
  
but asked for other matter, — purely literary,  
I suppose. O'Sullivan wrote me that articles of  
this kind have to be referred to the circle who,  
it seems, are represented by this journal, and  
said something about “collective we” and \* ho-  
mogeneity.”  
Pray don’t think of Bradbury & Soden \* any  
more, —  
“For good deed done through praiere  
Tnsold and bought too dear wis,  
‘Tohheria that of grt valor i”  
I see that they have given up their shop here,  
Say to Mrs. Emerson that Tam glad to re-  
member how she too dwells there in Concord,  
and shall send her anon some of the thoughts  
that belong to her. As for Edith, I soem to  
see a star in the east over where the young child  
is, Remember me to Mrs. Brown.  
  
‘These letters for the most part explain them-  
  
1 Emerson had written, July 20, “I am sorry to say that  
wwhon T called on Bradbury & Soden, nearly a mouth ago,  
  
   
  
‘their partner, in their abseneo, informed mo that they could  
not pay you, at preset, any part of their debt on account of  
the Boston Miscalany. After much talking, all the promise  
Iho could offer waa ‘that within a year it would probably be  
  
certainly looks very slender.  
  
   
  
‘psid’— a probability wl  
‘The very worst thing he  
should take your payment in the form of Boston Miscellanies  
‘Laball not fil to refresh their memory at interval.”

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1.2] EMERSON TO THOREAU. 123  
  
selves, with the aid of several to Thoreau’s fam-  
ily, which the purpose of Emerson, in 1865, to  
present his friend in a stoieal character, had ex-  
‘eluded from the collection then printed. Men-  
tion of C. S. Wheeler and his sad death in Ger-  
many had come to him from Emerson, as well  
as from his own family at Concord, —of whose  
‘occupations Thorean gives so genial a picture in  
the letter of August 6, to his mother. Emerson  
wrote: “You will have read and heard the sad  
news to the little village of Lincoln, of Stearns  
‘Wheeler's death. Such an overthrow to the  
hopes of his parents made me think more of  
them than of the loss the community will suffer  
in bis kindness, diligence, and ingenuous mind.”  
He died at Leipsic, in the midst of Greek stud-  
ies which have since been taken up and carried -  
farther by a child of Concord, Professor Good-  
win of the same university. Henry James,  
several times mentioned in the correspondence,  
was the moral and theological essayist (father  
of the novelist Henry James, and the distin-  
guished Professor James of Harvard), who was  
so striking a personality in the Concord and  
Cambridge cirele for many years. W. H. Chan-  
ning was a Christian Socialist fifty years ago,  
—cousin of Ellery Channing, and nephew and  
Diographer of Dr. Channing. Both he and Hor-  
ace Greeley were then deeply interested in the

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124 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. sss,  
  
Fourierist scheme of association, one develop-  
ment of which was going on at Brook Farm,  
under direction of George Ripley, and another,  
differing in design, at Fruitlands, under Bron-  
son Alcott and Charles Lane. ‘The jocose allu-  
sions of Thoreau to his Jones ancestors (the de-  
scendants of the Tory Colonel Jones of Weston)  
had this foundation in fact,—that his uncle,  
Charles Dunbar, soon to be named in connec-  
tion with Daniel Webster, suffered from a sort  
of lethargy, which would put him to sleep in the  
midst of conversation. Webster had heen re-  
tained in the once famous “ Wyman case,” of a  
bank officer changed with fraud, and had exerted  
his great forensic talent for a few days in the  
Concord courthouse. Emerson wrote Thoreau,  
“You will have heard of the Wyman trial, and  
the stir it made in the village. But the Cliff  
and Walden knew nothing of that.”  
  
‘TO MRS, THOREAU (A CONCORD).  
Casrusxrox, Tossday, August 20, 1848  
  
Dear Morner,— Mr. Emerson bas just  
given me warning that he is about to send to  
Concord, which I will endeavor to improve. I  
am a great deal more wakeful than I was, and  
growing stout in other respects, —so that I may  
yet accomplish something in the literary way  
indeed, I should have done so before now but

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26.) 70 MRS. THOREAU. 125  
  
for the slowness and poverty of the “ Reviews”  
themselves. I have tried sundry methods of  
earning money in the city, of late, but without  
success: have rambled into every bookseller’s  
‘or publisher's house, and discussed their affairs  
with them, Some propose to me to do what an  
honest man cannot, Among others I conversed  
with the Harpers—to see if they might not find  
‘me useful to thom; but they say that they are  
making $50,000 annually, and their motto is to  
let well alone. I find that I talk with these  
poor men as if I wore over head and ears in  
business, and a few thousands were no consider-  
ation with me, I almost reproach myself for  
bothering them so to no purpose; but it is a  
very valuable experience, and the best introduc-  
tion I could have.  
  
‘We have had a tremendous rain here last  
Monday night and Tuesday morning. I was in  
the city at Giles Waldo’s, and the streets at  
daybreak were absolutely impassable for the  
water. Yet the accounts of the storm that you  
may have seen are exaggerated, as indeed are  
“all such things, to my imagination. On Sunday.  
I heard Mr. Bellows preach here on the island ;  
but the fine prospect over the Bay and Narrows,  
from where I sat, preached louder than he,—  
though he did far better than the average, if I  
remember aright. I should have liked to seo

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126 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. tre83,  
  
Daniel Webster walking about Concord; I sup-  
pose the town shook, every step he took. But  
I trust there were some sturdy Concordians who  
were not tumbled down by the jar, but repro-  
sented still the upright town. Where was  
George Minott? he would not have gone far to  
seo him. Uncle Charles should have been there,  
he might as well have been catching cat naps  
in Concord as anywhere,  
  
And then, what a whetterup of his memory  
this event would have been! You'd have had  
all the classmates again in alphabetical order  
reversed, —‘and Seth Hunt and Bob Smith —  
and he was a student of my father’s,—and  
where ’s Put now? and I wonder — you—if  
Henry’s been to see George Jones yet! A lit  
tle account with Stow,— Baleom, — Bigelow,  
‘poor miserable t-o-ad,— (sound asleep.) I vow,  
you,—what noise was that?— saving grace —  
and few there be—That’s clear as preaching,  
—Easter Brooks,— morally depraved, — How  
charming is divine philosophy, —some wise and  
some otherwise, — Heighho! (sound asleep  
again) Webster’s a smart fellow — bears his age  
well, —how old should you think he was? you  
—does he look as if he were ten years younger  
than 1?”  
  
met, or rather, was overtaken by Fuller, who  
tended for Mr. How, the other day, in Broad-

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7.26) TO R. W. EMERSON. 127  
  
way. He dislikes New York very much. The  
Mercantile Library,—that is, its Librarian, pre-  
sented me with a stranger's ticket, for a month,  
and I was glad to read the “Reviews” there,  
and Carlyle’s last article. I have bought some  
pantaloons; stockings show no holes yet. ‘These  
pantaloons cost $2.25 ready made.  
Tn haste.  
  
‘TO R. W. EMERSON (AT CONCORD).  
Srarex Totano, Sopember 1, 148  
Dear Farenp,—Miss Fuller will tell you the  
news from these parts, so I will only devote  
these few moments to what she doesn’t know as  
‘well. I was absent only one day and night from  
tho island, the family expecting me back imme-  
diately. I was to earn a certain sum before  
winter, and thought it worth the while to try  
various experiments. I carried “The Agricul-  
turist” about the city, and up as far as Manhat-  
tanville, and called at the Croton Reservoir,  
where, indeed, they did not want any # Agricul-  
  
turists,” but paid well enough in their way.  
Literature comes to poor market here; and  
even the little that I write is more than will sell.  
I have tried “The Dem. Review,” “Tho New  
Mirror,” and “Brother Jonathan.”? ‘The last  
  
2 Tt may need to be said that those were New York week  
lies — the Mirror, edited in part by NP. Willis, and the New

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128 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 1848,  
  
two, as well as the “New World,” are over-  
whelmed with eontributions which cost nothing,  
and are worth no more. “The Knickerbocker”  
is too poor, and only “The Ladies’ Companion”  
pays. O'Sullivan is printing the manuscript I  
sent him some time ago, having objected only to  
my want of sympathy with the Committee.  
  
T doubt if you have made more corrections in  
my manuscript than I should have done ere this,  
though they may be better; but Iam glad you  
have taken any pains with it. I have not pre-  
pared any translations for the “ Dial,” supposing  
there would be no room, though it is the only  
place for them.  
  
T have been seeing men during these days,  
and trying experiments upon trees; have in-  
serted three or four hundred buds (quite a  
Buddhist, one might say). Books I have access  
to through your brother and Mr. MeKean, and  
have read a good deal. Quarles’s «Divine Po-  
ems” as well as “ Emblems” are quite a disoov-  
ery.  
  
Tam very sorry Mrs. Emerson is so sick. Re-  
member me to her and to your mother. I like  
to think of your living on the banks of the Mill-  
  
   
  
World by Park Benjamin, formerly of Boston, whose dstine-  
tom i ie to have fret named Hawthorne na a writer of goniun.  
“Mins Fuller" was Margaret, — not yet resident in Now York,  
“whither sho went to live in 1844,

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26) TO HIS MOTHER. 129  
  
brook, in the midst of the garden with all its  
weeds; for what are botanical distinctions at  
this distance?  
  
‘to HIS MoruER (aT coxconn)-  
Srarex Ie.ann, Ostober 1, 1868,  
  
Dear Morner,—I hold together remarka-  
bly well as yet, — speaking of my outward linen  
and woolen man; no holes more than I brought  
away, and no stitches needed yet. It is mar  
velous. I think the Fates must be on my side,  
for there is less than a plank between me and —  
Time, to say the least. As for Eldorado, that  
is far off yet. My bait will not tempt the rats,  
—they are too well fed. ‘The Demoeratie Re-  
view” is poor, and ean only afford half or quar-  
ter pay, which it wild dos and they say there  
is a “Lady's Companion” that pays, — but I  
could not write anything companionable. How-  
ever, speculate as we will, itis quite gratuitous;  
for life, nevertheless and never the more, goes  
steadily on, well or ill-ed, and clothed somehow,  
and “honor bright” withal. It is very gratify-  
ing to live in the prospect of great successes  
always; and for that purpose we must leave a  
sufficient foreground to seo them through. AIL  
the painters prefer distant prospects for the  
greater breadth of view, and delicacy of tint.  
But this is no news, and describes no new con-  
ditions.

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180 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (163,  
  
‘Meanwhile I am somnambulic at least, — stir-  
ring in my sleep; indeed, quite awake. I read  
a good deal, and am pretty well known in the  
libraries of New York. Am in with the libra-  
rian (one Dr. Forbes) of the Society Library,  
who has lately been to Cambridge to learn lib-  
erality, and has come back to let me take out  
some un-take-out-able books, which I was threat-  
ening to read on the spot. And Mr. MeKean,  
of the Mereantile Library, is a true gentleman  
(@ former tutor of mine), and offers me every  
privilege there. I have from him a perpetual  
stranger’s ticket, and a citizen’s rights besides,  
—all which privileges I pay handsomely for by  
improving.  
  
‘A canoe race “came off” on the Hudson the  
other day, between Chippeways and New York-  
ers, which must have been as moving a sight as  
the buffalo hunt which I witnessed. But canoes  
and buffaloes are all lost, as is everything here,  
in the mob. It is only the people have come to  
see one another. Let them advertise that there  
will be a gathering at Hoboken, — having bar-  
gained with the ferryboats, — and there will be,  
and they need not throw in the buffaloes.  
  
T have erossed the bay twenty or thirty times,  
and have seen a great many immigrants going  
up to the city for the first time : Norwegians,  
who carry their old-fashioned farming-tools to

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25) TO HIS MOTHER. 181  
  
the West with them, and will buy nothing here  
for fear of being cheated ; English operatives,  
known by their pale faces and stained hands,  
who will recover their birthright in a little cheap  
sun and wind; English travelers on their way  
to the Astor House, to whom I have done the  
honors of the city ; whole families of emigrants  
cooking their dinner upon the pavement, — all  
sunburnt, so that you are in doubt where the  
foreigner’s face of flesh begins ; their tidy clothes  
laid on, and then tied to their swathed bodies,  
which move about like a bandaged finger,— caps  
et on the head as if woven of the hair, which  
is still growing at the roots,—each and all  
busily cooking, stooping from time to time over  
the pot, and having something to drop in it, that  
so they may be entitled to take something ont,  
forsooth. They look like respectable but strait  
‘ened people, who may turn out to be Counts when  
they get to Wisconsin, and will have this expe-  
rience to relate to their children.  
  
Seeing so many people from day to day, one  
comes to have less respect for flesh and bones,  
and thinks they must be more loosely joined, of,  
Jess firm fibre, than the few he had known, It  
must have a very bad influence on children to  
see so many human beings at once, — mere herds.  
of men.  
  
T came across Henry Bigelow a week ago, sit-

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182 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (164s,  
  
ting in front of a hotel in Broadway, very much  
as if he were under his father’s stoop. He is  
seeking to be admitted into the bar in New York,  
but as yet had not succeeded. I directed him to  
Fuller's store, which he had not found, and in-  
vited him to come and see me if he came to the  
island, Tell Mrs. and Miss Ward that I have  
not forgotten them, and was glad to hear from  
George— with whom I spent last night — that  
they had returned to C. ‘Toll Mrs. Brown that  
it gives me as much pleasure to know that she  
thinks of me and my writing as if I had been  
the author of the piece in question, — but I did  
not even read over the papers I sent. The  
“Mirror” is really the most readable journal  
here. I see that they have printed a short piece  
that I wrote to sell, in the “Dem. Review,”  
and still keep the review of “ Paradise,” that I  
may inelade in it a notice of another book by  
the same author, which they have found, and are  
going to send me.  
  
T don’t know when I shall come home; I like  
to keep that feast in store, Tell Helen that I  
do not see any advertisement for her, and I am  
looking for myself. If I could find a rare open-  
ing, I might be tempted to try with her for a  
year, till T had paid my debts, but for such I  
am sure it is not well to go out of New Eng-  
land. Teachers are but poorly recompensed,

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7. 26.) TO MRS. EMERSON. 133  
  
even here, Tell her and Sophia (if she is not  
gone) to write to me. Father will know that  
this letter is to him as well as to you. I send  
him a paper which usually contains the news, —  
if not all that is stirring, all that has stirred,  
—and even draws a little on the future. I wish  
he would send me, by and by, the paper which  
contains the results of the Cattle Show. You  
must get Helen’s eyes to read this, though she  
is a scoffer at honest penmanship.  
  
To MRS, EMERSON (AT CONCORD).  
Searex IstAxo, October 18, 184,  
My pear Fatenp,—I promised you some  
thoughts long ago, but it would be hard to tell  
whether these are the ones. I suppose that the  
great questions of “ Fate, Freewill, Foreknow-  
edge absolute,” which used to be discussed at  
Concord, are still unsettled. And here comes  
[W. H.] Channing, with his “ Present,” to vex  
the world again,—a rather galvanic movement,  
I think. However, I like the man all the better,  
though his schemes the less. I am sorry for his  
confessions. Faith never makes a confession.  
Have you had the annual berrying party, or  
sat on the Cliffs a whole day this summer? I  
suppose the flowers have fared quite as well since  
Twas not there to scoff at them; and the hens,  
without doubt, keep up their reputation.

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134 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. —\_[15,  
  
T have been reading lately what of Quarle  
poetry I could get. ‘He was a contemporary of  
Herbert, and a kindred spirit. I think you  
would like him, It is rare to find one who was  
so much of a poet and so little of an artist. He  
wrote long poems, almost epics for length, about  
Jonah, Esther, Job, Samson, and Solomon, in-  
terspersed with meditations after a quite original  
plan, — Shepherd’s Oracles, Comedies, Ro-  
mances, Fancies, and Meditations, — the quin-  
tessence of meditation, — and Enchiridions of  
Meditation all divine, — and what he calls his  
Morning Muse ; besides prose works as curious  
as the rest. He was an unwearied Christian,  
and a reformer of some old school withal. Hope-  
lessly quaint, as if he lived all alone and knew  
nobody but his wife, who appears to have rev-  
erenced him. He never doubts his genius; it  
is only he and his God in all the world. He  
uses Ianguage sometimes as greatly as Shake-  
speare ; and though there is not much straight  
grain in him, there is plenty of tough, crooked  
timber. In an age when Herbert is revived,  
Quarles surely ought not to be forgotten.  
  
I will copy a few such sentences, as I should  
read to you if there. Mrs. Brown, too, may  
find some nutriment in them.  
  
How does the Saxon Edith do? Can you  
tell yet to which school of philosophy she be-

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70 R. W. EMERSON. 135  
  
— whether she will be a fair saint of some  
Christian order, or a follower of Plato and the  
heathen? Bid Ellen a good-night or a good-  
morning from me, and see if sho will remember  
where it comes from; and remember me to Mrs.  
Brown, and your mother, and Elizabeth Hoar.  
  
   
  
TO R. W. EMERSON (AT CONCORD).  
Scare Tstann, Ostobor 17,1843.  
  
‘My pear Frrexp,—TI went with my pupil  
to the Fair of the American Institute, and so  
lost a visit from Tappan, whom I met returning  
from the Island. I should have liked to hear  
more news from his lips, though he had left me  
a letter and the “Dial,” which is a sort of eir-  
cular letter itself. I find Channing’s? letters  
full of life, and I enjoy their wit highly. ‘Lane  
writes straight and solid, like a guideboard, but  
I find that I put off the “ social tendencies” to  
a future day, which may never come. He is  
always Shaker fare, quite as Iuxurious as his  
principles will allow. I feel as if T were ready  
to be appointed a committee on poetry, I have  
  
1 The allusion hore isto Elery Channing's“ Youth of the  
Poot and Pinte,” in tho Dial—an unfinished autobiography  
"The Present of W. H. Chansing, his cousin, naaed above, was  
1 short-lived periodical, borun September 15, 1843, and ended  
in April, ISL McKean” wan Henry Swasey McKean, who  
‘was a classmate of Charles Ememon at Harvard in 1828, a  
tutor thore fa 1890-35, and who did in 1857,

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186 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 3848,  
  
got my eyes so whetted and proved of late, like  
the knife-sharpener I saw at the Fair, certified  
to have been “in constant use in a gentleman’s  
family for more than two years.” Yes, I ride  
along the ranks of the English poets, casting  
terrible glances, and some I blot out, and some  
I spare. McKean has imported, within the  
year, several new editions and collections of old  
poetry, of which I have the reading, but there  
is a good deal of chaff to a little meal, — hardly  
worth bolting. I have just opened Bacon's“ Ad-  
vaneement of Learning” for the first time, which  
I read with great delight. It is more like what  
Seott’s novels were than anything.  
  
I see that I was very blind to send you my  
manuscript in such a state; but I have a good  
second sight, at least. I could still shake it in  
the wind to some advantage, if it would hold  
together. There are some sad mistakes in the  
printing. Tt is a little unfortunate that the  
“Ethnical Seriptures ” should hold out so well,  
though it does really hold out. ‘The Bible ought:  
not to be very large. Is it not singular that,  
while the religious world is gradually picking  
to pieces its old testaments, here are some com-  
ing slowly after, on the seashore, picking up the  
durable relies of perhaps older books, and put  
ting them together again?  
  
Your Letter to Contributors is excellent, and

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m2) TO R. W. EMERSON. 187  
  
hits the nail on the+head. It will taste sour to  
their palates at first, no doubt, but it will bear  
a sweet fruit at last. I like the poetry, espe-  
cially the Autumn verses. They ring true.  
‘Though I am quite weather-beaten with poetry,  
having weathered so many epies of late. The  
“Sweep Ho!” sounds well this way. But I have  
good deal of fault to find with your “Ode to  
Beauty.” ‘The tune is altogether unworthy of  
the thoughts. You slope too quickly to the  
thyme, as if that trick had better be performed  
‘as soon as possible, or as if you stood over the  
line with a hatchet, and chopped off the verses a8  
they came out, some short and some long. But  
give us a long reel, and we'll cut it up to suit  
ourselves. Tt sounds like parody. ‘Thee knew  
I of old,” “Remediless thirst,” are some of  
those stereotyped lines. Iam frequently re-  
minded, I believe, of Jane Taylor's “ Philoso-  
pher’s Seales,” and how the world  
  
“Flew ot with a bounce,”  
  
which  
  
   
  
“Yerked the philosopher out of his cell;  
or else of  
“From the climes of the mun all war-wor and weary.”  
  
I had rather have the thought come ushered  
with a flourish of oaths and curses, Yet I love  
your poetry as I do little else that is near and

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138 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. 1843,  
  
recent, especially whien you got fairly round the  
end of the line, and are not thrown back upon  
the rocks. To read the lecture on “The Comie”  
is as good as to be in our town meeting or Ly-  
eum once more,  
  
Tam glad that the Concord farmers ploughed  
well this year ; it promises that something will  
‘be done these summers. But I am suspicious of  
that Brittonner, who advertises so many cords ”  
of good oak, chestnut, and maple wood for sale.  
Good! ay, good for what? And there shall not  
be left a stone upon a stone. But no matter, —  
let them hack away. The sturdy Irish arms that  
do the work are of more worth than oak or  
maple. Methinks I could look with equanimity  
upon along street of Irish cabins, and pigs and  
children reveling in the genial Concord dirt; and  
I should still find my Walden wood and Fair  
‘Haven in their tanned and happy face:  
  
I write this in the cornfield — it being wash-  
ingday — with the inkstand Elizabeth Hoar  
gave me; though it is not redolent of corn-  
  
   
  
3 This inkstand was prosonted by Miss Hoar, with a note  
ated “ Boston, May 2, 1843," which deserves to be copied : —  
  
‘Drar Hewry,—The rain prevented me from seeing you  
‘the night before I eame away, to leave with you a parting as  
‘surance of good will and good hope. We have become better  
acquainted within the two past years than in our whole life as  
schoolmates and neighbors before ; and I am unwilling to let  
Jou go away without telling you that I, mong your other

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2.26.) THE DIAL. 189  
  
stalks, I fear. Let me not be forgotten by  
Channing and Hawthorne, nor our gray-suited  
neighbor under the hill [Edmund Hosmer].  
  
This letter will be best explained by a refer-  
ence to the “Dial” for October, 1843, The  
“ Ethnical Scriptures” were selections from the  
Brahminical books, from Confucius, ete, such  
as we have since seen in great abundance. The  
Autumn verses are by Channing; “Sweep  
Ho!” by Ellen Sturgis, afterwards Mrs.  
Hooper ; the “Youth of the Poet and Painter”  
also by Channing. The Letter to Contributors,  
which is headed simply “A Letter,” is by Em-  
erson, and has been much overlooked by his  
later readers; his “ Ode to Beauty” is very well  
mown, and does not deserve the slashing cen-  
sure of Thoreau, though, as it now stands, it is  
better than first printed. Instead of  
  
friends, shall miss you much, and follow you with remem-  
bance aod all best wishes and confidence. Will you take this  
Little inkstand and try if i will carry ink safely from Concord  
to Staten Island ? and the pen, which, if you ean write with  
steel, may be made sometimes the interpreter of friendly  
‘thoughts to those whom you leave beyond the reach of your  
voice, —or record the inspirations of Nature, who, I doubt  
rot, will be aa faithful to you who trust her in the sea-gist  
Staten Island at in Concord woods and meadows. Good-by,  
and of xpdrrew, which, a wise man say, ia the only salutation  
‘efor the wise  
‘Tealy your friend, E. Hoan

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140 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. (1843,  
  
“Love drinks at thy banquet  
Renedilese thie,”  
  
‘we now have the perfect phrase,  
  
“Love drinks at thy fountain  
False waters of thirst”  
  
“The Comic” is also Emerson's, There is a  
poem, “The Sail,” by William Tappan, so often  
named in these letters, and a sonnet by Charles  
‘A. Dana, now of the “New York Sun.”  
  
‘TO HELEN THOREAU (AT CONCORD).  
Svaran Tavano, October 18, 188,  
  
Dear Hetex,— What do you mean by say-  
ing that “we have written eight times by private  
opportunity”? Is n’t it the more the better?  
And am I not glad of it? But people have a  
habit of not letting me know it when they go to  
Concord from New York. I endeavored to get  
you “The Present” when I was last in the city,  
but they were all sold; and now another is out,  
which I will send, if I get it. I did not send the  
“Democratic Review,” because I had no copy,  
and my piece was not worth fifty cents. You  
think that Channing's words would apply to me  
too, as living more in the natural than the moral  
world; but I think that you mean the world of  
men and women rather, and reformers generally.  
‘My objection to Channing and all that frater-

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an.) T0 HELEN THOREAU. 141  
  
nity is, that they need and deserve sympathy  
themselves rather than are able to render it to  
others. They want faith, and mistake their pri-  
vate ail for an infected atmosphere; but let any  
one of them recover hope for a moment, and  
right his partiewar grievance, and he will no  
longer train in that company. ‘To speak or do  
anything that shall concern mankind, one must  
speak and act as if well, or from that grain of  
health which he has left. This “ Present” book  
indeed is blue, but the hue of its thoughts is  
yellow. Tsay these things with the less hesita-  
tion, because I have the jaundice myself ; but I  
also know what it is to be well. But do not  
think that one can escape from mankind who is  
one of them, and is so constantly dealing with  
them.  
  
T ould not undertake to form a nucleus of an  
institution for the development of infant minds,  
where none already existed. It would be too  
cruel. And then, as if looking all this while one  
way with benevolence, to walk off another about  
one’s own affairs suddenly! Something of this  
kind is an unavoidable objection to that.  
  
I am very sorry to hear such bad news about  
Aunt Maria; but I think that the worst is al-  
ways the least to be apprehended, for nature is  
averse to it as well as we. I trust to hear that  
she is quite well soon. I send love to her and

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142 YEARS OF DISCIPLINE. Lasss,  
  
Aunt Jane. For three months I have not known:  
whether to think of Sophia as in Bangor or Con-  
cord, and now you say that she is going directly.  
‘Tell her to write to me, and establish her where-  
abouts, and also to get well directly. And see  
that she has something worthy to do when she  
gots down there, for that’s the best remedy for  
disease,  
‘Your affectionate brother,  
HL D. Tuorzav.

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Tl GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT.  
  
‘Tans was the golden age of hope and achieve-  
ment for the Concord poets and philosophers.  
‘Their ranks were not yet. broken by death (for  
‘Stearns Wheeler was hardly one of them), their  
spirits were high, and their faith in each othér  
unbounded. Emerson wrote thus from Concord,  
while Thoreau was perambulating Staten Island  
and calling on “ the false booksellers :” “Ellery  
Channing is excellent company, and we walk in  
all directions. He remembers you with great  
faith and hope; thinks you ought not to see  
Concord again these ten years — that you ought  
to grind up fifty Concords in your mill—and  
much other opinion and counsel he holds in store  
on this topic. Hawthorne walked with me yes-  
terday afternoon, and not until after our return  
did I read his ‘ Celestial Railroad,’ which has a  
serene strength which we cannot afford not to  
praise, in this low life.”  
  
‘The Transcendentalists had their “Quarterly,”  
and even their daily organ, for Mr. Greeley put  
the “Tribune” at their service, and gave places

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144 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (8,  
  
on its staff to Margaret Fuller and her brother-  
inJaw Channing, and would gladly have made  
room for Emerson in its columns, if the swift  
utterance of a morning paper had suited his  
habit of publication. While in the Tribune”  
office, Ellery Channing thus wrote to Thoreau,  
after he had returned home, disappointed with  
New York, to make lead pencils in his father’s  
shop at Concord.  
  
BLLERY CHANNING TO THOREAU (AT CONCORD).  
March 5, 1845.  
  
‘My pear Tuoreav,—The handwriting of  
your letter is s0 miserable that Tam not sure I  
have made it out. If I have, it seems to me you  
are the same old sixpence you used to be, rather  
rusty, but a genuine piece, I see nothing for  
you in this earth but that field which I once  
christened “Briars;” go out upon that, build  
yourself a hut, and there begin the grand pro-  
cess of devouring yourself alive. I see no alter-  
native, no other hope for you. Eat yourself  
up; you will eat nobody else, nor anything else.  
Concord is just as good a place as any other;  
there are, indeed, more people in the streets of  
that village than in the streets of this. ‘This is  
a singularly muddy town; muddy, solitary, and  
silent.  
  
In your Tine, I have not done a great deal

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aa] CHANNING TO THOREAU. 145  
  
since I arrived here; I do not mean the Pencil  
line, but the Staten Island line, having been  
there once, to walk on a beach by the tele-  
graph, but did not visit the scene of your do-  
minical duties. Staten Island is very distant  
from No. 30 Ann Street. I saw polite William  
Emerson in November last, but have not caught  
any glimpse of him since then. Tam as usual  
suffering the various alternations from agony to  
despair, from hope to fear, from pain to plens-  
ure. Such wretched one-sided productions as  
you know nothing of the universal man; you  
may think yourself well off.  
  
That baker, Hecker, who used to live on two  
crackers a day, I have not seen; nor Black, nor  
‘Vethake, nor Danesaz, nor Rynders, nor any of  
Emerson's ol cronies, excepting James, a lit.  
tle fat, rosy Swedenborgian amateur, with the  
look of a broker, and the brains and heart of  
a Pascal. William Channing, I see nothing  
of him; he is the dupe of good feelings, and I  
have all-toomany of these now. I have seen  
something of your friends, Waldo and Tappan,  
and have also seen our good man McKean,  
the keeper of that stupid place, the Mercantile  
  
Library.  
  
‘Acting on Channing’s hint, and an old fancy  
  
of his own, Thoreau, in the summer of 1845,

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146 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1683,  
  
built his cabin at Walden and retired there;  
while Hawthorne entered the Salem Custom-  
house, and Alcott, returning defeated from his  
Fruitlands paradise, was struggling with poverty  
and discouragement at Concord. Charles Lane,  
his English comrade, withdrew to New York or  
its vicinity, and in 1846 to London, whence he  
had come in 1842, full of hope and enthusiasm.  
‘A few notes of his, or about him, may here find  
place. ‘They were sent to Thoreau at Concord,  
and show that Lane continued to value his can-  
did friend. ‘The first, written after leaving  
‘Fruitlands, introduces the late Father Hecker,  
who had been one of the family there, to Tho-  
veau. The second and third relate to the sale  
of the Aleott-Lane library, and other matters,  
  
CHARLES LANE TO THOREAU (AT CONCORD).  
Bosrox, December 3, 1845,  
Dear Frrexp,—As well as my wounded  
hands permit, I have seribbled something for  
friend Hecker, which if agreeable may be the  
‘opportunity for entering into closer relations  
with him; a course I think likely to be mutually  
encouraging, as well as beneficial to all men.  
But let it reach him in the manner most con-  
formable to your own feelings. That from all  
perils of a false position you may shortly be re-  
Tieved, and landed in the position where you feel

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at] CHARLES LANE TO THOREAU. 147  
  
“at home,” is the sincere wish of yours most  
friendly,  
Cuantes Lane.  
  
Mu Haxny Tuorxac,  
East House, Coach Ofice.  
  
New Yous, Febraary 17, 146.  
  
Dear Frrexp,—The books you were so kind  
as to deposit about two years and a half ago  
with Messrs. Wiley & Putnam have all been  
sold, but as they were left in your name it is  
needful, in strict business, that you should send  
an order to them to pay to me the amount due.  
I will therefore thank you to inclose me such  
an order at your earliest convenience in a letter  
addressed to your admiring friend,  
  
Cuartes Lane,  
Post Office, New York City.  
  
Boontox, N. J March 0, 1546,  
  
Dear Frrenp,—If the human nature parti-  
cipates of the elemental I am no longer in dan-  
ger of becoming suburban, or super-urban, that  
is to say, too urbane. I am now more likely to  
be converted into a petrifaction, for slabs of rock.  
and foaming waters never so abounded in my  
neighborhood. A very Peter I shall become:  
on this rock He has built his church. You  
would find much joy in these eminences and in  
the views therefrom,

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148 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (166,  
  
‘My pen has been necessarily unproductive in  
the continued motion of the sphere in which I  
have lately been moved. You, I suppose, have  
not passed the winter to the world’s unprofit.  
  
‘You never have seen, as I have, the book with  
a preface of 450 pages and a text of 60. My  
letter is like unto it.  
  
have only to add that your letter of the 26th  
February did its work, and that I submit to you  
cordial thanks for the same.  
  
Yours truly,  
Cas. Lane.  
  
I hope to hear occasionally of your doings  
and those of your compeers in your classic  
ploughings and diggings.  
  
‘To Huxny D. Tnoneac,  
  
Concord Woods.  
  
Thoreau’s letters to Lane have not come into  
any editor's hands. In England, before Lane's  
discovery by Aleott, in 1842, he had been the  
editor of the “Mark-Lane Gazette” (or some-  
thing similar), which gave the price-current of  
wheat, ete. in the English markets, Emerson  
found him in Hampstead, London, in February,  
1848, and wrote to Thoreau: \*T went last Sun-  
day, for the first time, to see Lane at Hamp-  
stead, and dined with him, He was full of

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0] EMERSON TO THOREAU. 149  
  
friendliness and hospitality ; has a school of six-  
teen children, one lady as matron, then Oldham.  
That is all the household. They looked just  
comfortable.”  
  
“Lane instructed me to ask you to forward  
his ‘Dials’ to him, which must be done, if you  
can find them. ‘Three bound volumes are among.  
his books in my library. The fourth volume is  
in unbound numbers at J. Munroe & Co.’s shop,  
received there in a parcel to my address, a day  
or two before I sailed, and which I forgot to  
carry to Concord. It must be claimed without  
delay. It is certainly there, —was opened by  
mo and left; and they can inclose all. four vol-  
umes to Chapman for me.”  
  
This would indicate that he had not lost in-  
terest in the days and events of his American  
sojourn,—unpleasant as some of these must  
have been to tho methodical, prosaie English-  
man.  
  
‘While at Walden, Thoreau wrote but few let-  
ters; there is, however, a brief correspondence  
with Mr. J. E. Cabot, then an active naturalist,  
cobperating with Agassiz in his work on the  
American fishes, who had requested Thoreau to  
procure certain species from Coneord. The let-  
ters were written from the cabin at Walden,  
and it is this same structure that figures in the  
letters from Thoreau to Emerson in England,

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150 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. ws,  
  
as the proposed nucleus of the cottage of poor  
‘Hngh the gardener, before he ran away from  
Concord, a8 there narrated, on a subsequent  
page. The first sending of river-fish was in the  
end of April, 1847. ‘Then followed this let-  
ter: —  
  
‘To ELLIOT CABOT (aT BosTON).  
  
Coxcono, May 8, 1847  
  
Dear Stn,—I believe that I have not yet  
acknowledged the receipt of your notes, and a  
five dollar bill. I am very glad that the fishes  
afforded Mr. Agassiz co much pleasure. Teould  
easily have obtained more specimens of the Ster-  
nothaerus odoratus ; they are quite numerous  
here. I will send more of them erelong. Snap-  
ping turtles are perhaps as frequently met with  
in our mnddy river as anything, but they are  
not always to be had when wanted. It is now  
rather late in the season for them. As no one  
makes a business of seeking them, and they are  
valued for soups, science may be forestalled by  
appetite in this market, and it will be necessary  
to bid pretty high to induce persons to obtain  
or preserve them. I think that from seventy-  
five cents to a dollar apiece would secure all  
that are in any case to be had, and will set this  
price upon their heads, if the treasury of science  
is full enough to warrant it.

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an] 70 ELLIOT CABOT. 151  
  
You will excuse me for taking toll in the  
shape of some, it may be, impertinent and unsei-  
entific inquiries. ‘There are found in the waters  
of the Concord, so far as I know, the following  
Kinds of fishes : —  
  
Pickerel. Besides the common, fishermen dis-  
tinguish the Brook, or Grass Pickerel, which bites  
differently, and has a shorter snout. Those  
caught in Walden, hard by my house, are easily  
distinguished from those caught in the river,  
being much heavier in proportion to their size,  
stouter, firmer fleshed, and lighter colored. ‘Tho  
little pickerel which I sent last, jumped into the  
boat in its fright.  
  
Pouts. ‘Those in the pond are of different  
appearance from those that I have sent.  
  
Breams. Some more green, others more  
brown.  
  
Suckers. The horned, which I sent first, and  
the black. I am not sure whether the Common  
or Boston sucker is found here. Are the three  
which I sent last, which were speared in the river,  
identical with the three Black suckers, taken by  
hand in the brook, which I sent before? I have  
never examined them minutely.  
  
Perch. The river perch, of which I sent five  
specimens in the box, are darker colored than  
those found in the pond. There are myriads of  
small ones in the latter place, and but few large

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152 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. [1s11,  
  
ones. Ihave counted ten transverse bands on  
some of the smaller.  
  
Lampreys. Very scarce since the dams at  
Lowell and Billerica were built.  
  
Shiners. Leuciscus chrysolewcas, silver and  
golden. :  
  
What is the difference?  
  
Roach or Chiverin, Leuciscus pulchellus,  
argenteus, ox what not. The white and the red,  
‘The former described by Storer, but thp latter,  
which deserves distinct notice, not described, to  
my knowledge. Are the minnows (called here  
dace), of which I sent three live specimens, I  
believe, one larger and two smaller, the young of  
this species ?  
  
Trout. Of different appearance in different  
brooks in this neighborhood.  
  
Eds.  
  
Red.finned Minnows, of which I sent you a  
dozen alive. I have never recognized them'in  
any books. Have they any scientific name?  
  
If convenient, will you let Dr. Storer see  
these brook minnows? There is also a kind of  
dace or fresh-water smelt in the pond, which is,  
perhaps, distinct from any of the above. What  
of the above does M. Agassiz particularly wish  
to see? Does he want more specimens of kinds  
which I have already sent? There are also  
minks, muskrats, frogs, lizards, tortoise, snakes,

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00] 70 ELLIOT CABoT. 158  
  
caddice-worms, leeches, muscles, ete., or rather,  
here they are. The funds which you sent me  
are nearly exhausted. Most fishes can now be  
taken with the hook, and it will cost but little  
trouble or money to obtain them. The snapping  
turtles will be the main expense. I should think  
that five dollars more, at least, might be profita-  
  
bly expended.  
  
0 RLUIOT canor (AT nosToN).  
Coxcons, June 1, 1847  
  
Dear Sir,—I send you 15 pouts, 17 pereh,  
18 shiners, 1 larger land tortoise, and 5 muddy  
tortoises, all from the pond by my house. Also  
T perch, 5 shiners, 8 breams, 4 dace? 2 muddy  
tortoises, 5 painted do., and 8 land do,, all from  
the river. One black snake, alive, and one dor-  
mouse? caught last night in my cellar. ‘The  
tortoises were all put in alive; the fishes were  
alive yesterday, i. . Monday, and some this  
morning. Observe the difference between those  
from the pond, which is pure water, and those  
from the river.  
  
T will send the light-eolored trout and the  
pickerel with the longer snout, which is our  
large one, when I meet with them. I have set a  
price upon the heads of snapping turtles, though.  
it is late in the season to get them.  
  
If I wrote red-finned eel, it was a slip of the

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154 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1611,  
  
pen; I meant red-finned minnow. This is their  
name here; though smaller specimens have but  
a slight reddish tinge at the base of the pecto-  
nals.  
Will you, at your leisure, answer these queries ?  
  
Do you mean to say that the twelve banded  
minnows which I sent are undescribed, or only  
one? What are tho scientific names of those  
minnows which have any? Are the four dace I  
send to-day identical with one of the former, and  
what are they called? Is there such a fish as  
the black sucker described, — distinct from the  
common ?  
  
   
  
AGASSIZ 10 THOREAU (AT CONCORD).  
In October, 1849, Agassiz, in reply to a re-  
  
quest from Thoreau that he would lecture in  
  
Bangor, sent this characteristic letter: —  
  
“T remember with much pleasure the time  
when you used to send me specimens from your  
vicinity, and also our short interview in the  
‘Marlborough Chapel! Iam under too many  
obligations of your kindness to forget it. I am  
very sorry that I missed your visit in Boston;  
but for eighteen months T have now been settled  
in Cambridge. It would give me great pleasure  
to engage for the lectures you ask from me for  
the Bangor Lyceum; but I find it has been last:  
  
2 Where Agassiz was giving a courso of Lowell leturws,

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an.2] AGASSIZ TO THOREAU. 155  
  
winter such a heavy tax upon my health, that I  
wish for the present to make no engagements 5  
as I have some hope of making my living this  
year by other efforts, —and beyond the neces.  
sity of my wants, both domestic and scientific,  
T am determined not to exert myself; as all the  
time I can thus secure to myself must be exeln-  
sively devoted to science. My only business is  
my intercourse with nature ; and could I do with-  
out draughtsmen, lithographers, ete, I would  
live still more retired. ‘This will satisfy you that  
whenever you come this way, I shall be delighted  
to see you, —since I have also heard something  
of your mode of living.”  
  
   
  
Agassiz had reason indeed to remember the  
collections made by Thoreau, since (from the  
letters of Mr. Cabot) they aided him much in  
his comparison of the American with the Eu-  
ropean fishes. When the first firkin of Concord  
fish arrived in Boston, where Agassiz was then  
working, “he was highly delighted, and began  
immediately to spread them out and arrange  
them for his draughtsman. Some of the species  
he had seen before, but never in so fresh con-  
dition; others, as the breams and the pout, he  
had seen only in spirits, and the little tortoise he  
knew only from the books. Tam sure you would  
have felt fully repaid for your trouble,” adds

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156 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1s,  
  
‘Mr. Cabot, “if you could have seen the eager  
satisfaction with which he surveyed each fin and  
scale.” Agassiz himself wrote the same day :  
“T have been highly pleased to find that the  
small mud turtle was really the Sternothaerus  
odoratus, as I suspected, — a very rare species,  
quite distinct from the snapping turtle. The  
suckers were all of one and the same species  
(Catastomus tubercudatus) ; the female has the  
tubercles. As Iam very anxious to sond some  
snapping turtles home with my first boxes, I  
would thank Mr. T. very much if he could have  
some taken for me.”  
  
Mr. Cabot goes on: “Of the perch Agassiz,  
remarked that it was almost identical with that  
of Europe, but distinguishable, on elose exami-  
nation, by the tubercles on the sub-operculum.  
«++ More of the painted tortoises would be  
acceptable. The snapping turtles are very in-  
teresting to him as forming a transition from  
the turtles proper to the alligator and crocodile.  
«... We have received three boxes from you  
since the first.” (May 27.) “Agassiz was much  
surprised and pleased at the extent of the col-  
lections you sent during his absence in New  
York. Among the fishes there is one, and prob-  
ably two, new species. ‘The fresh-water smelt,  
he does not know. He is very anxious to see  
the pickerel with the long snout, which he sus-

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1.9] CABOT TO THOREAU. 187  
  
pects may be the Zsox estor, or Maskalongé ;  
he has seen this at Albany. ... As to the  
minks, ete., I know they would all be very ac-  
ceptable to him. When I asked him about  
these, and more specimens of what you have  
sent, he said, (I dare not make any request, for  
I do not know how much trouble I may be  
giving to Mr. Thoreau; but my method of ex-  
amination requires many more specimens than  
most naturalists would care for.” (June 1.)  
 Agassis is delighted to find one, and he thinks  
‘two, more new species; one is a Pomotis, —the  
bream without the red spot in the operculum,  
and with a red belly and fins. The other is the  
shallower and lighter colored shiner. The four  
dace you sent last are Leuciscus argenteus,  
‘They are different from that you sent before  
under this name, but which was a new species.  
Of the four kinds of minnow, two are new.  
There is a black sucker (Catastomus nigri-  
cans), but there has been no specimen among  
those you have sent, and A. has never soen a  
specimen. He seemed to know your mouse, and  
called it the whito-bellied mouse. It was the  
first specimen he had seen. I am in hopes to  
Dring or send him to Concord, to look after new  
Leucisci, etc.” Agassiz did afterwards come,  
more than once, and examined turtles with Tho-  
eau,

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158 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (ss,  
  
Soon after this scientific correspondence, Tho-  
reau left his retreat by Walden to take the place  
of Emerson in his household, while his friend  
went to visit Carlyle and give lectures in Eng-  
land. The letters that follow are among the  
longest Thoreau ever composed, and will give a  
new conception of the writer to those who may  
have figured him as a cold, stoical, or selfish  
person, withdrawn from society and its duties.  
‘The first describes the setting out of Emerson  
for Europe.  
  
   
  
   
  
‘To SOPHIA THOREAU (47 BANGOR).  
Conconn, Ostober 24, 1847.  
  
Dear Soruia,—I thank you for those let-  
ters about Ktaadn, and hope you will save and  
send me the rest, and anything else you may  
meet with relating to the Maino woods. That  
Dr. Young is both young and green too at trav-  
cling in the woods. However, I hope he got  
“yarbs” enough to satisfy him. I went to Bos-  
ton the 5th of this month to see Mr, Emerson  
off to Europe. He sailed in the Washington  
Inving packet ship; the same in which Mr. [F,  
HL] Hedge went before him. Up to this trip  
the first mato aboard this ship was, as I hear,  
one Stephens, a Concord boy, son of Stephens  
the carpenter, who used to live above Mr. Den-  
nis’s, Mr, Emerson’s stateroom was like a car

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1.9] TO SOPHIA THOREAU. 159  
  
peted dark closet, about six feet square, with a  
Targe keyhole for a window. ‘The window was  
about as big as a saucer, and the glass two inches  
thick, not to mention another skylight overhead.  
in the deck, the size of an oblong doughnut,  
  
\* and about as opaque. Of course it would be in  
vain to look up, if any contemplative promenader  
put his foot upon it. Such will be his lodgings  
for two or three weeks; and instead of a walk  
in Walden woods he will take a promenade on  
deck, where the few trees, you know, are stripped  
of their bark. ‘The steam-tug carried the ship  
to sea against a head wind without a rag of sail  
being raised.  
  
T don’t remember whether you have heard of  
the new telescope at Cambridge or not. They  
think it is the best one in the world, and have  
already seen more than Lord Rosse or Herschel.  
I went to see Perez Blood’s, some time ago, with  
Mr. Emerson. He had not gone to bed, but was  
sitting in the woodshed, in the dark, alone, in  
his astronomical chair, which is all legs and  
rounds, with a seat which can be inserted at any  
height. We saw Saturn's rings, and the moun-  
tains in the moon, and the shadows in their  
craters, and the sunlight on the spurs of the  
mountains in the dark portion, ete., ete, When  
I asked him the power of his glass, he said it  
was 85. But what is the power of the Cam-

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160 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1s,  
  
bridge glass? 2000!!! ‘The last is about twenty-  
three feet long.  
  
T think you may have a grand time this win-  
ter pursuing some study,—keeping a journal,  
or the like, — while the snow lies deep without.  
Winter is the time for study, you know, and the  
colder it is the more studious we are. Give my  
respects to the whole Penobscot tribe, and tell  
them that I trust we are good brothers still, and  
‘endeavor to keep the chain of friendship bright,  
though I do dig up a hatchet now and then. I  
trust you will not stir from your comfortable  
winter quarters, Miss Bruin, or even put your  
head out of your hollow treo, till the sun has  
melted the snow in the spring, and “the green  
buds, they are a-swellin’.”  
  
‘From your Brorner Henry.  
  
‘This letter will explain some of the allusions  
in the first letter to Emerson in England. Perez  
Blood was a rural astronomer living in the ex-  
treme north quarter of Concord, next to Carlisle,  
with his two maiden sisters, in the midst of a  
fine oak wood ; their cottage being one of the  
points in view when Thorean and his friends  
took their afternoon rambles. Sophia Thoreau,  
the younger and soon the only surviving sister,  
was visiting her cousins in Maine, the “ Penob-  
seot tribe” of whom the letter makes mention,

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an. 90) 70 R. W. EMERSON. 161  
  
with an allusion to the Indians of that name near  
Bangor. His letter to her and those which fol-  
low were written from Emerson's house, where  
‘Thoreau lived during the master’s absence across  
the ocean. Tt was in the orchard of this house  
that Alcott was building that summer-house at  
which Thoreau, with his goometrical eye, makes  
merry in the next letter.  
  
TO R. W. EMERSON (IN ENGLAND).  
  
Coscono, November 14, 1847.  
  
Dear Ferenp,—I am but a poor neighbor  
to you here, —a very poor companion am I. I  
understand that very well, but that need not  
prevent my torifing to you now. I have almost  
never written letters in my life, yet I think I  
‘can write as good ones as I frequently see, so T  
shall not hesitate to write this, such as it may  
be, knowing that you will weleome anything that  
reminds you of Concord.  
  
T have banked up the young trees against the  
winter and the mice, and I will look out, in my  
careless way, to see when a pale is loose or a  
nail drops out of its place. ‘The broad gaps, at  
least, I will occupy. I heartily wish I could be  
of good service to this household. But I, who  
have only used these ten digits so long to solve  
the problem of a living, how can I? The world  
is a cow that is hard to milk, —life does not

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162 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1511,  
  
‘come so easy, —and oh, how thinly it is watered  
ere we get it! But the young bunting calf, he  
will get at it. ‘Thore is no way so direct. ‘This  
is to carn one’s living by the sweat of his brow.  
It is little like joining @ community, this life,  
to such a hermit as Iam; and as I don’t keep  
the accounts, I don’t know whether the experi-  
ment will succeed or fail finally. At any rate,  
it is good for society, so I do not regret my tran-  
siont nor my permanent share in it.  
  
Lidian [Mrs. Emerson] and I make very good  
housekeepers. She is a very dear sister to me.  
Ellen and Edith and Eddy and Aunty Brown  
keep up the tragedy and comedy and tragic-com-  
edy of life as usual. The two former have not  
forgotten their old acquaintance; even Edith  
carries a young memory in her head, I find.  
‘Eddy can teach us all how to pronounce. If  
you should discover any rare hoard of wooden  
or pewter horses, I have no doubt he will know  
how to appreciate it. He occasionally surveys  
mankind from my shoulders as wisely as ever  
Johnson did. I respect him not a little, though,  
itis T that lift him up so unceremoniously. And  
sometimes I have to set him down again in a  
hurry, according to his “mere will and good  
pleasure.” He very seriously asked me, the  
other day, “Mr. Thoreau, will you be my fa-  
ther?” Iam occasionally Mr. Rough-and-tum-

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a.00) TO R. W. EMERSON. 168  
  
ble with him that I may not miss Aim, and lest  
he should miss you too much. So you must  
‘come back soon, or you will be superseded.  
Alcott has heard that T laughed, and so set  
the people laughing, at his arbor, though I never  
Ianghed louder than when I was on the ridgo-  
pole. But now I have not Iaughed for a long  
time, it is so serious. He is very grave to look  
at. But, not knowing all this, I strove inno-  
cently enough, the other day, to engage his at-  
tention to my mathematics, “Did you ever  
study geometry, the relation of straight lines to  
curves, the transition from the finite to the inf  
nite? Fine things about it in Newton and Leib-  
nitz.” But he would hear none of it, —men of  
taste preferred the natural curve. Ah, he is a  
crooked stick himself. He is getting on now so  
many knots an hour. There is one knot at pres-  
ent occupying the point of highest elevation, —  
the present highest points and as many knots  
as are not handsome, I presume, are thrown  
down and cast into the pines. Pray show him  
this if you meet him anywhere in London, for I  
‘cannot make him hear much plainer words here.  
He forgets that I am neither old nor young, nor  
anything in particular, and behaves as if I had  
still some of the animal heat in me. As for the  
building, I feel a little oppressed when I come  
near it, It has no great disposition to be beau-

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164 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. psn,  
  
tiful; it is certainly a wonderful structure, on  
the whole, and the fame of the architect will  
endure as long as it shall stand. I should not  
show you this side alone, if I did not suspect  
that Lidian had done complete justice to the  
other.  
  
Mr. [Edmund] Hosmer has been working at  
a tannery in Stow for a fortnight, though he has  
just now come home sick. Tt seems that he was  
a tanner in his youth, and so he has made up  
his mind a little at last. This comes of reading  
the New Testament. Wasn't one of the Apos-  
tles a tanner? Mrs. Hosmer remains here, and  
John looks stout enough to fill his own shoes  
and his father’s too.  
  
‘Mr. Blood and his company have at length  
seen the stars through the great telescope, and  
he told me that he thought it was worth the  
while. Mr. Peirce made him wait till the crowd  
had dispersed (it was a Saturday evening), and  
then was quite polite, — conversed with him, and  
showed him the micrometer, ete. ; and he said  
‘Mr. Blood’s glass was large enough for all ordi-  
nary astronomical work. [Rev.] Mr. Frost and  
Dr. [Josiah] Bartlett seemed disappointed that  
there was no greater difference between the  
Cambridge glass and the Concord one. They  
used only a power of 400. Mr. Blood tells me  
that he is too old to study the calculus or higher

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at. 90) TO R. W. EMERSON. 165  
  
mathematics. At Cambridge they think that  
they have discovered traces of another satellite  
to Neptune. They have been obliged to exclude  
the public altogether, at last. ‘The very dust  
which they raised, “which is filled with minute  
crystals,” etc., as professors declare, having to  
be wiped off the glasses, would erclong wear  
them away. It is true enough, Cambridge ool-  
lege is really beginning to wake up and redeem  
its character and overtake the age. I see by the  
catalogue that they are about establishing a sci-  
entific school in connection with the university,  
‘at which any one above eighteen, on paying one  
hundred dollars annually (Mr. Lawrence's fifty  
thousand dollars will probably diminish this sum),  
may be instructed in the highest branches of  
science, —in astronomy, ‘theoretical and prac-  
tical, with the use of the instruments” (so the  
great Yankee astronomer may be born without  
delay), in mechanies and engineering to the last  
degree. Agassiz will erelong commence his lec-  
‘tures in the zodlogical department. A chemistry  
class has already been formed under the direc-  
tion of Professor Horsford. A new and ade-  
quate building for the purpose is already being  
erected. They have been foolish enough to put  
at the end of all this earnest the old joke of a  
diploma. Let every sheep keep but his own  
skin, T say.

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166 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (117,  
  
T have had a tragic correspondence, for the  
most part all on one side, with Miss —. She  
did really wish to— I hesitate to write— marry  
me. ‘That is the way they spell it. Of course  
I did not write a deliberate answer. How could  
T deliberate upon it? I sent back as distinet a  
no as I have learned to pronounce after consid-  
erable practice, and I trust that this no has suc-  
ceeded. Indeed, I wished that it might. burst,  
like hollow shot, after it had struck and buried  
itself and made itself felt there. There was no  
other way. I really had anticipated no such foe  
as this in my career.  
  
I suppose you will like to hear of my book,  
though I have nothing worth writing about it.  
Indeed, for the last month or two I have forgot  
ten it, but shall certainly remember it again.  
Wiley & Putnam, Munroe, the Harpers, and  
Crosby & Nichols have all declined printing it  
with the least risk to themselves; but Wiley &  
Putnam will print it in their series, and any of  
them, anywhere, at my risk, If I liked the book  
well enough, I should not delay; but for the  
present I am indifferent. I believe this is, after  
all, the course you advised, —to let it lie.  
  
Ido not know what to say of myself. I sit  
before my green desk, in the chamber at the  
head of the stairs, and attend to my thinking,  
sometimes more, sometimes less distinctly. I

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2r.00] 70 R. W. EMERSON. 167  
  
am not unwilling to think great thoughts if  
there are any in the wind, but what they are I  
am not sure. They suffice to keep mo awake  
while the day lasts, at any rate. Perhaps they  
will redeem some portion of the night erclong.  
  
T can imagine you astonishing, bewildering,  
confounding, and sometimes delighting John  
Bull with your Yankee notions, and that he be-  
gins to take a pride in the relationship at lasts  
introduced to all the stars of England in sueces-  
sion, after the lecture, until you pine to thrust  
your head once more into a genuine and unques-  
tionable nebula, if there be any left. I trust a  
common man will be the most uncommon to you  
before you return to these parts. I have thought  
there was some advantage even in death, by  
which we “mingle with the herd of common  
men.”  
  
Hugh [the gardener] still has his eye on the  
‘Walden agellum, and orchards are waving there  
in the windy future for him. ‘That’s the where-  
T'l-go-next, thinks he; but no important steps  
are yot taken. He reminds me occasionally of  
this open secret of his, with which the very sea-  
son seems to labor, and affirms seriously that as  
+o his wants — wood, stone, or timber — I know  
better than he. That is a clincher which I shall  
have to avoid to some extent; but I fear that  
it is @ wrought nail and will not break. Un-

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168 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1917,  
  
fortunately, the day after cattle show — the day  
after small beer —he was among the missing,  
but not long this time. The Ethiopian cannot  
change his skin nor the leopard his spots, nor  
indeed Hugh — his Hugh.  
  
‘As I walked over Conantum, the other after-  
noon, I saw a fair column of smoke rising from  
the woods directly over my house that was (as  
I judged), and already began to conjecture if  
my deed of sale would not be made invalid by  
this. But it turned out to be John Richardson's  
young wood, on the southeast of your field. Tt  
was burnt nearly all over, and up to the rails  
and tho road. It was set on fire, no doubt, by  
the same Lucifer that lighted Brooks's lot be-  
fore. So you see that your small lot is compar-  
atively safe for this season, the back fire having  
been already set for you.  
  
‘They have been choosing between John Keyes  
and Sam Staples, if the world wants to know it,  
as representative of this town, and Staples is  
chosen, ‘The candidates for governor — think of  
my writing this to you! — were Governor Briggs  
and General Cushing, and Briggs is elected,  
though the Democrats have gained. Ain't I a  
brave boy to know so much of politics for the  
nonce? But I shouldn't have known it if  
Coombs had n’t told me. ‘They have had a  
peace meeting here,—I shouldn't think of

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a. 0] TO R. W. EMERSON. 169  
  
telling you if I didn’t now anything would  
do for the English market,—and some men,  
‘Deacon Brown at the head, have signed a long  
pledge, swearing that they will “treat all man-  
kind as brothers henceforth.” I think T shall  
wait and seo how they treat me first. I think  
that Nature meant kindly when she made our  
brothers few, However, my voice is still for  
peace. So good-by, and a truce to all joking,  
my dear friend, from  
H.D.T.  
  
Upon this letter some annotations are to be  
made. “ Eddy” was Emerson’s youngest child,  
‘Edward Waldo, then three years old and up-  
ward,— of Inte years his father’s biographer.  
Hugh, the gardener, of whom more anon, bar-  
gained for the house of Thoreau on Emerson's  
land at Walden, and for a field to go with its  
but the bargain came to naught, and the cabin  
was removed three or four miles to the north-  
west, where it became a granary for Farmer  
Clark and his squirrels, near the entrance to the  
park known as Estabrook’s, Edmund Hosmer  
was the farming friend and neighbor with whom,  
at one time, G. W. Curtis and his brother took  
lodgings, and at another time the Alcott family.  
The book in question was “A Week on the  
Concord and Merrimack Rivers.”

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110 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. Us,  
  
‘To these letters Emerson replied from Eng-  
land: —  
  
Dear Henry, — Very welcome in the parcel  
‘was your letter, very precious your thoughts and  
tidings. It is one of the best things connected  
with my coming hither that you could and would  
keep the homestead ; that fireplace shines all the  
brighter, and has a certain permanent glimmer  
therefor. Thanks, ever more thanks for the  
kindness which I well discern to the youth of  
the house: to my darling little horseman of  
pewter, wooden, rocking, and what other breeds,  
— destined, I hope, to ride Pegasus yet, and, I  
hope, not destined to be thrown ; to Edith, who  
long ago drew from you verses which I carefully  
preserve ; and to Ellen, whom by speech, and  
now by letter, I find old enough to be compan-  
ionable, and to choose and reward her own  
friends in her own fashions. She sends me a  
poom to-day, which I have read three times!  
  
   
  
‘TO RW. EMERSON (IN ENGLAND).  
Coxoono, December 16, 1847.  
  
Dear Frrexp, — Yon are not so far off but  
  
the affairs of this world still attract you. Per-  
  
haps it will be so when we are dead. Then  
  
Took out. Joshua R, Holman, of Harvard, who  
  
says he lived a month with [Charles] Lane at

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20] 70 R. W. EMERSON. im  
  
Fruitlands, wishes to hire said Lane’s farm for  
‘one or more years, and will pay $125 rent, tak-  
ing out of the same a half, if necessary, for  
repairs, —as for a new bank-wall to the barn  
cellar, which he says is indispensable. Palmer is  
gone, Mrs. Palmer is going. This is all that is  
known or that is worth knowing. Yes or no?  
‘What to do?  
  
Hugh's plot begins to thicken, He starts  
‘thus: eighty dollars on one side ; Walden, field  
and house, on the other. How to bring these  
together so as to make a garden and a palace?  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
oaae  
0 ef aw Oo  
Ist, lot $10 go over to unite the two lots.  
0  
$6 for Wethorbeo's rocks to found your  
palace on, Oo  
wi  
  
{864 — ao far, indeed, we have already got  
$4 to bring the rocks to the field.  
‘$00  
Seve $20 by all means, to measure the field, and you have  
~ heft  
‘HO to complete the palace, build collar, and dig well  
‘Build the cellar yourself, and let wall alone,—  
‘and now how doos it stand ?  
‘HO to completo the palace somewhat like  
hin

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112 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1st,  
  
For when one asks, “Why do you want twice  
as much room more?” the reply is, “ Parlor,  
Kitchen, and bedroom, — these make the pal-  
ace.”  
  
“Well, Hugh, what will you do? Here are  
forty dollars to buy a new house, twelve feet by  
twenty-five, and add it to the old.”  
  
“Well, Mr. Thoreau, as I tell you, I know  
no more than a child about it, It shall be just  
as you say.”  
  
“Then build it yourself, get it roofed, and  
get in,  
  
M6  
  
   
  
So you see we have forty dollars for a nest  
egg; sitting on which, Hugh and I alternately  
and simultaneously, there may in course of time  
be hatched a house that will long stand, and  
perchance even lay fresh eggs one day for its  
owner ; that is, if, when he returns, he gives the  
young chick twenty dollars or more in addition,  
by way of.“ swichin,” to give it a start in the  
world,  
  
‘The “ Massachusetts Quarterly Review” came  
out the 1st of December, but it does not seem  
to be making a sensation, at least not here-  
abouts. I know of none in Concord who take  
or have seen it yet.  
  
‘We wish to get by all possible means some

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xr. 90] TO R. W. EMERSON. 118  
  
notion of your success or failure in England, —  
more than your two letters have furnished. Can’t  
you send a fair sample both of young and of  
‘old England’s criticism, if there is any printed?  
‘Alcott and [Ellery] Channing are equally  
greedy with myself,  
  
Henry THoREav.  
  
©. T, Jackson takes the Quarterly (new one),  
and will lend it to us. Are you not going to  
send your wife some news of your good or ill  
success by the newspapers ?  
  
‘TO R. W. EMERSON (IN ENGLAND).  
Coxcono, December 2, 1847.  
  
‘My pear Fare, —I thank you for your  
letter. I was very glad to get it; and I am  
glad again to write to you. However slow the  
steamer, no time intervenes between the writing  
and the reading of thoughts, but they come  
freshly to the most distant port. I am here  
still, and very glad to be here, and shall not  
trouble you with any complaints because I do  
not fill my place better. I have had many good  
hours in the chamber at the head of the stairs,—  
a solid time, it seems to me. Next week I am  
going to give an account to the Lyceum of my  
expedition to Maine. Theodore Parker lectures  
tonight. We have had Whipple on Genius, —

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174 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1s,  
  
too weighty a subject for him, with his antitheti-  
cal definitions new-vamped, — what it ia, what it  
isnot, but altogether what itis not ; cuffing it this  
way and cuffing it that, as if it were an India-  
rubber ball. Really, it is a subject which should  
expand, expand, accumulate itself before the  
speaker's eyes as he goes on, like the snowballs  
which the boys roll in the street; and when it  
stops, it: should he so large that he cannot start  
it, but must leave it there. [H.N.] Hudson,  
too, has been here, with a dark shadow in the  
core of him, and his desperate wit, eo much in-  
dobted to the surface of him, — wringing out his  
words and snapping them off like a dish-cloth ;  
very remarkable, but not memorable. Singular  
that these two best lecturers should have s0  
much “wave” in their timber,— their solid  
parts to be made and kept solid by shrinkage  
and contraction of the whole, with consequent  
checks and fissures.  
  
Ellen and I have a good understanding. I  
appreciate her genuineness. Edith tells me after  
her fashion: “By and by I shall grow up and  
‘be a woman, and then I shall remember how you  
exercised me.” Eddy has been to Boston to  
Christmas, but ean remember nothing but the  
coaches, all Kendall’s coaches. There is no  
variety of that vehicle that he is not familiar  
with. He did try twieo to tell us something

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ar. 90) TO R. W. EMERSON. 115  
  
else, but, after thinking and stuttering a long  
time, said, “I don’t know what the word is,” —  
the one word, forsooth, that would have disposed.  
of all that Boston phenomenon. If you did not  
know him better than I, I could tell you more.  
He is a good companion for me, and I am glad  
that we are all natives of Concord. It is young  
Concord. Look out, World!  
  
Mr. Alcott seems to have sat down for the  
winter. He has got Plato and other books to  
read. He is as large-featured and hospitable to  
traveling thoughts and thinkers as ever; but  
with the same Connecticut philosophy as ever,  
mingled with what is better. If he would only  
stand upright and toe the line!— though he  
were to put off several degrees of langeness, and  
put on a considerable dogreo of littleness. After  
all, I think we must call him particularly your  
man.  
  
T have pleasant walks and talks with Chan-  
ning. James Clark—the Swedenborgian that  
‘was —is at the poorhouse, insane with too large  
views, so that he cannot support himself. I see  
him working with Fred and the rest. Better  
than be there and not insane. It is strange that  
they will make ado when a man’s body is buried,  
but not when he thus really and tragically dies,  
or seems to die. Away with your funeral pro-

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116 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (Us  
  
cessions, — into the ballroom with them! I hear  
the bell toll hourly over there.  
  
Lidian and I have a standing quarrel as to  
what is a suitable state of preparedness for a  
traveling professor's visit, or for whomsoever  
else; but further than this we are not at war.  
‘We have made up a dinner, we have made up a  
bed, we have made up a party, and our own  
minds and mouths, three several times for your  
professor, and he came not. ‘Three several tur-  
‘keys have died the death, which I myself carved,  
just as if he had been there; and the company,  
too, convened and demeaned themselves accord-  
ingly. Everything was done up in good style, I  
assure you, with only the part of the professor  
omitted. To have seen the preparation (though  
Lidian says it was nothing extraordinary) I  
should certainly have said he was a-coming, but  
he did not. He must have found out some  
shorter way to Turkey,—some overland route,  
I think. By the way, he was complimented, at  
the conclusion of his course in Boston, by the  
mayor moving the appointment of a committee  
to draw up resolutions expressive, ete., which  
was done.  
  
Thave made a few verses lately. Here are  
some, though perhaps not the best, — at any rate  
  
‘Tho town almshouse was acrom tho fold from the Emer-  
soa hours

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#0] TO R. W. EMERSON. aT  
  
they are the shortest, —on that universal theme,  
yours as well as mine, and several other peo-  
  
   
  
‘Tho good how can we trust!  
Only the wise are jast.  
  
‘Tho good, we ure,  
  
‘The wise wo eannot choowe;  
  
‘Thono there are none above.  
  
‘Tho good, they know and love,  
  
‘But are not known again  
  
By thowo of lessor ken.  
  
‘They do not choose us with their eye,  
‘But they transix with their advioe  
‘No partial sympathy thoy fool  
  
‘With private woo or private weal,  
‘But with the universe joy and sigh,  
‘Whose knowledge is their aympathy.  
  
Good-night. Henny Tuorsav.  
  
P.S.—Iam sorry to send such a medley as  
this to you. I have forwarded Lane's “Dial”  
to Munroe, and he tells the expressman that all  
is right.  
  
70 R. W. EMERSON (IN ENGLAND).  
  
‘Concon, January 12, 1848.  
  
Tt is hard to believe that England is so near  
as from your letters it appears; and that this  
identical piece of paper has lately come all the  
‘way from there hither, begrimed with the Eng-  
lish dust which made you hesitate to use its  
from England, which is only historical fairyland

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118 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1318,  
  
to me, to America, which T have put my spade  
into, and about which there is no doubt.  
  
T thought that you needed to be informed of  
‘Hugh's progress. He has moved his house, as  
I told you, and dug his cellar, and purchased  
stone of Sol Wetherbee for the last, though he  
has not hauled it; all which has cost sixteen dol-  
Jars, which I have paid. He has also, as next in  
order, run away from Concord without a penny  
in his pocket, “crying” by the way,—having  
had another long difference with strong beer,  
and a first one, I suppose, with his wife, who  
seems to have complained that he sought other  
society ; the one difference leading to the other,  
perhaps, but I don’t know which was the leader.  
He writes back to his wife from Sterling, near  
Worcester, where he is chopping wood, his dis  
tantly kind reproaches to her, which I read  
straight through to her (not to his bottle, which  
he has with him, and no doubt addresses orally).  
He says that he will go on to the South in the  
spring, and will never return to Concord. Per-  
haps he will not, Life is not tragic enough for  
him, and he must try to cook up more highly  
seasoned dish for himself, Towns which keep a  
barroom and a gun-house and a reading-room,  
should also keep a steep precipice whereoff im-  
patient soldiers may jump. His sun went down,  
to me, bright and steady enough in the west, but

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r.90) TO R. W. EMERSON. 119  
  
it never came up in the east. Night intervened.  
He departed, as when a man dies suddenly ; and  
perhaps wisely, if he was to go, without settling  
his affairs. They knew that that was a thin soil  
and not well calculated for pears. Nature is  
rare and sensitive on the score of nurseries.  
You may cut down orchards and grow forests at  
your pleasure. Sand watered with strong beer,  
though stirred with industry, will not produce  
grapes. He dug his eollar for the new part too  
near the old house, Irish like, though I warned  
him, and it has caved and let one end of the  
house down, Such is the state of his domestic  
affairs, I laugh with the Pare only. He had  
got the upland and the orchard and a part of  
the meadow ploughed by Warren, at an expense  
of eight dollars, still unpaid, which of course is  
no affair of yours.  
  
I think that if an honest and small-familied  
man, who has no affinity for moisture in him,  
but who has an affinity for sand, can be found,  
it would be safe to rent him the shanty as it is,  
and the land; or you ean very easily and simply  
let nature keep them still, without great loss. ‘It  
may be so managed, perhaps, as to be a home  
for somebody, who shall in return serve you as  
fencing stuff, and to fix and locate your lot, as  
we plant a tree in the sand or on the edge of a  
stream ; without expense to you in the mean

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180 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (ss,  
  
while, and without disturbing its possible future  
value.  
  
Tread a part of the story of my excursion to  
Ktaadn to quite a large audience of men and  
boys, the other night, whom it interested. It  
contains many facts and some poetry. I have  
also written what will do for a lecture on  
“Friendship.”  
  
I think that the article on you in Blackwood’s  
is a good deal to get from the reviewers, — the  
first purely literary notice, as I remember. The  
writer is far enough off, in every sense, to speak  
with a certain authority. It is a better judg-  
ment of posterity than the public had. It is  
singular how sure he is to be mystified by any  
uncommon sense. But it was generous to put  
Plato into the list of mystics. His confessions  
on this subject suggest several thoughts, which  
Thave not room to express here. The old word  
seer, — I wonder what the reviewer thinks that  
means ; whether that he was a man who could  
see more than himself.  
  
T was struck by Ellen’s asking me, yesterday,  
while I was talking with Mrs. Brown, if I did  
not use “colored words.” She said that sho  
could tell the color of a great many words, and  
amused the children at school by so doing.  
Eddy climbed up the sofa, the other day, of his  
‘own accord, and kissed the picture of his father,  
— “right on his shirt, T did.”

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zr. 0) TO R. W. EMERSON. 181  
  
Thad a good talk with Alcott this afternoon.  
He is certainly the youngest man of his age we  
have seen, — just on the threshold of life. When  
T looked at his gray hairs, his conversation  
sounded pathetic; but I looked again, and they  
reminded me of the gray dawn. He is getting  
better acquainted with Channing, though he  
says that, if they were to live in the same house,  
they would soon sit with their backs to each  
other?  
  
You must exense me if I do not write with  
sufficient directness to yourself, who are a far-  
off traveler. It is a little like shooting on the  
wing, I confess.  
  
Farewell. Hewry Tnoreav.  
  
OR. We EMERSON (IN ENGLAND).  
Conconn, February 25, 1848,  
  
Dear Watno,—For I think Ihave heard  
that that is your name,—my letter which was  
put last into the leathern bag arrived first.  
‘Whatever I may call you, I know you better  
than I know your name, and what becomes of  
the fittest name if in any sense you are here  
  
1 At thia date Aloott had passed his forty-cighth year,  
‘while Channing and ‘Thoreau were atill in tho latitude of  
thirty. Hawthorne had left Concord, and was in the Salem  
Custom-house ; the Old Manso having gone back into the accu  
ancy of Emerson’s cousins, the Ripleys, who owned it.

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182 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1918,  
  
with him who calls, and not theré simply to  
be called ?  
  
T believe I never thanked you for your lec-  
tures, one and all, which I heard formerly read  
here in Concord. I know I never have. There  
‘was some excellent reason each time why I did  
not; but it will never be too late. I have that  
advantage, at least, over you in my education,  
  
Lidian is too unwell to write to you; so I  
‘must tell you what I can about the children and  
herself. I am afraid she has not told you how  
unwell she is, — or to-day perhaps we may say  
has been. She has been confined to her cham-  
ber four or five weeks, and three or four weeks,  
at least, to her bed, with the jaundice. The  
doctor, who comes once a day, does not let her  
read (nor can she now) nor hear much read-  
ing. She has written her letters to you, till re-  
cently, sitting up in bed, but he said he would  
not come again if she did so. She has Abby  
and Almira totake care of her, and Mrs. Brown  
to read to her; and I also, occasionally, have  
something to read or to say. The doctor says  
she must not expect to “take any comfort of  
her life” for a week ortwo yet. She wishes mo  
to say that she has written two long and full  
letters to you about the houschold economies,  
ete, which she hopos have not been delayed.  
‘The children are quite well and full of spirits,

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7.90] TO R. W. EMERSON. 183  
  
and are going through a regular course of pic-  
ture-seeing, with commentary by me, every even-  
ing, for Eddy’s behoof. All the Annuals and  
“Diadems” are in requisition, and Eddy is for-  
ward to exclaim, when the hour arrives, “ Now  
for the demdems!” I overheard this dialogue  
when Frank [Brown] came down to breakfast  
the other morning.  
  
Eddy. “Why, Frank, I am astonished that  
you should leave your boots in the dining-room.”  
  
Frank. “I guess you mean surprised, don’t  
you?”  
  
Eddy. “No, boots!”  
  
“Tf Waldo were here,” said he, the other  
night, at bedtime, “we'd be four going up-  
stairs.” Would he like to tell papa anything ?  
No, not anything; but finally, yes, he would,  
—that one of the white horses in his new ba-  
rouche is broken! Ellen and Edith will per-  
haps speak for themselves, as I hear something  
about letters to be written by them.  
  
‘Mr. Aleott seems to be reading well this win-  
ter: Plato, Montaigne, Ben Jonson, Beaumont  
and Fletcher, Sir Thomas Browne, etc, ete.  
“I believe I have read them all now, or nearly  
all,” — those English authors. He is rallying  
for another foray with his pen, in his latter  
years, not discouraged by the past, into that  
crowd of unexpressed ideas of his, that undis-

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184 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1318,  
  
ciplined Parthian army, which, as soon as a Ro-  
man soldier would face, retreats on all hands,  
cccasionally firing backwards ; easily routed, not  
easily subdued, hovering on the skirts of society.  
Another summer shall not be devoted to the  
raising of vegetables (Arbors?) which rot in  
the cellar for want of consumers; but perchance  
to the arrangement of the material, the brain-  
crop which the winter has furnished. I have  
good talks with him. His respect for Carlyle  
has been steadily increasing for some time. He  
hhas read him with new sympathy and apprecia-  
tion.  
  
I see Channing often. He also goes often  
to Alcott’s, and confesses that he has made a  
discovery in him, and gives vent to his admira  
tion or his confusion in characteristic exaggera-  
tion; but between this extreme and that you  
may get a fair report, and draw an inference  
if you can. Sometimes he will ride a broom-  
stick still, though there is nothing to keep him,  
or it, up but a certain centrifugal force of whim,  
which is soon spent, and there lies your stick,  
not worth picking up to sweep an oven with  
now. His accustomed path is strewn with them.  
But then again, and perhaps for the most part,  
he sits on the Cliffs amid the lichens, or flits  
past on noiseless pinion, like the barred owl in  
the daytime, as wise and unobserved. He

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=r. 90) TO R. W. EMERSON. 185  
  
brought me a poem the other day, for me, on  
‘Walden Hermitage : not remarkable?  
  
Lectures begin to multiply on my desk. I  
have one on Friendship which is new, and the  
materials of some others. I read one last week  
to the Lyceum, on The Rights and Duties of  
the Individual in Relation to Government, —  
much to Mr. Aleott’s satisfaction,  
  
Tool Britton has failed and gone into chan-  
cery, but the woods continue to fall before the  
axes of other men, Neighbor Coombs? was  
lately found dead in the woods near Goose Pond,  
with his half-empty jug, after he had been riot-  
jing a week. Hugh, by the last accounts, was  
still in Worcester County. Mr. Hosmer, who  
is himself again, and living in Concord, has just  
hauled the rest of your wood, amounting to about  
ten and a half cords.  
  
‘The newspapers say that they have printed a  
pirated edition of your Essays in England. Is  
it as bad as they say, and undisguised and un-  
mitigated piracy? I thought that the printed  
serap would entertain Carlyle, notwithstanding  
its history. If this generation will see out of  
its hind-head, why then you may turn your back  
  
3 Soo Sanbom’s Thoreau, p. 214, and Channing's Thoreau,  
‘pp. 106-109, for this poom.  
  
This ia'tho political neighbor mentioned in a former let-  
ter.

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186 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1s,  
  
on its forehead. Will you forward it to him  
for me?  
  
‘This stands written in your day-book: “ Sep-  
tember 3d. Received of Boston Savings Bank,  
on account of Charles Lane, his deposit with  
interest, $131.83. 16th. Received of Joseph  
Palmer, on account of Charles Lane, three hun-  
dred twenty-three yf dollars, being the balance  
of a note on demand for four hundred dollars,  
with interest, $323.36.”  
  
If you have any directions to give about the  
trees, you must not forget that spring will soon  
be upon us.  
  
Farewell. From your friend,  
  
Henny Tuoreav.  
  
Before a reply came to this letter, Thoreau  
had occasion to write to Mr. Elliot Cabot again,  
‘The allusions to the “ Weck” and to the Walden  
house are interesting.  
  
70 ELLIOT CABOF.  
  
CCoxcon, March 8, 1848.  
  
Dear Sir,— Mr. Emerson’s address is as  
yet, “R. W. Emerson, care of Alexander Ire-  
Jand, Esq., Examiner Office, Manchester, Eng-  
land.” We had a letter from him on Monday,  
dated at Manchester, February 10, and he was  
then preparing to go to Edinburgh the next

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=n. 30) T0 ELLIOT CABOT. 187  
  
day, where he was to lecture, He thought that  
he should get through his northern journeying  
by the 25th of February, and go to London to  
spend March and April, and if he did not go to  
Paris in May, then come home. He has been  
eminently successful, though the papers this side  
of the water have been so silent about his ad-  
ventures.  
  
My book,! fortunately, did not find a pub-  
lisher ready to undertake it, and you can im-  
agine the effect of delay on an author's estimate  
of his own work. However, I like it well enough  
to mend it, and shall look at it again directly  
when I have dispatched some other things.  
  
Thave been writing lectures for our own Ly-  
coum this winter, mainly for my own pleasure  
and advantage. I esteom it a rare happiness  
to be able to write anything, but there (if I  
ever get there) my concern for it is apt to end.  
‘Time & Co. are, after all, the only quite honest  
and trustworthy publishers that we know. I  
can sympathize, perhaps, with the barberry  
  
   
  
2 From England Emerson wrote: “I am not of opin  
‘that your book should be delayed a month. I should print it  
at onee, nor do T think that you would ineur aoy risk in doing.  
0 that you cannot well afford. It ia very certain to havo  
readers and debtors, hore as well as there. The Dial is ab-  
surdly well known here. We at home, I think, aro always a  
little ashamed of it,—Z am,—and yet here it is spoken of  
‘with the utmost gravity, and T do not laugh.”

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188 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1618,  
  
bush, whose business it is solely to ripen its  
fruit (though that may not be to sweeten it)  
and to protect it with thorns, so that it holds  
on all winter, even, unless some hungry crows  
come to pluck it. But I see that I must get a  
few dollars together presently to manure my  
roots. Is your journal able to pay anything,  
provided it likes an article well enough? I do  
not promise one. At any rate, I mean always  
to spend only words enough to purchase silence  
with; and I have found that this, which is so  
valuable, though many writers do not prize it,  
does not cost much, after all.  
  
I have not obtained any more of the mice  
which I told you were so numerous in my cellar,  
as my house was removed immediately after I  
saw you, and I have been living in the village  
since,  
  
However, if I should happen to meet with any-  
thing rare, I will forward it to you. I thank  
you for your kind offers, and will avail myself  
of them so far as to ask if you can anywhere  
borrow for me for a short time the copy of the  
“Revue des Deux Mondes,” containing a notice  
of Mr. Emerson. I should like well to read it,  
and to read it to Mrs. Emerson and others. If  
this book is not easy to be obtained, do not by  
any means trouble yourself about it.

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10) TO R. W. EMERSON. 189  
  
TOR. W. EMERSON.)  
  
Concouo, March 25, 1888,  
  
Dear Frrenp, — Lidian says I must write a  
sentence about the children. Eddy says he ean-  
not sing, — “not till mother is agoing to be  
well.” We shall hear his voice very soon, in  
that case, I trust. Ellen is already thinking  
what will be done when you come home; but  
then she thinks it will be some loss that I shall  
go away. Edith says that I shall come and see  
them, and always at tea-time, so that I can play  
with her. Ellen thinks she likes father best  
because he jumps her sometimes. This is the  
latest news from  
  
‘Yours, ete., Henry.  
  
   
  
P.S,—Thave received three newspapers from  
you duly which I have not acknowledged. There  
is an antiSabbath convention held in Boston  
today, to which Aloott has gone.  
  
‘That friend to whom Thoreau wrote most con-  
stantly and fully, on all topics, was Mr. Harri-  
son Blake of Woreester, a graduate of Harvard  
two years earlier than ‘Thoreau, in the same  
  
2 This Ietor wan addromed, “R. Waldo Emerton, cae of  
Alexander Ireland, Faq, Manchester, England, via New York  
  
tnd Steamer Cembria, March 25." Tt was mailed in Boston,  
March 24, and received in Manchester, April 19.

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190 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (ss,  
  
lass with two other young men from Concord,  
—E. R Hoar and H. B. Dennis, This cir  
cumstance may have led to Mr. Blake's visiting  
the town occasionally, before his intimacy with  
its poctnaturalist began, in the year 1848. At  
that time, as Thoreau wrote to Horace Greeley,  
he had been supporting himself for five years  
wholly by the labor of his hands; his Walden  
hermitlife was over, yet neither its record nor  
the first book had been published, and Thoreau  
was known in literature chiefly by his papers in  
the “Dial,” which had then ceased for four  
years. In March, 1848, Mr. Blake read Tho-  
reau’s chapter on Persius in the “Dial” for  
July, 1840,— and though he had read it before,  
without being much impressed by it, he now  
found in it“pure depth and solidity of thought.”  
“Tt has revived in me,” he wrote to Thoreau,  
“a haunting impression of you, which I carried  
‘away from some spoken words of yours.  
‘When I was last in Concord, you spoke of retir-  
ing farther from our civilization. T asked you  
if you would feel no longings for the society of  
your friends. Your reply was in substance, ‘No,  
Tam nothing?” ‘That reply was memorable to  
me. It indicated a depth of resources, a com-  
pleteness of renunciation, a poise and repose in  
the universe, which to me is almost inconceiva-  
ble; which in you seemed domesticated, and to

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zr 30) BLAKE TO THOREAU. 191  
  
which I look up with veneration, I would know  
of that soul which can say ‘Iam nothing” I  
would be roused by its words to a truer and  
purer life. Upon me seems to be dawning with  
new significance the idea that God is here; that  
we have but to bow before Him in profound sub-  
mission at every moment, and He will fill our  
souls with his presence, In this opening of the  
soul to God, all duties seem to centre; what else  
have we todo? . . . If I understand rightly the  
significance of your life, this is it: You would  
sunder yourself from society, from the spell of  
institutions, customs, conventionalities, that you  
may lead a fresh, simple life with God. Instead  
of breathing a new life into the old forms, you  
would have a new life without and within,  
‘There is something sublime to me in this atti-  
‘tude,—far as I may be from it myself. . . .  
Speak to me in this hour as you are prompted.  
«+ « [honor you because you abstain from sc-  
tion, and open your soul that you may be some-  
what. Amid a world of noisy, shallow actors it  
is noble to stand aside and say, ‘I will simply  
be? Could I plant myself at once upon the  
truth, reducing my wants to their minimum,  
+++ Tshould at once be brought nearer to na-  
ture, nearer to my fellow-men, —and life would  
be infinitely richer. But, alas! I shiver on the  
brink.”

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192 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1918,  
  
‘Thus appealed to by one who had so well at-  
tained the true Transcendental shibboleth, —  
God working in us, both to will and to do,” —  
‘Thoreau could not fail to make answer, as he  
did at once, and thus:  
  
   
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WoRCESTIER).  
[The first of many letters.)  
Coxcon, March 27,1848,  
  
Tam glad to hear that any words of mine,  
though spoken so long ago that I can hardly  
claim identity with their author, have reached  
you. It gives me pleasure, because I have there-  
fore reason to suppose that I have uttered what  
concerns men, and that it is not in vain that  
‘man speaks to man. ‘This is the value of litera-  
ture. Yet those days are so distant, in every  
sense, that I have had to look at that page again,  
to learn what was the tenor of my thoughts then,  
T should value that article, however, if only be-  
‘cause it was the occasion of your letter.  
  
I do believe that the outward and the inward  
life correspond; that if any should succeed to  
live a higher life, others would not know of it;  
that difference and distance are one. ‘To set  
about living a true life is to go a journey to a  
distant country, gradually to find ourselves sur-  
rounded by new scenes and men; and as long  
as the old are around me, I know that I am not

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7.00] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 193  
  
in any true sense living a new or a better life.  
‘The outward is only the outside of that which is  
within. Men are not concealed under habits,  
but are revealed by them ; they are their true  
clothes. I care not how curious a reason they  
may give for their abiding by them, Cireum-  
stances are not rigid and unyielding, but our  
habits are rigid, We are apt to speak vaguely  
sometimes, as if a divine life were to be grafted  
on to or built over this present as a suitable  
foundation. This might do if we could so build  
over our old life as to exclude from it all the  
warmth of our affection, and addle it, as the  
thrush builds over the cuckoo's egg, and lays  
her own atop, and hatches that only; but the  
fact is, we—so there is the partition —hatch  
them both, and the cuckoo’s always bya day  
first, and that young bird crowds the young  
thrushes out of the nest. No, Destroy the cuck-  
0's egg, or build a new nest.  
  
Change is change. No new life occupies the  
‘ol bodies ;— they decay. tis born, and grows,  
and flourishes. Men very pathetically inform  
the old, accept and wear it. Why put up with  
the almshouse when you may go to heaven? Tt  
is embalming,—no more. Let alone your oint-  
ments and your linen swathes, and go into an  
infant's body. You see in the catacombs of  
Egypt the result of that experiment, —that is  
the end of it.

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194 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. Ds,  
  
I do believe in simplicity. Tt is astonishing  
as well as sad, how many trivial affairs even the  
wisest man thinks he must attend to in a day ;  
how singular an affair he thinks he must omit.  
‘When the mathematician would solve a difficult  
problem, he first frees the equation of all incum-  
brances, and reduces it to its simplest terms. So  
simplify the problem of life, distinguish the ne-  
cessary and the real. Probe the earth to see  
where your main roots run. I would stand upon  
facts. Why not see, —use our eyes? Do men  
know nothing? I know many men who, in com-  
mon things, are not to be deceived ; who trust  
no moonshine ; who count their money correctly,  
and know how to invest it; who are said to be  
prudent and knowing, who yet will stand at a  
desk the greater part of their lives, as cashiers  
in banks, and glimmer and rust and finally go  
out there. If they know anything, what under  
the sun do they do that for? Do they know  
what bread is? or what it is for? Do they know  
what life is? If they knew something, the places  
which know them now would know them no  
more forever.  
  
This, our respectable daily life, in which the  
‘man of common sense, the Englishman of the  
world, stands so squarely, and on which our in-  
stitutions are founded, is in fact the veriest illu-  
sion, and will vanish like the baseless fabric of

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1.0] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 195  
  
a vision ; but that faint glimmer of reality which  
sometimes illuminates the darkness of daylight  
for all men, reveals something more solid and  
enduring than adamant, which is in fact the cor-  
ner-atone of the world,  
  
‘Men cannot conceive of a state of things so  
fair that it cannot be realized. Can any man  
honestly consult his experience and say that it  
is so? Have we any facts to appeal to when we  
say that our dreams are premature? Did you  
ever hear of a man who had striven all his life  
faithfully and singly toward an object and in no  
measure obtained it? If a man constantly as-  
pires, is he not elevated? Did ever a man try  
heroism, magnanimity, truth, sincerity, and find  
that there was no advantage in them? that it  
was a vain endeavor? Of course we do not ex-  
pect that our paradise will be a garden. We  
mow not what we ask. To look at literature;  
—how many fine thoughts has every man had!  
how few fine thoughts are expressed! Yet we  
never have a fantasy so subtile and ethereal, but  
that talent merely, with more resolution .and  
faithful persistency, after a thousand failures,  
might fix and engrave it in distinct and endur-  
ing words, and we should see that our dreams  
are the solidest facts that we know. But I speak  
not of dreams,  
  
What can be expressed in words can be ex-  
pressed in life,

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196 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1616,  
  
‘My actual life is a fact, in view of which T  
have no occasion to congratulate myself ; but  
for my faith and aspiration I have respect. It  
is from these that I speak. Every man’s position  
is in fact too simple to be described. I have  
sworn no oath. I have no designs on society,  
or nature, or God. I am simply what I am, or  
T begin to be that. I live in the present. I  
only remember the past, and anticipate the fu-  
ture. Tove to live. I love reform better than  
its modes, There is no history of how bad be-  
came better. I believe something, and there is  
nothing else but that. I know that Iam. I  
know that another is who knows more than I,  
who takes interest in me, whose creature, and  
yet whose kindred, in one sense, am I I know  
that the enterprise is worthy. I know that  
things work well. T have heard no bad news.  
  
‘As for positions, combinations, and details, —  
what are they? In clear weather, when we  
look into the heavens, what do we see but the  
sky and the sun ?  
  
Tf you would convince a man that he does  
wrong, do right. But do’ not care to convince  
him. Men will believe what they see. Let  
them see.  
  
Pursue, keep up with, circle round and round  
your life, as a dog does his master’s chaise. Do  
what you love. Know your own bone; gnaw at

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=1.] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 197  
  
it, bury it, unearth it, and gnaw it still. Do not  
be too moral. You may cheat yourself out of  
much life so. Aim above morality. Be not  
simply good; be good for something. All fa-  
bles, indeed, have their morals; but the inno-  
cent enjoy the story. Let nothing come between  
you and the light. Respect men and brothers  
only. When you travel to the Celestial City,  
carry no letter of introduction, When you  
knock, ask to see God, —none of the servants.  
Tn what concerns you much, do not think that  
you have companions: know that you are alone  
in the world.  
  
‘Thus I write at random. I need to see you,  
and I trust T shall, to correct my mistakes.  
Perhaps you have some oracles for me.  
  
Henry Taoreav.  
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcon, May 2, 1848  
  
“We must have our bread.” But what is  
our bread? Is it baker's bread? Methinks it  
should be very home-made bread. What is our  
meat? Is it butcher's meat? What is that  
which we must have? Ts that: bread which we  
are now earning sweet? Is it not bread which  
has been suffered to sour, and then been sweet-  
ened with an alkali, which has undergone the  
vinous, acetous, and sometimes the putrid fer-

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198 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1s,  
  
mentation, and then been whitened with vitriol ?  
Is this the bread which we must have? Man  
must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow,  
truly, but also by the sweat of his brain within  
his brow. The body can feed the body only.  
T have tasted but little bread in my life. It  
has been mere grub and provender for the most  
part. Of bread that nourished the brain and  
the heart, scarcely any. There is absolutely  
none even on the tables of the rich.  
  
‘There is not one kind of food for all men.  
You must and you will feed those faculties  
which you exercise. ‘The laborer whose body is  
weary does not require the same food with the  
scholar whose brain is weary. Men should not  
labor foolishly like brutes, but the brain and the  
body should always, or as much as possible,  
work and rest together, and then the work will  
be of such a kind that when the body is hungry  
the brain will be hungry also, and the same food  
will suffice for both; otherwise the food which  
repairs the waste energy of the over-wrought  
body will oppress the sedentary brain, and the  
degenerate scholar will come to esteem all food  
vulgar, and all getting a living drudgery.  
  
How shall we earn our bread is a grave ques-  
tion; yet it is a sweet and inviting question,  
Let us not shirk it, as is usually done. It is  
the most important and practical question which

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27.90] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 199  
  
is put to man. Let us not answer it hastily.  
Let us not be content to get our bread in some  
gross, careless, and hasty manner. Some men  
go whunting, some fishing, some agaming,  
some to war; but none have so pleasant a time  
as they who in earnest seek to earn their bread.  
It is true actually as it is true really; it is true  
‘materially as it is true spiritually, that they who  
seek honestly and sincerely, with all their hearts  
and lives and strength, to earn their bread, do  
earn it, and it is sure to be very sweet to them.  
‘A very little bread, —a very few crumbs are  
enough, if it be of the right quality, for it is  
infinitely nutritious, Let each man, then, earn  
at least a crumb of bread for his body before ho  
dies, and know the taste of jit, — that it is iden-  
tical with the bread of life, and that they both  
go down at one swallow.  
  
Our bread need not ever be sour or hard to  
digest. What Nature is to the mind she is also  
to the body. As she feeds my imagination, she  
will feed my body ; for what she says she means,  
and is ready to do. She is not simply beautiful  
to the poet's eye. Not only the rainbow and  
sunset are beautiful, but to be fed and clothed,  
sheltered and warmed aright, are equally beau-  
tiful and inspiring. There is not necessarily  
any gross and ugly fact which may not be eradi-  
cated from the life of man, We should endeavor

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200 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. [1s48,  
  
practically in our lives to correct all the defects  
which our imagination detects. ‘The heavens are  
as deep as our aspirations are high. So high as  
a tree aspires to grow, so high it will find an  
atmosphere suited to it. Every man should  
stand for a force which is perfectly irresistible.  
‘How can any man be weak who dares to be at  
all? Even the tenderest plants force their way  
up through the hardest earth, and the erev-  
ices of rocks; but a man no material power can  
resist. What a wedge, what a beetle, what a  
catapult, isan earnest man! What can resist  
him?  
  
It is a momentous fact that a man may be  
good, or he may be bad ; his life may be true, or  
it may be false ; it may be either a shame or a  
glory to him. ‘The good man builds himself up;  
the bad man destroys himself.  
  
But whatever we do we must do confidently  
Gf we are timid, let us, then, act timidly), not  
expecting more light, but having light enough.  
If we confidently expect more, then let us wait  
for it. But what is this which wo have? Have  
we not already waited? Is this the beginning  
of time? Is there a man who does not see  
clearly beyond, though only a hair's breadth  
beyond where he at any time stands?  
  
Tf one hesitates in his path, let him not pro-  
ceed. Let him respect his doubts, for doubts,

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1.00] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 201  
  
too, may have some divinity in them. ‘That we  
have but little faith is not sad, but that we have  
but little faithfulness. By faithfulness faith  
earned. When, in the progress of a life, a man  
swerves, though only by an angle infinitely small,  
from his proper and allotted path (and this  
never done quite unconsciously even at first; in  
fact, that was his broad and scarlet sin, — ah, he  
knew of it more than he ean tell), then the drama  
of his life turns to tragedy, and makes haste to  
its fifth act. When once we thus fall behind  
ourselves, there is no accounting for the obsta-  
cles which rise up in our path, and no one is so  
wise as to advise, and no one 80 powerful as to  
aid us while we abide on that ground. Such  
are cursed with duties, and the neglect of their  
duties. For such the decalogue was made, and  
other far more voluminous and terrible codes.  
  
‘These departures, —who have not made them?  
—for they are as faint as the parallax of a fixed  
star, and at the commencement we say they are  
nothing, — that is, they originate in a kind of  
sleep and forgetfulness of the soul when it  
naught. A man cannot be too cireumspect in  
order to keep in the straight road, and be sure  
that he sees all that he may at any time see, that  
s0 ho may distinguish his true path.  
  
‘You ask if there is no doctrine of sorrow in  
my philosophy. Of acute sorrow I suppose that

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202 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (198,  
  
I know comparatively little. My saddest and  
most genuine sorrows are apt to be but tran-  
sient regrets. The place of sorrow is supplied,  
perchance, by a certain hard and proportionably  
‘barren indifference. Iam of kin to the sod, and  
partake largely of its dull patience, —in winter  
expecting the sun of spring. In my cheapest  
moments T am apt to think that it is not my  
‘business to be seeking the spirit,” but as much  
its business to be secking me. I know very well  
what Goethe meant when he said that he never  
had a chagrin but he made a poem out of it. I  
have altogether too much patience of this kind.  
I am too easily contented with a slight and  
almost animal happiness. My happiness is a  
‘good deal like that of the woodchucks.  
  
‘Methinks I'am never quite committed, never  
wholly the creature of my moods, being always  
to some extent their critic. My only integral  
experience is in my vision. I see, perchance,  
with more integrity than I feel.  
  
But I need not tell you what manner of man  
Tam,—my virtues or my vices. You can guess  
if it is worth the while; and I do not discrimi-  
nate them well.  
  
T do not write this time at my hut in the  
woods. Iam at present living with Mrs. Emer-  
son, whose house is an old home of mine, for  
company during Mr. Emerson's absence.

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wx.%] THOREAU’S PENETRATION, 208  
  
‘You will perceive that I'am as often talking  
to myself, perhaps, as speaking to you.  
  
Here is a confession of faith, and a bit of self-  
portraiture worth having; for there is little ex-  
cept faithful statement of the fact. Its sentences  
are based on the questions and experiences of  
his correspondent ; yet they diverge into that  
atmosphere of humor and hyperbole so native to  
Thoreau; in whom was the oddest mixture of  
the serious and the comic, the literal and the  
romantic. He addressed himself also, so far as  
his unbending personality would allow, to the  
mood or the need of his correspondent; and he  
hhad great skill in fathoming character and de-  
seribing in a few touches the persons he encoun-  
tered ; as may be seen in his letters to Emerson,  
especially, who also had, and in still greater  
is “fatal gift of penetration,” as he  
‘once termed it. This will be seen in the contrast  
of Thoreau’s correspondence with Mr. Blake,  
and that he was holding at the same time with  
Horace Greeley, — persons radically unlike.  
  
In August, 1846, Thoreau sent to Greeley  
his essay on Carlyle, asking him to find a place  
for it in some magazine. Greeley sent it to  
R. W. Griswold, then editing “Graham's Maga-  
zine” in Philadelphia, who accepted it and  
promised to pay for it, but did not publish it

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204. GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1388,  
  
till March and April, 1847; even then the  
promised payment was not forthcoming. On  
the 31st of March, 1848, a year and a half  
after it had been put in Griswold’s posses-  
sion, Thoreau wrote again to Greeley, saying  
‘that no money had come to hand. At once,  
and at the very time when Mr. Blake was open-  
ing his spiritual state to Thoreau (April 3,  
1848), the busy editor of the “ Tribune” re-  
plied: “Tt saddens and surprises me to know  
that your article was not paid for by Graham ;  
and, since my honor is involved, I will see that  
you are paid, and that at no distant day.” Ac-  
cordingly, on May 17th, he adds: “To-day I have  
been able to lay my hand on the money due  
you. I made out a regular bill for the contri-  
bution, drew a draft on G. R. Graham for the  
amount, gave it to his brother in New York  
for collection, and received the money. I have  
made Graham pay you seventy-five dollars, but  
Tonly send you fifty dollars,” having deducted  
twenty-five dollars for the advance of that sum  
he had made a month before to Thoreau for his  
“Ktaadn and the Maine Woods,” which finally  
came out in “Sartain’s Union Magazine” of  
Philadelphia, late in 1848. To this letter and  
remittance of fifty dollars Thoreau replied, May  
19, 1848, eubstantially thus :—

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ar.%] 10 HORACE GREELEY. 205  
  
TO HORACE GREELEY (AT NEW YORK).  
Concono, May 1, 1848.  
  
My Frrenp Greetey,—I have today re-  
ceived from you fifty dollars. It is five years  
that I have been maintaining myself entirely by  
manual labor, —not getting a cent from any  
other quarter or employment. Now this toil has  
occupied so few days,— perhaps a single month,  
spring and fall each,—that I must have had  
more leisure than any of my brethren for study  
and literature. I have done rude work of all  
kinds. From July, 1845, to September, 1847,  
T lived by myself in the forest, in a fairly good  
cabin, plastered and warmly covered, which I  
built myself. ‘There I earned all I needed and  
‘kept to my own affairs, During that time my  
weekly outlay was but seven-and-twenty cents;  
and I had an abundance of all sorts. Unless  
the human race perspire more than I do, there  
is no occasion to live by the sweat of their  
brow. If men cannot get on without money  
(the smallest amount will suffice), the truest  
method of earning it is by working as a laborer  
at one dollar per day. You are least dependent  
503 I speak as an export, having used several  
kinds of labor.  
  
Why should the scholar make a constant com-  
plaint that his fate is specially hard? We are

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206 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (1s,  
  
too often told of “the pursuit of knowledge  
under difficulties,” —how posts depend on pa-  
trons and starve in garrets, or at last go mad  
and die. Let us hear the other side of the  
story. Why should not the scholar, if he is  
really wiser than the multitude, do coarse work  
now and then? Why not let his greater wis-  
dom enable him to do without things? If you  
say tho wise man is unlucky, how could you dis-  
tinguish him from the foolishly unfortunate ?  
  
My friond, how can I thank you for your  
kindness? Perhaps there is a better way, — I  
will convince you that it is felt and appreciated,  
Here have I been sitting idle, as it were, while  
you have been busy in my cause, and have done  
so much for me. I wish you had had a better  
subject; but good deeds are no less good because  
their object is unworthy.  
  
Yours was the best way to collect money, —  
but I should never have thought of it; I might  
have waylaid the debtor perchance. Even a  
business man might not have thought of it, —  
and I cannot be called that, as business is under-  
stood usually, —not being familiar with the rou-  
tine. But your way has this to commend it also,  
—if you make the draft, you decide how much  
to draw. You drew just the sum suitable.  
  
The Ktaadn paper ean be put in the guiso  
of letters, if it runs best so; dating each part

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ar.31.] 70 HORACE GREELEY. 207  
  
on the day it describes. Twenty-five dollars  
more for it will satisfy me; I expected no more,  
and do not hold you to pay that,—for you  
asked for something else, and there was delay  
in sending. So, if you use it, send me twenty-  
five dollars now or after you sell it, as is most  
convenient; but take out the expenses that I  
see you must have had. In such eases carriers  
generally get the most; but you, as carrier here,  
get no money, but risk losing some, besides  
much of your time ; while I go away, as I must,  
giving you unprofitable thanks. Yet trust me,  
my pleasure in your letter is not wholly a selfish  
one. May my good genius still watch over me  
and my added wealth!  
  
P. S.—My book grows in bulk as I work on  
its but soon I shall get leisure for those shorter  
articles you want, — then look out,  
  
   
  
The “ book,” of course, was the “ Week,” then  
‘about to go through the press; the shorter  
articles were some that Greeley suggested for  
the Philadelphia magazines. Nothing came of  
this, but the correspondence was kept up until  
1854, and led to the partial publication of  
“Cape Cod,” and “The Yankee in Canada,” in  
the newlyJaunched “Putnam’s Magazine,” of  
which G. W. Curtis was editor. But he dif-  
fered with Thoreau on a matter of style or

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208 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (158,  
  
opinion (the articles appearing as anonymous,  
or editorial), and the author withdrew his MS.  
‘The letters of Greeley in this entertaining series  
are all preserved; but Greeley seems to have  
given Thoreau’s away for autographs; and the  
only one accessible as yet is that just para-  
phrased.  
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT MILTON).  
CCoxconn, Angst 10, 1840.  
  
‘Mn. Buaxe, —I write now chiefly to say, be-  
fore it is too late, that I shall be glad to see you  
in Concord, and will give you a chamber, etc.,  
in my father’s house, and as much of my poor  
‘eompany as you can bear.  
  
Tam in too great haste this time to speak to  
your, or out of my, condition, I might say, —  
you might say,— comparatively speaking, be  
not anxious to avoid poverty. In this way the  
wealth of the universe may be securely invested,  
What a pity if we do not live this short time  
according to the laws of the long time, — the  
eternal laws! Let us sce that we stand erect  
here, and do not lie along by our whole Length  
in the dirt. Let our meanness be our footstool,  
not our cushion, In the midst of this labyrinth  
let us live a thread of life, We must act with  
so rapid and resistless a purpose in one direo-  
tion, that our vices will necessarily trail behind,

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1.9] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 209  
  
‘The nucleus of a comet is almost a star. Was  
there ever a genuine dilemma? The laws of  
earth are for the feet, or inferior man ; the laws  
of heaven are for the head, or superior man 5  
the latter are the former sublimed and ex-  
panded, even as radii from the earth's centre  
go on diverging into space. Happy the man  
who observes the heavenly and the terrestrial  
law in just proportion ; whose every faculty,  
from the soles of his feet to the crown of his  
head, obeys the law of its level; who neither  
stoops nor goes on tiptoe, but lives a balanced  
life, acceptable to nature and to God.  
  
‘These things I say; other things I do.  
  
Tam sorry to hear that you did not receive  
my book earlier. I addressed it and left it in  
‘Munrve’s shop to be sent to you immediately,  
on the twenty-sixth of May, before a copy had  
been sold.  
  
‘Will you remember me to Mr. Brown, when  
you see him next: he is well remembered by  
  
Henry Tuoreav.  
  
I still owe you a worthy answer.  
  
0 HARRISON BLAKE.  
Coxcono, November 20,1840,  
  
Mr. Buaxe,—I have not forgotten that I  
  
am your debtor. When I read over your let-

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210 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (180,  
  
ters, as I have just done, I feel that Iam un-  
worthy to have received or to answer them,  
though they are addressed, as I would have  
them, to the ideal of me. It behoves me, if I  
‘would reply, to speak out of the rarest part of  
myself.  
  
‘At present I am subsisting on certain wild  
flavors which nature wafts to me, which unac-  
countably sustain me, and make my apparently  
poor life rich. Within a year my walks have  
extended themselves, and almost every after-  
noon (I read, or write, or make pencils in the  
forenoon, and by the last means get a living for  
my body) I visit some new hill, or pond, or  
wood, many miles distant. I am astonished at  
the wonderful retirement through which I move,  
rarely meeting a man in these excursions, never  
seeing one similarly engaged, unless it be my  
companion, when I have one. I cannot help  
feeling that of all the human inhabitants of na-  
ture hereabouts, only we two have leisure to  
admire and enjoy our inheritance.  
  
“Free in this world as the birds in the air,  
disengaged from every kind of chains, those  
who have practiced the yoga gather in Brahma  
the certain fruit of their works.”  
  
Depend upon it, that, rude and careless as I  
am, I would fain practice the yoga faithfully.  
  
“The yogi, absorbed in contemplation, con-

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2.8] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 21  
  
tributes in his degree to creation: he breathes a  
divine perfume, he hears wonderful things. Di-  
vine forms traverse him without tearing him, and,  
united to the nature which is proper to him, he  
‘goes, ho acts as animating original matter.”  
  
‘To some extent, and at rare intervals, even I  
am a yogi.  
  
I know little about the affairs of Turkey, but  
I am sure that I know something about bar-  
berries and chestnuts, of which I have collected  
‘a store this fall. When I go to see my neigh-  
bor, he will formally communicate to me the  
latest news from Turkey, which he read in  
yesterday's mail,— Now Turkey by this time  
looks determined, and Lord Palmerston” —  
‘Why, I would rather talk of the bran, which,  
unfortunately, was sifted out of my bread this  
morning, and thrown away. Tt is a fact which  
Ties nearer to me. The newspaper gossip with  
which our hosts abuse our ears is as far from  
a true hospitality as the viands which they set  
before us. We did not need them to feed our  
bodies, and the news can be bought for a penny.  
‘We want the inevitable news, be it sad or cheer-  
ing, wherefore and by what means they are ex-  
tant this new day. If they are well, let them  
whistle and dance ; if they are dyspeptic, it is  
their duty to complain, that so they may in any  
cease be entertaining. If words were invented

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212 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (69,  
  
to conceal thought, I think that newspapers are  
a great improvement on a bad invention. Do  
not suffer your life to be taken by newspapers.  
  
T thank you for your hearty appreciation of  
my book. Tam glad to have had such a long  
talk with you, and that you had patience to lis-  
ten tome tothe end. I think that I had the  
advantage of you, for I chose my own mood,  
and in one sense your mood too,—that is, a  
quiet and attentive reading mood. Such ad-  
vantage has the writer over the talker. Iam  
sorry that you did not come to Concord in your  
vacation. Is it not time for another vacation?  
Tam here yet, and Concord is here.  
  
You will have found out by this time who it  
is that writes this, and will be glad to have you  
write to him, without his subscribing himself  
  
Henry D, Tuoreau.  
  
P. 8, —It is so long since I have seen you,  
that, as you will perceive, I have to speak, as it  
wore, in vacuo, as if I were sounding hollowly  
for an echo, and it did not make much odds  
what kind of a sound I made. But the gods do  
not hear any rude or discordant sound, as wo  
Jearn from the echo; and I know that the na-  
ture toward which I launch these sounds is so  
rich that it will modulate anew and wonderfully  
improve my rudest strain,

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=] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 218  
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT MILTON).  
  
Cowconn, Apsi 3, 180,  
  
‘Mn, Brake, —TI thank you for your letter,  
and I will endeavor to record some of the  
thoughts which it suggests, whether pertinent  
or not. You speak of poverty and dependence.  
Who are poor and dependent? Who are rich  
and independent? When was it that men  
agreed to respect the appearance and not the  
reality? Why should the appearance appear ?  
‘Are we well acquainted, then, with the reality?  
‘There is none who does not lie hourly in the  
respect he pays to false appearance. How sweet  
it would be to treat men and things, for an hour,  
for just what they are! We wonder that the  
sinner does not confess his sin. When we are  
weary with travel, we lay down our load and  
rest by the wayside. So, when we are weary  
with the burden of life, why do we not lay down  
this load of falsehoods which we have volun.  
teored to sustain, and be refreshed as never  
mortal was? Let the beautiful laws. prevail.  
Let us not weary ourselves by resisting them.  
When we would rest our bodies we cease to  
support them ; we recline on the lap of earth.  
So, when we would rest our spirits, we must  
recline on the Great Spirit. Let things alone;  
let them weigh what they will ; let them soar or

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214 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (180,  
  
fall. To succeed in letting only one thing alone  
in a winter morning, if it be only one poor  
frozen-thawed apple that hangs on a treo, what  
a glorious achievement! Methinks it lightens  
through the dusky universe. What an infinite  
wealth we have discovered! God reigns, i. e4  
when we take a liberal view, — when a liberal  
view is presented us.  
  
Let God alone if need be. Methinks, if I  
loved him more, I should keep him, —I should  
keep myself rather, —at a more respectful dis-  
tance. It is not when Iam going to meet him,  
but when I am just turning away and leaving  
him alone, that I discover that Goa is. I say,  
God. I am not sure that that is the name.  
‘You will know whom I mean.  
  
If for a moment we make way with our petty  
selves, wish no ill to anything, apprehend no ill,  
cease to be but as the crystal which reflects  
a ray,—what shall we not reflect! What a  
universe will appear crystallized and radiant  
around us!  
  
I should say, let the Muse lead the Muse, —  
let the understanding lead the understanding,  
though in any case it is the farthest forward  
which leads them both. If the Muse accompany,  
she is no muse, but an amusement, ‘The Muse  
should lead like a star which is very far off;  
but that does not imply that we are to follow

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zr] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 215  
  
foolishly, falling into sloughs and over preci  
pices, for it is not foolishness, but understand  
ing, which is to follow, which the Muse is ap-  
pointed to lead, as a fit guide of a fit follower.  
Will you live? or will you be embalmed ?  
Will you live, though it be astride of a sun-  
beam; or will you repose safely in the cata  
combs for a thousand years? In the former  
cease, the worst accident that can happen is that  
you may break your neck. Will you break  
Your heart, your soul, to save your neck? Necks  
and pipestems are fated to be broken. Men  
make a great ado about the folly of demand-  
ing too much of life (or of eternity’), and of  
endeavoring to live according to that demand.  
It is much ado about nothing. No harm ever  
came from that quarter. I am not afraid that  
I shall exaggerate the value and significance of  
Jife, but that I shall not be up to the occasion  
which it is. I shall be sorry to remember that  
I was there, but noticed nothing remarkable, —  
not so much as a prince in disguise; lived in  
the golden age a hired man; visited Olym-  
pus even, but fell asleep after dinner, and did  
not hear the conversation of the gods. I lived  
in Judea eighteen hundred years ago, but I  
never knew that there was such a one as Christ  
among my contemporaries! If there is any-  
thing more glorious than a congress of men

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216 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (180,  
  
aframing or amending of a constitution going  
on, which I suspect there is, I desire to see the  
morning papers. I am greedy of the faintest  
rumor, though it were got by listening at the  
kkey-hole. I will dissipate myself in that direo-  
tion.  
  
Tam glad to know that you find what I have  
said on Friendship worthy of attention. I wish  
T could have the benefit of your criticism; it  
would be a rare help to me. Will you not  
communicate it?  
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE (aT MILTON).  
Coxcono, May 28, 1860  
‘Mr. Buawe,—“T never found any content  
ment in the life which the newspapers record,”  
—anything of more value than the cent which  
they cost. Contentment in being covered with  
dust an inch deep! We who walk the streets,  
and hold time together, are but the refuse of  
‘ourselves, and that life is for the shells of us, —  
of our body and our mind, — for our scurf, —  
a thoroughly scurvy life. It is coffee made of  
coffee-grounds the twentieth time, which was  
only coffee the first time,— while the living  
water leaps and sparkles by our doors. I know  
some who, in their charity, give their coffee-  
grounds to the poor! We, demanding news,  
and putting up with euch news! Is it a new

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12] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 217  
  
convenience, or a new accident, or, rather, a now  
perception of the truth that we want!  
  
‘You say that “the serene hours in which  
friendship, books, nature, thought, seem alone  
primary considerations, visit you but faintly.”  
Is not the attitude of expectation somewhat  
divine?—a sort of home-made divineness ?  
Does it not compel a kind of sphere-music to  
attend on it? And do not its satisfactions  
merge at length, by insensible degrees, in the  
‘enjoyment of the thing expected?  
  
‘What if I should forget to write about my  
not writing? Tt is not worth the while to make  
that a theme. It is as if I had written every  
day. It is as if I had never written before. I  
wonder that you think so much about it, for not  
writing is the most like writing, in my case, of  
anything T know.  
  
‘Why will you not relate to me your dream?  
‘That would be to realize it somewhat. You tell  
me that you dream, but not what you dream. I  
‘ean guess what comes to pass. So do the frogs  
dream, Would that I knew what. I have  
never found out whether they are awake or  
asleep, — whether it is day or night with them.  
  
Lam preaching, mind you, to bare walls, that  
is, to myself ; and if you have chaneed to come  
in and occupy a pew, do not think that my re-  
marks are directed at you particularly, and so

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218 GOLDEN AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT. (180,  
  
slam the seat in disgust. ‘This discourse was  
written long before these exciting times.  
  
Some absorbing employment on your higher  
ground, — your upland farm, — whither no eart-  
path leads, but where you mount alone with  
your hoe,—where the life everlasting grows;  
there you raise a crop which needs not to be  
brought down into the valley to a market ;  
which you barter for heavenly products.  
  
‘Do you separate distinctly enough the support  
of your body, from that of your essence? By  
how distinct a course commonly are these two  
ends attained! Not that they should not be  
attained by one and the same means, — that, in-  
deed, is the rarest success, — but there is no  
half and half about it.  
  
I shall be glad to read my lecture to a small  
audience in Worcester such as you describe, and  
will only require that my expenses be paid. If  
only the parlor be large enough for an echo, and  
the audience will embarrass themselves with  
hearing as much as the lecturer would otherwise  
embarrass himself with reading. But I warn  
you that this is no better calculated for a pro-  
miscuous audience than the last two which T read  
to you. It requires, in every sense, a concor-  
dant audience.  
  
I will come on next Saturday and spend Sun-  
day with you if you wish it. Say so if you do.

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a.m] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 219  
  
“ Drink deep, or tarte not the Pierian spring.”  
  
Be not deterred by melancholy on the path  
which leads to immortal health and joy. When  
they tasted of the water of the river over which  
they were to go, they thought it tasted a little  
Ditterish to the palate, but it proved sweeter  
when it was down.  
  
H.D.T.  
  
Nore, —The “‘companion of his walls, mentioned by  
‘Thoreau in November, 1819, was Ellery Channing; the neigh-  
Dor who insisted on talking of Tuskey waa peehaps Emerson,  
‘who, after his visit to Europe in 1848, was more interested in  
ita polities than before. Pencil-making waa'Thoreau's manual  
‘work for many years; and it must have been about this time  
(1849-60) that he ‘had oceasion to go to New York to peddle  
some pencils," as he says in hia journal for November 20,1853.  
‘He adds, I was obliged to manufacture one thousand dollars!  
‘worth of pencils, and slowly dispose of, and fnally sacrifice  
‘them, in order to pay an assumed debt of one hundred dol-  
lars”. This debt was perhaps for the printing of the Week,  
‘published in 1849, and paid for in 1853. Thoreau’s poncile  
Ihave sol (in 1813) for 25 cents each. For other facta concorn-  
ing his debt to James Munroe, see Sanborn's Thoreau, pp. 230,  
2,

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IIL FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS.  
  
70 RW. EMERSON? (aT CONCORD).  
Frar Isuaxp Brace,  
‘Thursday morning, July 25, 1860.  
  
Dear Frtexp,—I am writing this at the  
house of Smith Oakes, within one mile of the  
wreck. He is the one who rendered most assist-  
ance. William H. Channing came down with  
me, but I have not seen Arthur Fuller, nor Gree-  
ley, nor Mareus Spring. Spring and Charles  
‘Sumner were here yesterday, but left soon. Mr.  
Oakes and wife tell me (all the survivors came,  
‘or were brought, directly to their house) that  
the ship struck at ten minutes after four a. a,  
and all hands, being mostly in their nightelothes,  
made haste to the forecastle, the water coming  
in at once. ‘There they remainod ; the passengers  
in the forecastle, the erew above it, doing what  
  
1 Tewillwadilybe seen that thin letter seltea tothe ship-  
‘wreck on Fite Inland, near New York, in which Margaret Ful-  
Ter, Counts Osol, with her husband and child, was Tost. A  
letter with no date ofthe year, but probably written Febraary  
15, 1840, from Emerson to Thorens, reprnenia thorn both  
taking mach trouble about a house in Concord for Mrs. Fuller,  
  
‘the mother of Margaret, who had jut aold her Groton howse,  
‘and wished to live with her danghter near Emerson.

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ar.) 70 R. W. EMERSON. 221  
  
they could. Every wave lifted the forecastle  
roof and washed over those within, The first  
man got ashore at nine; many from nine to  
noon. At flood tide, about half past three  
o'clock, when the ship broke up entirely, they  
came out of the forccastle, and Margaret sat  
with her back to the foremast, with her hands  
on her knees, her husband and child already  
drowned. A great wave came and washed her  
aft. The steward (?) had just before taken her  
child and started for shore. Both were drowned.  
  
‘The broken desk, in a bag, containing no very  
valuable papers; a large black leather trunk,  
with an upper and under compartment, the  
upper holding books and papers; a carpet-bag,  
probably Ossoli’s, and one of his shoes (7) are  
all the Ossoli effeots known to have been found.  
Four bodies remain to be found : the two Ossolis,  
Horace Sumner, and a sailor. I have visited  
the child’s grave. Its body will probably be  
taken away today. The wreck is to be sold at  
auction, excepting the hull, to-day.  
  
The mortar would not go off. Mrs. Hasty,  
the captain’s wife, told Mrs. Oakes that she and  
‘Margaret divided their money, and tied up the  
halves in handkerchiefs around their persons;  
that Margaret took sixty or seventy dollars.  
‘Mrs. Hasty, who can tell all about Margaret up  
to eleven o'clock on Friday, is said to be going

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222 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (180,  
  
to Portland, New England, today. She and  
Mrs. Fuller must, and probably will, come to-  
gether. The cook, the last to leave, and the  
steward (?) will know the rest. I shall try to  
see them. In the mean while I shall do what I  
‘can to recover property and obtain particulars  
hereabouts. William H. Channing —did I  
write it? —has come with me. Arthur Fuller!  
has this moment reached the house. He reached  
the beach last night. We got here yesterday  
noon. A good part of the wreck still holds to-  
gether where she struck, and something may  
come ashore with her fragments. The last body  
was found on Tuesday, three miles west. Mrs.  
Oakes dried the papers which were in the trunk,  
and she says they appeared to be of various  
Kinds. “Would they cover that table?” (a  
small round one). “They would if spread out.  
Some were tied up. ‘There were twenty or thirty  
books in the same half of the trunk. Another  
smaller trunk, empty, came ashore, but there was  
no mark on it.” She speaks of Paulina as if she  
might have been a sort of nurse to the child.  
T expect to go to Patchogue, whence the pilferers  
must have chiefly come, and advertise, ete.  
  
   
  
1 Rey. A. B. Fuller, thon of Manchester, N. H., afterward  
  
in the

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=r%] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 228  
  
70 HARRISON BLAKE (I MILTOX).  
Coxconn, August 8, 1850.  
  
‘Mr. Buaxe,—I received your letter just as  
Iwas rushing to Fire Island beach to recover  
what remained of Margaret Fuller, and read it  
on the way. That event and its train, as much  
as anything, have prevented my answering it be-  
fore. It is wisest to speak when yon are spoken  
to, I will now endeavor to reply, at the risk of  
having nothing to say.  
  
I find that actual events, notwithstanding the  
singular prominence which we all allow them, are  
far less real than the creations of my imagina-  
tion, They are truly visionary and insignificant,  
—alll that we commonly call life and death, —  
and affect me less than my dreams. This petty  
stream which from time to time swells and car-  
ries away the mills and bridges of our habitual  
life, and that mightier stream or ocean on which  
we securely float, —what makes the difference  
between them? Ihave in my pocket a button  
which I ripped off the coat of the Marquis of  
Ossoli, on the seashore, the other day. Held  
up, it intereepts the light, —an actual button,  
—and yet all the life it is connected with is less  
substantial to me, and interests me less, than my  
faintest dream. Our thoughts are the epochs in  
our lives: all else is but as a journal of the winds  
that blew while we were here.

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224 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1800,  
  
I say to myself, Do a little more of that work  
which you have confessed to be good. You are  
neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with yourself,  
without reason. Have you not a thinking fac-  
ulty of inestimable value? If there is an ex-  
periment which you would like to try, try it. Do  
not entertain doubts if they are not agreeable to  
you. Remember that you neednot eat unless  
you are hungry. Do not read the newspapers.  
‘Improve every opportunity to be melancholy. As  
for health, consider yourself well. Do not en-  
gage to find things as you think they are. Do  
what nobody else ean do for you. Omit to do  
anything else. It is not easy to make our lives  
respectable by any course of activity. We must  
repeatedly withdraw into our shells of thought,  
Tike the tortoise, somewhat helplessly ; yet there  
is more than philosophy in that.  
  
Do not waste any reverence on my attitude,  
I merely manage to sit up where I have dropped.  
Tam sure that my acquaintances mistake me.  
‘They ask my advice on high matters, but they  
do not know even how poorly ont I am for hats  
and shoes. I have hardly a shift. Just as  
shabby as I am in my outward apparel, ay, and  
‘more lamentably shabby, am I in my inward  
substance. If I should turn myself inside out,  
my rags and meanness would indeed appear. I  
am something to him that made me, undoubt-

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7.3] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 225  
  
edly, but mot much to any other that he has  
made.  
  
‘Would it not be worth while to discover na  
ture in Milton? be native to the universe? I,  
too, love Concord best, but I am glad when I  
discover, in. oceans and wildernesses far away,  
tho material of a million Concords: indeod, I am  
lost, unless I discover them. I see less differ-  
ence between a city and a swamp than formerly.  
It is a swamp, however, too dismal and dreary  
even for me, and I should be glad if there were  
fewer owls, and frogs, and mosquitoes in it. I  
prefer ever a more cultivated place, free from  
miasma and crocodiles. I am so sophisticated,  
and I will take my choice.  
  
As for missing friends, — what if we do miss  
one another? have we not agreed on a rendez  
vous? While each wanders his own way through  
the wood, without anxiety, ay, with serene joy,  
though it be on his hands and knees, over rocks  
and fallen trees, he cannot but be in the right  
way. There is no wrong way to him. How  
can he be said to miss his friend, whom the  
fruits still nourish and the elements sustain? A  
man who missed his friend at a turn, went on  
buoyantly, dividing the friendly air, and hum.  
ming a tune to himself, ever and anon kneeling  
with delight to study each little lichen in his  
path, and scarcely made three miles a day for

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226 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
friendship. As for conforming outwardly, and  
living your own life inwardly, I do not think  
much of that, Let not your right hand know  
what your left hand does in that line of busi-  
ness, It will prove a failure. Just as suevess-  
fully can you walk against a sharp steel edge  
which divides you cleanly right and left. Do  
you wish to try your ability to resist disten.  
sion? It isa greater strain than any soul can  
Jong endure. When you get God to pulling one  
way, and the devil the other, each having his  
feet well braced, —to say nothing of the con-  
science sawing transversely, — almost any tim-  
ber will give way  
  
T do not dare invite you earnestly to come to  
Concord, because I know too well that the ber-  
ries are not thick in my fields, and we should  
have to take it out in viewing the landscape.  
But come, on every account, and we will seo—  
one another.  
  
   
  
   
  
No lettors of the year 1851 have been found  
by me. On the 27th of December, 1850, Mr.  
Cabot wrote to say that the Boston Society of  
Natural History, of which he was secretary, had  
elected Thoreau a corresponding member, “with  
all the honores, privilegia, etc, ad gradum tuum  
pertinentia, without the formality of paying any  
entrance fee, or annual subscription. Your du-

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anu] 70 T. W. HIGGINSON. 227  
  
ties in return are to advanee the interests of the  
Society by communications or otherwise, as shall  
seein good.” This is believed to be the only  
learned body which honored itself by electing  
Thoreau. The immediate occasion of this elec-  
tion was the present, by Thoreau, to the Society,  
of a fine specimen of the American goshawk,  
caught or shot by Jacob Farmer, which Mr.  
Cabot acknowledged, December 18, 1849, say-  
ing: “It was first deseribed-by Wilson ; lately  
Audubon has identified it with the European  
goshawk, thereby committing a very flagrant  
blunder. It is usually a very rare spocies with  
us. The European bird is used in hawking;  
and doubtless ours would be equally game. If  
Mr. Farmer skins him now, he will have to take  
second cut ; for his skin is already off and stuffed,  
—his remains dissected, measured, and deposited  
in alcohol.”  
  
   
  
0 7, W. midarsoN (A” nostoN).  
Conoono, April 2-3, 1852,  
  
Dear Str,—I do not see that I can refuse  
to read another lecture, but what makes me hesi-  
tate is the fear that I have not another available  
which will entertain a lange audience, though  
Thave thoughts to offer which I think will be  
quite as worthy of their attention. However, I  
will try ; for the prospect of earning a few dol-

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228 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 182,  
  
Jars is alluring. As far as I can foresee, my  
subject would be “Reality” rather transcenden-  
tally treated. It lies still in \* Walden, or Life  
in the Woods.” Since you are kind enough to  
undertake the arrangements, I will leave it to  
you to name an evening of next week, decide  
‘on the most suitable room, and advertise, — if  
this is not taking you too literally at your word.  
  
If you still think it worth the while to attend  
to this, will you let me know as soon as may be  
what evening will be most convenient? I cer-  
tainly do not feel prepared to offer myself as. a  
lecturer to the Boston public, and hardly know  
whether more to dread a small audience or  
a large one. Nevertheless, I will repress this  
squeamishness, and propose no alteration in your  
arrangements. I shall be glad to accept your  
invitation to tea.  
  
‘This lecture was given, says Colonel Higgin-  
son, “at the Mechanies’ Apprentices Library in  
Boston, with the snow outside, and the young  
boys rustling their newspapers among the Al-  
cotts and Blakes.” Or, possibly, this remark  
may apply to a former lecture in the same year,  
which was that in which Thoreau first lectured  
habitually away from Concord. He commenced  
by accepting an invitation to speak at Leyden  
Hall, in Plymouth, where his friends the Wat-

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a1.) TO MARSTON WATSON. 229  
  
sons had organized Sunday services, that the  
Transcendentalists and Abolitionists might have  
a chance to be heard at a time when they were  
generally excluded from the popular “Lyceum  
courses” throughout New England. Mr. B. M.  
‘Watson says: —  
  
“T have found two letters from Thoreau in  
answer to my invitation in 1852 to address our  
congregation at Leyden Hall on Sunday morn-  
ings, —an enterprise I undertook about that  
time. I find among the distinguished men who  
addressed us the names of Thoreau, Emerson,  
Ellery Channing, Aleott, Higginson, Remond,  
8. Johnson, F. J. Appleton, Edmund Quincy,  
Garrison, Phillips, J. P. Lesley, Shackford, W.  
F. Channing, N. H. Whiting, Adin Ballou, Abby  
K, Foster and her husband, J. T. Sargent, T.  
‘T. Stone, Jones Very, Wasson, Hurlbut, F. W.  
Holland, and Scherb; so you may depend we  
had some fun.”  
  
‘These letters were mere notes. ‘The first,  
dated February 17, 1852, says : “I have not yet  
seen Mr. Channing, though I believe he is in  
town, —having decided to come to Plymouth  
myself, —but I will let him know that he is  
expected. Mr. Daniel Foster wishes me to say  
that he accepts your invitation, and that he would  
like to come Sunday after next. I will take the  
Saturday afternoon train. I shall be glad to

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280 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1802,  
  
get a winter view of Plymouth Harbor, and soe  
where your garden lies under the snow.”  
‘The second letter follows : —  
  
70 MARSTON WATSON (AT PLYMOUTH).  
  
Coxcono, December 1, 1852.  
  
Mr. Warsox,—I would be glad to visit Plym-  
outh again, but at present I have nothing to  
read which is not severely heathenish, or at least,  
secular, — which the dictionary defines as re-  
lating to affairs of the present world, not holy,”  
—though not necessarily unholy ; nor have I  
any leisure to prepare it. My writing at present  
is profane, yet in a good sense, and, as it were,  
sacredly, I may say ; for, finding the air of the  
temple too close, I sat outside. Don’t think I  
say this to got off; no, no! It will not do to  
read such things to hungry ears. “If they ask  
for bread, will you give them a stone?” When  
T have something of the right kind, depend upon  
it I will let you know.  
  
Up to 1848, when he was invited to lecture  
before the Salem Lyceum by Nathaniel Haw-  
thorne, then its secretary, Thoreau seems to have  
spoken publicly very little except in Concord ;  
nor did he extend the circuit of his lectures much  
until his two books had made him known as a  
thinker, ‘There was little to attract a popular

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a2.) LYCEUM LECTURES. 231  
  
audience in his manner or his matter ; but it was  
the era of lectures, and if one could once gain  
admission to the cirele of “lyceum lecturers,” it,  
did not so much matter what he said ; a lecture  
was a lecture, as a sermon was a sermon, good,  
bad, or indifferent. But it was common to ex-  
clude the anti-slavery speakers from the lyceums,  
even those of more eloquence than Thoreau;  
this led to invitations from the small band of  
reformers scattered about New England and  
‘New York, so that the most unlikely of platform  
speakers (Ellery Channing, for example) some-  
times gave lectures at Plymouth, Greenfield,  
Nowburyport, or elsewhere. ‘The present fash-  
ion of parlor lectures had not come in; yet at  
‘Worcester Thoreau’s friends early organized for  
him something of that kind, as his letters to Mr.  
Blake show. In default of an audience of num-  
bers, Thoreau fell into the habit of lecturing in  
his letters to this friend ; the most marked in-  
stance being the thoughtful essay on Love and  
Chastity which makes the bulk of his epistle  
dated September, 1852. Like most of his seri-  
ous writing, this was made up from his daily  
joumal, and hardly comes under the head of  
“familiar letters ;” the didactic purpose is rather  
too apparent. Yet it cannot be spared from any  
collection of his epistles, —none of which flowed  
more directly from the quickened moral nature  
of the man.

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282 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1882,  
  
170 SOPHIA THOREAU (AT BANGOR).  
Coxcono, July 13,1852  
  
Dear Sornra,—I am a miserable letter-  
writer, but perhaps if I should say this at length.  
and with sufficient emphasis and regret it would  
make a letter. Iam sorry that nothing tran-  
spires here of much moment; or, I should rather  
say, that Iam so slackened and rusty, like the  
telegraph wire this season, that no wind that  
blows can extract music from me.  
  
I am not on the trail of any elephants or mas-  
todons, but have succeeded in trapping only a  
few ridiculous mice, which cannot feed my im-  
agination. I have become sadly scientific. I  
would rather come upon the vast valley-like  
“ spoor ” only of some celestial beast which this  
world’s woods can no longer sustain, than spring  
my net over a bushel of moles. You must do  
better in those woods where you are. You must:  
have some adventures to relate and repeat for  
years to come, which will eclipse even mother's  
voyage to Goldsborough and Sissiboo.  
  
‘They say that Mr. Pierce, the presidential  
candidate, was in town last th of July, visiting  
Hawthorne, whose college chum he was; and  
that Hawthorne is writing a life of him, for  
electioneering purposes.  
  
Concord is just. as idiotic as ever in relation

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1.85] TO SOPHIA THOREAU. 238  
  
to the spirits and their knockings. Most people  
here believe in a spiritual world which no respec-  
table junk bottle, which had not met with a slip,  
would condescend to contain even a portion of  
for a moment, — whose atmosphere would ex-  
tinguish a candle let down into it, like a well  
that wants airing; in spirits which the very bull-  
frogs in ‘our meadows would blackball. Their  
evil genius is seeing how low it can degrade  
them. The hooting of owls, the croaking of  
frogs, is celestial wisdom in comparison, If I  
could be brought to believe in the things which  
they believe, I should make haste to get rid of  
my certificate of stock in this and the next  
‘world’s enterprises, and buy a share in the first  
Immediate Annihilation Company that offered.  
I would exchange my immortality for a glass of  
small beer this hot weather. Where are the  
heathen? Was there ever any superstition be-  
fore? And yet I suppose there may be a vessel  
this very moment setting sail from the coast of  
North America to that of Africa with a mission-  
ary on board! Consider the dawn and the sun-  
rise, — the rainbow and the evening, — the words  
of Christ and the aspiration of all the saints !  
Hear music! see, smell, taste, fecl, hear, — any-  
thing, —and then hear these idiots, inspired by  
the cracking of a restless board, humbly asking,  
“Please, Spirit, if you cannot answer by knocks,  
answer by tips of the table.” 1111111

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284 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER),  
Coxcons, July 2, 1882.  
  
‘Mn. Braxe,—I am too stupidly well these  
days to write to you. My life isalmost altogether  
outward,— all shell and no tender kernel ; so that  
T fear the report of it would be only a nut for  
you to crack, with no meat in it for you to eat.  
Moreover, you have not comered me up, and I  
enjoy such large liberty in writing to you, that I  
feel as vague astheair. However, I rejoice to hear  
that you have attended so patiently to anything  
which I have said heretofore, and have detected.  
any trath in it. It encourages me to say more,  
—not in this letter, I fear, but in some book  
which I may write one day. I am glad to know  
that I am as much to any mortal as a persistent  
and consistent scarecrow is to a farmer, — such  
a bundle of straw in a man’s clothing as I am,  
with a few bits of tin to sparkle in the sun  
dangling about me, as if I were hard at work  
there in the field. However, if this kind of life  
saves any man’s corn, —why, he is the gainer.  
Tam not afraid that you will flatter me as long  
as you know what I am, as well as what I think,  
or aim to be, and distinguish between these two,  
for then it will commonly happen that if you  
praise the last you will condemn the first.  
  
I remember that walk to Asnebumskit very

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2.8] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 235  
  
well, —a fit place to go to on a Sunday; one of  
the true temples of the earth. A temple, you  
know, was anciently “an open place without a  
roof,” whose walls served merely to shut out the  
world and direct the mind toward heaven; but  
a modern meeting-house shuts out the heavens,  
while it crowds the world into still closer quar-  
ters. Best of all is it when, as on a mountait  
top, you have for all walls your own elevation  
and deeps of surrounding ether. ‘The partridge-  
berries, watered with mountain dews which are  
gathered there, are more memorable to me than  
the words which I last heard from the pulpit  
at least; and for my part, I would rather look  
toward Rutland than Jerusalem, Rutland, —  
modern town, —land of ruts, — trivial and  
worn, —not too sacred, — with no holy sepul-  
chre, but profane green fields and dusty roads,  
‘and opportunity to live as holy a life as you  
‘can, —where the sacredness, if there is any, is  
all in yourself and not in the place.  
  
I fear that your Woreester people do not often  
‘enough go to the hilltops, though, as I am told,  
the springs lie nearer to the surface on your  
hills than in your valleys. ‘They have the repu-  
tation of being FreeSoilers) Do they insist on  
a free atmosphere, too, that is, on freedom for  
  
1 The name of a political party, afterwards called “ Repub-  
Aieasa.”

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286 = FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 182,  
  
the head or brain as well as the feet? If I were  
‘eonsciously to join any party, it would be that  
which is the most free to entertain thought.  
  
All the world complain nowadays of a press  
of trivial duties and engagements, which pre-  
‘vents their employing themselves on some higher  
ground they know of ; but, undoubtedly, if they  
were made of the right stuff to work on that  
higher ground, provided they were released from  
all those engagements, they would now at once  
fulfill the superior engagement, and neglect all  
the rest, as naturally as they breathe. They would  
never be caught saying that they had no time  
for this, when the dullest man knows that this  
ig all that he has time for. No man who acts  
from a sense of duty ever puts the lesser duty  
above the greater. No man has the desire and  
the ability to work on high things, but he has  
also the ability to build himself a high staging.  
  
As for passing through any great and glo-  
rious experience, and rising above it, as an eagle  
might fly athwart the evening sky to rise into  
still brighter and fairer regions of the heavens, I  
cannot say that I ever sailed so creditably ; but  
my bark ever seemed thwarted by some side  
wind, and went off over the edge, and now only  
occasionally tacks back toward the centre of that  
sea again, I have outgrown nothing good, but,  
I do not fear to say, fallen behind by whole con-

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2.8] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 287  
  
tinents of virtue, which should have been passed  
as islands in my course; but I trust— what else  
can I trust? that, with a stiff wind, some Fri-  
day, when I have thrown some of my cargo  
overboard, I may make up for all that distance  
lost.  
  
Perchance the time will come when we shall  
not be content to go back and forth upon a raft  
to some huge Homeric or Shakespearean India-  
man that lies upon the reef, but build a bark  
‘out of that wreck and others that are buried in  
the sands of this desolate island, and such new  
timber as may be required, in which to sail away  
to whole new worlds of light and life, where our  
friends are.  
  
‘Write again. There is one respect in which  
you did not finish your letter: you did not write  
it with ink, and it is not so good, therefore,  
against or for you in the eye of the law, nor in  
the eye of HD.T.  
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (aT WORCESTER).  
September, 1852.  
  
‘Mr. Buaxe,—Here come the sentences which  
  
I promised you. You may keep them, if you  
  
will regard and use them as the disconnected  
  
fragments of what I may find to be a completer  
  
essay, on looking over my journal, at last, and  
may claim again.

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288 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1882,  
  
I send you the thoughts on Chastity and Sen-  
suality with diffidence and shame, not knowing  
how far I speak to the condition of men gener-  
ally, or how far I betray my peculiar defects.  
Pray enlighten me on this point if you can,  
  
LOVE.  
  
‘What the essential difference between man  
and woman is, that they should be thus attracted  
to one another, no one has satisfactorily an-  
swered. Perhaps we must acknowledge the just-  
ness of the distinction which assigns to man the  
sphere of wisdom, and to woman that of love,  
though neither belongs exclusively to either.  
Man is continually saying to woman, Why will  
you not be more wise? Woman is continually  
saying to man, Why will you not be more lov-  
ing? It is not in their wills to be wise or to be  
loving but, unless each is both wise and loving,  
there can be neither wisdom nor love.  
  
‘All transcendent goodness is one, though  
appreciated in different ways, or by different  
senses. In beauty we see it, in music we hear  
it, in fragrance we scent it, in the palatable the  
pure palate tastes it, and in rare health the  
whole body feels it. The variety is in the sur-  
face or manifestation; but the radical identity  
wo fail to express. The lover sees in the glance  
of his beloved the same beauty that in the sun-

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5] LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP, 239  
  
set paints the western skies. It is the same dai-  
mon, here Turking under a human eyelid, and  
there under the closing eyelids of the day.  
Here, in small compass, is the ancient and natu-  
ral beauty of evening and morning. What lov-  
ing astronomer has ever fathomed the ethereal  
depths of the eye?  
  
‘The maiden conceals a fairer flower and  
sweeter fruit than any calyx in the field; and,  
if she goes with averted face, confiding in her  
purity and high resolves, she will make the heav-  
ens retrospective, and all nature humbly con-  
fess its queen.  
  
Under the influence of this sentiment, man is  
a string of an Adolian harp, which vibrates with  
the zephyrs of the eternal morning.  
  
There is at first thought something trivial  
in the commonness of love. So many Indian  
youths and maidens along these banks have in  
ages past yielded to the influence of this great  
civilizer. Nevertheless, this generation is not  
disgusted nor discouraged, for love is no indi-  
vidual’s experience; and though we are imper-  
fect mediums, it does not partake of our imper-  
fection; though we are finite, it is infinite and  
eternal ; and the same divine influence broods  
over these banks, whatever race may inhabit  
them, and perchance still would, even if the hu-  
man race did not dwell here.

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240 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. \_[1862,  
  
Perhaps an instinct survives through the in-  
tensest actual love, which prevents entire aban-  
donment and devotion, and makes the most ar-  
dent lover a little reserved. It is the anticipation  
of change. For the most ardent lover is not the  
less practically wise, and seeks a love which will  
last forever.  
  
Considering how few poetical friendships there  
are, it is remarkable that so many are married.  
Tt would seem as if men yielded too easy an  
obedience to nature without consulting their ge-  
nius, One may be drunk with love without  
being any nearer to finding his mate. ‘There is  
more of good nature than of good sense at the  
bottom of most marriages. But the good nature  
must have the counsel of the good spirit or In-  
telligence. If common sensé had been consulted,  
how many marriages would never have taken,  
place; if uncommon or divine sense, how few  
marriages such as we witness would ever have  
taken place!  
  
Our love may be ascending or descending.  
‘What is its character, if it may be said of it, —  
“We mut respect the sons shove  
But only those bow we love.”  
  
Love is a severe critic, Hate can pardon more  
than love. They who aspire to love worthily,  
subject themselves to an ordeal more rigid than  
‘any other.

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22.8] LOVE IS NOT BLIND. 241  
  
Is your friend such a one that an increase of  
worth on your part will rarely make her more  
your friend? Is she retained —is she attracted  
by more nobleness in you,—by more of that  
virtue which is peculiarly yours ; or is she indif.  
ferent and blind to that? Is she to be flattered  
and won by your meeting her on any other than  
the ascending path? Then duty requires that  
you separate from her.  
  
‘Love must be as much a light as a flame.  
  
‘Where there is not diseernment, the behavior  
even of the purest soul may in effect amount to  
‘coarseness.  
  
‘A man of fine perceptions is more truly femi-  
nine than a merely sentimental woman. The  
heart is blind; but love is not blind. None of  
the gods is so discriminating.  
  
In love and friendship tho imagination is as  
much exercised as the heart; and if either is  
outraged the other will be estranged. It is com-  
monly the imagination which is wounded first,  
rather than the heart, —it is so much the more  
sensitive.  
  
Comparatively, we can excuse any offense  
against the heart, but not against the imagina  
tion. ‘The imagination knows — nothing escapes  
its glance from out its eyry—and it controls  
the breast. My heart may still yearn toward  
the valley, but my imagination will not permit

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242 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (180,  
  
me to jump off the precipice that debars me  
from it, for it is wounded, its wings are clipt,  
and it cannot fly, even descendingly. Our  
“blundering hearts!” some poet says. ‘The im-  
agination never forgets; it is a remembering. It  
is not foundationless, but most reasonable, and  
it alone uses all the knowledge of the intellect.  
  
Love is the profoundest of secrets. Divulged,  
even to the beloved, it is no longer Love. As  
if it were merely I that loved you. When love  
coases, then it is divulged.  
  
In our intercourse with one we love, we wish  
to have answered those questions at the end of  
which we do not raise our voice ; against which  
‘we put no interrogation-mark, — answered with  
the same unfailing, universal aim toward every  
point of the compass.  
  
T require that thou knowest everything with-  
out being told anything. I parted from my be-  
loved because there was one thing which I had  
to tell her. She questioned me. She should  
have known all by sympathy. That I had to  
tell it her was the difference between us, — the  
misunderstanding.  
  
‘A lover never hears anything that is told, for  
that is commonly either false or stale; but he  
hears things taking place, as the sentinels heard  
‘Trenck? mining in the ground, and thought it  
was moles.  
  
1 Baron Trenc, the famous prisoner

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ar. 55) LOVE AND HATE. 243,  
  
The relation may be profaned in many ways.  
‘The parties may not regard it with equal saered-  
ness. What if the lover should learn that his  
beloved dealt in incantations and philters!  
What if he should hear that she consulted a  
clairvoyant! The spell would be instantly  
broken.  
  
If to chaffer and higgle are bad in trade,  
they are much worse in Love, It demands  
directness as of an arrow.  
  
‘There is danger that we lose sight of what  
our friend is absolutely, while considering what  
she is to us alone.  
  
‘The lover wants no partiality. He says, Be  
so kind as to be just.  
  
CCanst thou love with thy mind,  
‘And reason with thy heart ?  
CCanst thou be kind,  
‘And from thy darling part ?  
  
Can'st thou range earth, se, and air,  
And a0 mest me everywhere ?  
‘Through all eventa I wll pursue the,  
‘Through all pemons I will woo the.  
I need thy hate as much as thy love. Thou  
wilt not repel me entirely when thou repellest  
what is evil in me.  
  
Indeed, indeed, T cannot tell  
mn it well,  
  
   
  
All my love or all my hate.

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244" FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1302,  
  
Sarely, rarely thon wilt trast me  
‘When I any thou doth diagust me.  
©, hate thee with a hate  
‘That would fain anibilate  
‘Yet, sometimes, against my wil,  
My dear Friend, Tlove thee ail.  
Ie were treanon to ont love,  
  
‘And a win to God abo  
(One iota to abate  
(OF « pure, impartial hat,  
  
It is not enough that we are truthful; we  
must cherish and carry out high purposes to be  
truthful about.  
  
Tt must be rare, indeed, that we meet with  
one to whom we are prepared to be quite ideally  
related, as she to us. We should have no re-  
serve; we should give the whole of ourselves to  
that society ; we should have no duty aside from  
that. One who could bear to be so wonderfully  
and beautifully exaggerated every day. I would  
take my friend out of her low self and set her  
higher, infinitely higher, and there know her.  
But, commonly, men are as much afraid of love  
as of hate, They have lower engagements.  
They have near ends to serve. They have not  
imagination enough to be thus employed about  
a human being, but must. be coopering a barrel,  
forsooth.  
  
‘What a difference, whether, in all your walks,  
you meet only strangers, or in one house is one  
who knows you, and whom you know. To have

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a1.%.] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 245  
  
a brother or a sister! ‘To have a gold mine on  
your farm! To find diamonds in the gravel  
heaps before your door! How rare these things  
are! To share the day with you,—to people  
the earth. Whether to have a god or a goddess  
for companion in your walks, or to walk alone  
with hinds and villains and carles. Would not  
a friend enhance the beauty of the landscape as,  
much as a deer or hare? Everything would ac-  
knowledge and serve such a relation; the com  
in the field, and the cranberries in the meadow.  
The flowers would bloom, and the birds sing,  
with a new impulse, ‘There would be more fair  
days in the year.  
  
The object of love expands and grows before  
us to eternity, until it includes all that is lovely,  
and wo become all that can love,  
  
CHASTITY AND SENSUALITY.  
  
‘The subject of sex is a remarkable one, since,  
though its phenomena concern us so much, both  
directly and indirectly, and, sooner or later, it  
occupies the thoughts of all, yet all mankind, as  
it were, agree to be silont about it, at least the  
sexes commonly one to another. One of the  
most interesting of all human facts is veiled  
more completely than any mystery. It is treated  
with such seerecy and awe as surely do not go  
toany religion. I believe that it is unusual even

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246 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1802,  
  
for the most intimate friends to communicate  
the pleasures and anxieties connected with this  
fact,—much as the external affair of love, its  
comings and goings, are bruited. The Shakers  
do not exaggerate it so much by their manner  
of speaking of it, as all mankind by their man-  
ner of keeping silence about it. Not that men  
should speak on this or any subject without  
having anything worthy to say ; but it is plain  
that the education of man has hardly com-  
menced, — there is so little genuine intercom-  
munication,  
  
In a pure society, the subject of marriage  
would not be so often avoided, —from shame  
and not from reverence, winked out of sight,  
and hinted at only; but treated naturally and  
simply, —perhaps simply avoided, like the kin-  
dred mysteries. If it cannot be spoken of for  
shame, how can it be acted of? But, doubtless,  
there is far more purity, as well as more im-  
purity, than is apparent.  
  
‘Men commonly couple with their idea of mar-  
riage a slight degree at least of sensuality; but  
every lover, the world over, believes in its incon-  
ceivable purity.  
  
If it is the result of a pure love, there can be  
nothing sensual in marriage. Chastity is some-  
thing positive, not negative. Tt is the virtue of  
the married especially. All lusts or base pleas-

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xx.3] THE DEEDS OF LOVE. 247  
  
ures must give place to loftier delights. ‘They  
who meet as superior beings cannot perform the  
deeds of inferior ones. The deeds of love are  
Jess questionable than any action of an individ  
ual can be, for, it being founded on the rarest  
mutual respect, the parties incessantly stimulate  
each other to a loftier and purer life, and the  
act in which they are associated must be pure  
and noble indeed, for innocence and purity can  
have no equal. In this relation we deal with  
one whom we respect more religiously even than  
wwe respect our better selves, and we shall neces-  
sarily conduct as in the presence of God. What  
‘presence can be more awful to the lover than the  
presence of his beloved?  
  
If you seek the warmth even of affection from  
a similar motive to that from which cats and  
dogs and slothful persons hug the fire, —be-  
cause your temperature is low through sloth, —  
you are on the downward road, and it is but to  
plunge yet deeper into sloth. Better the cold  
affection of the sun, reflected from fields of ice  
and snow, or his warmth in some still, wintry  
dell. The warmth of celestial love does not  
relax, but nerves and braces its enjoyer. Warm  
your body by healthful exercise, not by cowering  
over a stove. Warm your spirit by performing  
independently noble deeds, not by ignobly seek-  
ing the sympathy of your fellows who are no

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248 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
better than yourself. A man’s social and spirit-  
ual discipline must answer to his corporeal. He  
‘must Jean on a friend who has a hard breast, as  
he would lie on a hard bed. He must drink cold  
water for his only beverage. So he must not  
hear sweetened and colored words, but pure and  
refreshing truths. He must daily bathe in trath  
cold as spring water, not warmed by the sympa-  
thy of friends.  
  
Can love be in aught allied to dissipation ?  
Let us love by refusing, not accepting one an-  
other. Love and lust are far asunder. ‘The one  
is good, the other bad. When the affectionate  
sympathize by their higher natures, there is  
love; but there is danger that they will eympa-  
thize by their lower natures, and then there is  
lust. It is not necessary that this be deliberate,  
hardly even conscious; but, in the close contact  
of affection, there is danger that we may stain  
and pollute one another ; for we cannot embrace  
‘but with an entire embrace,  
  
‘We must love our friend so much that she  
shall be associated with our purest and holiest  
thoughts alone. When there is impurity, we  
have ‘descended to meet,” though we knew it  
not.  
  
The luxury of affection, —there’s the danger.  
‘There must be some nerve and heroism in our  
love, as of a winter morning. In the religion of

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41.85] VIRGINITY AND MARRIAGE. 249  
  
all nations a purity is hinted at, which, I fear,  
‘men never attain to. We may love and not  
elevate one another, The love that takes us as  
it finds us degrades us. What watch we must  
keep over the fairest and purest of our affec-  
tions, lest there be some taint about them! May  
we so love as never to have occasion to repent  
of our love!  
  
‘There is to be attributed to sensuality the  
loss to language of how many pregnant symbols!  
Flowers, which, by their infinite hues and fra-  
grance, celebrate the marriage of the plants, are  
intended for a symbol of the open and unsus-  
pected beauty of all true marriage, when man’s  
flowering season arrives,  
  
‘Virginity, too, is a budding flower, and by an  
impure marriage the virgin is deflowered. Who-  
ever loves flowers, loves virgins and chastity.  
Love and lust are as far asunder as a flower-  
garden is from a brothel.  
  
J. Biberg, in the “ Amanitates Botanic,”  
edited by Linneus, observes (I translate from  
the Latin): “The organs of generation, which,  
in the animal kingdom, are for the most part  
concealed by nature, as if they were to be  
ashamed of, in the vegetable kingdom are ex-  
posed to the eyes of all; and, when the nuptials  
of plants are celebrated, it is wonderful what  
delight they afford to the beholder, refreshing

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250 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1852,  
  
the senses with the most agreeable color and the  
sweetest odor; and, at the same time, bees and  
other inseets, not to mention the humming-bird,  
extract honey from their nectaries, and gather  
wax from their effete pollen.” Linnmus himself  
calls the calyx the thalamus, or bridal chamber;  
and the corolla the aulaewm, or tapestry of it,  
and proceeds to explain thus every part of the  
flower.  
  
Who knows but evil spirits might corrupt the  
flowers themselves, rob them of their fragrance  
and their fair hues, and turn their marriage into  
secret shame and defilement? Already they  
are of various qualities, and there is one whose  
‘nuptials fill the lowlands in June with the odor  
of carrion.  
  
‘The intercourse of the sexes, I have dreamed,  
is incredibly beautiful, too fair to be remem-  
ered. I have had thoughts about it, but they  
are among the most fleeting and irrecoverable in  
my experience. It is strange that men will talk  
of miracles, revelation, inspiration, and the like,  
as things past, while love remains.  
  
‘A true marriage will differ in no wise from  
illumination. In all perception of the truth  
there is a divine ecstasy, an inexpressible delir-  
ium of joy, as when a youth embraces his be-  
trothed virgin. ‘The ultimate delights of a true  
‘marriage are one with this.

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2.8] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 251  
  
No wonder that, out of such a union, not as  
end, but a8 accompaniment, comes the undying  
race of man, The womb is a most fertile soil.  
  
Some have asked if the stock of men could  
not be improved, — if they could not be bred as  
cattle. Let Love be purified, and all the rest  
will follow. A pure love is thus, indeed, the  
panacea for alll the ills of the world.  
  
‘The only excuse for reproduction is improve-  
ment. Nature abhors repetition. Beasts merely  
‘propagate their kind ; but the offspring of noble  
men and women will be superior to themselves,  
as their aspirations are. By their fruits ye shall  
now them.  
  
   
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxconn, February 27, 1858.  
  
Mr. Brake, —I have not answered your letter  
before, because I have been almost constantly in  
the ficlds surveying of late, It is long since T  
have spent many days so profitably in a pecuni-  
ary sense; so unprofitably, it seems to me, in  
a more important sense. I have earned just a  
dollar a day for seventy-six days past; for,  
though I charge at a higher rate for the days  
which are seen to be spent, yet so many more  
are spent than appears, This is instead of leo-  
turing, which has not offered, to pay for that  
book which I printed. I have not only cheap  
  
1 the Week,

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252 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. {18®8,  
  
hours, but cheap weeks and months; that is,  
weeks which are bought at the rate I have  
named. Not that they are quite lost to me, or  
‘make me very melancholy, alas! for I too often  
take a cheap satisfaction in so spending them,  
— weeks of pasturing and browsing, like beeves,  
and deer,—which give me animal health, it  
may be, but create a tough skin over the soul  
and intellectual part. Yet, if men should offer  
my body 2 maintenance for the work of my  
head alone, I feel that it would be a dangerous  
‘temptation, '  
  
‘As to whether what you speak of as the  
“world’s way” (which for the most part is my  
way), o that which is shown me, is the better,  
the former is imposture, the latter is truth. I  
hhave the coldest confidence in the last. ‘There  
is only such hesitation as the appetites feel in  
following the aspirations. The clod. hesitates,  
because it is inert, wants animation. The one  
is the way of death, the other of life everlasting.  
My hours are not “cheap in such a way that  
I doubt whether the world’s way would not  
have been better,” but cheap in such a way that  
I doubt whether the world’s way, which I have  
adopted for the time, could be worse. The  
whole enterprise of this nation, which is not an  
upward, but a westward one, toward Oregon,  
California, Japan, ete., is totally devoid of inter-

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21%] 70 HARRISON BLAKE. 258  
  
est to me, whether performed on foot, or by a  
Pacific railroad. It is not illustrated by a  
thought; it is not warmed by a sentiment;  
there is nothing in it which one should lay  
down his life for, nor even his gloves, — hardly  
which one should take up a newspaper for. Tt  
is perfectly heathenish, — a filibustering to-  
ward heaven by the great western route. No;  
they may go their way to their manifest destiny,  
which I trust is not mine. May my seventy-  
six dollars, whenever I get them, help to cany  
‘me in the other direction! I see them on their  
winding way, but no music is wafted from their  
host,— only the rattling of change in their  
pockets. I would rather be a captive knight,  
and let them all pass by, than be free only to  
go whither they are bound, What end do they  
propose to themselves beyond Japan? What  
aims more lofty have they than the prairie  
dogs?  
  
As it respects these things, I have not changed  
an opinion one iota from the first. As the stars  
looked to me when I was a shepherd in Assyria,  
they look to me now, e New-Englander. The  
higher the mountain on which you stand, the  
less change in the prospect from year to year,  
from age to age. Above a certain height there is  
no change. I am a Switzer on the edge of the  
glacier, with his advantages and disadvantages,

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254 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1883,  
  
goitre, or what not. (You may suspect it to be  
some kind of swelling at any rate.) I have had  
‘but one spiritual birth (excuse the word), and  
now whether it rains or snows, whether I laugh  
or cry, fall farther below or approach nearer to  
my standard ; whether Pierce or Scott is elected,  
—not a new scintillation of light flashes on me,  
but ever and anon, though with longer intervals,  
the same surprising and everlastingly new light  
dawns to me, with only such variations as in the  
coming of the natural day, with which, indeed,  
it is often coincident.  
  
‘As to how to preserve potatoes from rotting,  
your opinion may change from year to year;  
but as to how to preserve your soul from rot-  
ting, I have nothing to learn, but something to  
practice.  
  
‘Thus I declaim against them; but I in my  
folly am the world I condemn.  
  
I very rarely, indeed, if ever, feel any itch-  
ing to be what is called useful to my fellow-men.”  
Sometimes — it may be when my thoughts for  
want of employment fall into a beaten path or  
humdrum —TI have dreamed idly of stopping a  
man’s horse that was running away ; but, per-  
chance, I wished that he might run, in order  
that I might stop him;—or of putting out a  
fire; but then, of course, it must have got well  
agoing. Now, to tell the truth, I do not dream

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41.8.) T0 HARRISON BLAKE. 255  
  
much of acting upon horses before they run, or  
of preventing fires which are not yet kindled.  
‘What a foul subject is this of doing good ! in-  
stead of minding one’s life, which should be his  
business; doing good as a dead carcass, which is  
only fit for manure, instead of as a living man, —  
instead of taking care to flourish, and smell and  
taste sweet, and refresh alll mankind to the extent  
of our capacity and quality. People will some-  
times try to persuade you that you have done  
something from that motive, as if you did not  
already know enough about it. If I ever did a  
‘man any good, in their sense, of course it was  
something exceptional and insignificant com-  
pared with the good or evil which I am con-  
stantly doing by being what I am. As if you  
were to preach to ice to shape itself into bumn-  
ing-glasses, which are sometimes useful, and so  
the peculiar properties of ice be lost. Tee that  
merely performs the office of a burning-glass  
does not do its duty.  
  
‘The problem of life becomes, one cannot say  
by how many degrees, more complicated as our  
material wealth is increased, — whether that  
needle they tell of was a gateway or not, —since  
the problem is not merely nor mainly to get life  
for our bodies, but by this or a similar discipline  
to get life for our souls; by cultivating the low-  
Jand farm on right principles, that is, with this

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256 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
view, to turn it into an upland farm. You have  
s0 many more talents to account for. If I accom-  
plish as much more in spiritual work as I am  
richer in worldly goods, then I am just as worthy,  
or worth just as much, as I was before, and no  
more. I see that, in my own case, money might  
be of great service to me, but probably it would  
not be; for the difficulty now is, that I do not  
improve my opportunities, and therefore I am  
not prepared to have my opportunities increased.  
Now, I warn you, if it be as you say, you have  
got to put on the pack of an upland farmer in  
good earnest the coming spring, the lowland  
farm being cared for ; ay, you must be selecting  
your seeds forthwith, and doing what winter  
work you can; and, while others are raising  
potatoes and Baldwin apples for you, you must  
be raising apples of the Hesperides for them.  
Only hear how he preaches!) No man can  
suspect that he is the proprietor of an upland  
farm, —upland in the sense that it will produce  
nobler crops, and better repay cultivation in the  
Tong run, — but he will be perfectly sure that  
he ought to cultivate i  
  
Though we are desirous to earn our bread, we  
need not be anxious to satisfy men for it, —  
though we shall take care to pay them, —but  
God, who alone gave it to us. Men may in  
effect put us in the debtors’ jail for that mat-

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1.5] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 257  
  
ter, simply for paying our whole debt to God,  
which includes our debt to them, and though we  
have His receipt for it,—for His paper is dis-  
honored. The cashier will tell you that He has  
no stock in his bank.  
  
How prompt we are to satisfy the hunger and  
thirst of our bodies ; how slow to satisfy the  
hunger and thirst of our souls! Indeed, we  
would-be-practical folks cannot use this word  
without blushing because of our infidelity, hav-  
ing starved this substance almost to a shadow.  
We feel it to be as absurd as if a man were to  
break forth into a eulogy on his dog, who has n't  
any. An ordinary man will work every day for  
a year at shoveling dirt to support his body, or  
a family of bodies ; but he is an extraordinary  
man who will work a whole day in a year for  
the support of his soul. Even the priests, the  
men of God, so called, for the most part confess  
that they work for the support of the body.  
But he alone is the truly enterprising and prac-  
tieal man who succeeds in maintaining his soul  
here. Have not we our everlasting life to get?  
and is not that the only excuse at last for eat  
ing, drinking, sleeping, or even carrying an  
umbrella when it rains? A man might as well  
devote himself to raising pork, as to fattening  
the bodies, or temporal part merely, of the  
whole human family. If we made the true dis-

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258 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1853,  
  
tinction we should almost all of us be seen to be  
in the almshouse for souls,  
  
Tam much indebted to you because you look:  
so steadily at the better side, or rather the true  
centre of me (for our true centre may, and per-  
haps oftenest does, lie entirely aside from us,  
and we are in fact eccentric), and, as I have  
elsewhere said, “ give me an opportunity to live.”  
‘You speak as if the image or idea which I see  
were reflected from me to you; and I see it again  
reflected from you to me, because we stand at  
the right angle to one another; and so it goes  
rigzag to what successive reflecting surfaces, be-  
fore it is all dissipated or absorbed by the more  
unreflecting, or differently reflecting, — who  
Jnows? Or, perhaps, what you see directly,  
you refer to me. What a little shelf is re-  
quired, by which we may impinge upon another,  
and build there our eyry in the clouds, and all  
the heavens we see above us we refer to the  
rags around and beneath us. Some piece of  
mica, as it were, in the face or eyes of one, as  
on the Delectable Mountains, slanted at the right  
angle, reflects the heavens to us. But, in the  
slow geological upheavals and depressions, these  
‘mutual angles are disturbed, these suns set, and  
new ones rise to us. That ideal which I wor-  
shiped was a greater stranger to the mica than  
tome. It was not the hero I admired, but the

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er. 35.) TO HARRISON BLAKE. 259  
  
reflection from his epaulet or helmet. It is  
nothing (for us) permanently inherent in an-  
other, but his attitude or relation to what we  
prize, that we admire. The meanest man may  
glitter with micacious particles to his fellow's  
eye. These are the spangles that adorn a man.  
The highest union, —the only un-ion (don’t  
laugh), or central oneness, is the coincidence of  
visual rays. Our club-room was an apartment  
in a constellation where our visual rays met  
(and there was no debate about the restaurant).  
‘The way between us is over the mount.  
  
Your words make me think of a man of my  
acquaintance whom I occasionally meet, whom  
you, too, appear to have met, one Myself, as he  
js called. Yet, why not call him Yourself?  
If you have met with him and know him, it is  
all T have done; and surely, where there is a  
mutual acquaintance, the my and thy make a  
distinction without a difference.  
  
I do not wonder that you do not like my  
Canada story. It concerns me but little, and  
probably is not worth the time it took to tell it.  
Yet I had absolutely no design whatever in my  
mind, but simply to report what I saw. I have  
inserted all of myself that was implicated, or  
made the excursion. It has come to an end, at  
any rate; they will print no more, but return  
me my MS. when it is but little more than half

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260 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1883,  
  
done, as well as another I had sent them, be-  
‘cause the editor? requires the liberty to omit the  
heresies without consulting me, — a privilege  
California is not rich enough to bid for.  
  
I thank you again and again for attending  
to me; that is to say, I am glad that you hear  
me and that you also are glad. Hold fast to  
your most; indefinite, waking dream. The very  
green dust on the walls is an onganized vege-  
table; the atmosphere has its fauna and flora  
floating in it; and shall we think that dreams  
are but dust and ashes, are always disintegrated  
and crumbling thoughts, and not dust- like  
thoughts trooping to their standard with music,  
—systems beginning to be organized? These  
expectations, — these are roots, these are nuts,  
which even the poorest man has in his bin, and  
roasts or cracks them occasionally in winter  
evenings, — which even the poor debtor retains  
with his bed and his pig, i.e. his idleness and  
sensuality. Men go to the opera because they  
‘hear there a faint expression in sound of this  
news which is never quite distinetly proclaimed.  
Suppose a man were to sell the hue, the least  
amount of coloring matter in the superficies of  
his thought, for a farm,— were to exchange an  
absolute and infinite value for a relative and  
finite one,—to gain the whole world and lose  
his own soul!  
  
1 Of Punan's Magacne

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1] 10 HARRISON BLAKE. 261  
  
Do not wait as ong as I have before you  
write, If you will look at another star, I will  
try to supply my side of the triangle,  
  
Tell Mr. Brown that I remember him, and  
trust that he remembers me.  
  
P, S,—Excuse this rather flippant preaching,  
which does not cost me enough; and do not  
think that I mean you always, though your let-  
ter requested the subjects.  
  
70 HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
  
Coxooxo, April 10, 1858,  
  
‘Mr. Brake, — Another singular kind of  
spiritual foot-ball, — really nameless, handle-  
less, homeless, like myself,—a mere arena for  
thoughts and feelings; definite enough out-  
wardly, indefinite more than enough inwardly.  
But I do not know why we should be styled  
“misters ” or “masters :” we come so near to  
being anything or nothing, and seeing that we  
are mastered, and not wholly sorry to be mas-  
tered, by the least phenomenon. It seems to me  
that we are the mere creatures of thought, —  
one of the lowest forms of intellectual life, we  
men, —as the sunfish is of animal life. As yet  
our thoughts have acquired no definiteness nor  
solidity ; they are purely molluscous, not verte-  
rate ; and the height of our existence is to float,  
upward in an ocean where the sun shines, — ap-

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262 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. {1883,  
  
pearing only like a vast soup or chowder to the  
eyes of the immortal navigators. It is wonder-  
ful that I ean be here, and you there, and that  
we can correspond, and do many other things,  
when, in fact, there is so little of us, either or  
both, anywhere. In a few minutes, I expect,  
this slight film or dash of vapor that I am will  
be what is called asleep, — resting! forsooth  
from what? Hard work? and thought? The  
hard work of the dandelion down, which floats  
over the meadow all day; the hard work of a  
pismire that labors to raise a hillock all day,  
‘and even by moonlight. Suddenly I can come  
forward into the utmost apparent distinctness,  
and. speak with a sort of emphasis to you; and  
the next moment I am so faint an entity, and  
make so slight an impression, that nobody can  
find the traces of me. I try to hunt myself  
up, and find the little of me that is discoverable  
is falling asleep, and then I assist and tuck it  
up. It is getting late. How can J starve or  
feed? Can I be said to sleep? There is not  
enough of me even for that. If you hear a  
noise, — "taint I, — "taint I,—as the dog says  
with a tinkettle tied to his tail. I read of some-  
thing happening to another the other day: how  
happens it that nothing ever happens to me?  
A dandelion down that never alights, — set-  
tles, — blown off by a boy to see if his mother

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z0.8h] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 263  
  
wanted him,—some divine boy in the upper  
pastures,  
  
‘Well, if there really is another such a meteor  
sojourning in these spaces, I would like to ask  
you if you know whose estate this is that we are  
‘on? For my part I enjoy it well enough, what  
with the wild apples and the scenery; but I  
should n’t wonder if the owner set his dog on  
me next. I could remember something not  
much to the purpose, probably but if T stick  
to what I do know, then —  
  
It is worth the while to live respoctably unto  
ourselves. We can possibly get along with a  
neighbor, even with a bedfellow, whom we re-  
spect but very little ; but as soon as it comes to  
this, that we do not respect ourselves, then we  
do not get along at all, no matter how much  
money we are paid for halting. There are old  
heads in the world who cannot help me by their  
example or advice to live worthily and satisfac-  
torily to myself; but I believe that it is in my  
power to elevate myself this very hour above  
the common level of my life. It is better to  
have your head in the clouds, and know where  
you are, if indeed you cannot get it above them,  
than to breathe the clearer atmosphere below  
them, and think that you are in paradise.  
  
Once you were in Milton doubting what to  
  
3 A town near Boston.

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264 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (183,  
  
do. To live a better life, — this surely can be  
done. Dot and carry one. Wait not for a clear  
sight, for that you are to get. What you see  
clearly you may omit to do, Milton and Worees-  
ter? It is all Blake, Blake. Never mind the  
rats in the wall ; the cat will tako care of them.  
All that men have said or are is a very faint  
rumor, and it is not worth the while to remem-  
ber or refer to that. If you are to meet God,  
will you refer to anybody out of that court?  
How shall men know how I succeed, unless they  
are in at the life? Idid not see the \* Times”  
reporter there.  
  
Is it not delightful to provide one’s self with  
the necessaries of life, — to collect dry wood for  
the fire when the weather grows cool, or fruits  
when we grow hungry? — not till then. And  
then we have all the time left for thought !  
  
Of what use were it, pray, to get a little wood  
to burn, to warm your body this cold weather, if  
there were not a divine fire kindled at the same  
time to warm your spirit?  
  
““Ualeas above bimaelf he can  
Erect himself, how poor a thing isan!”  
T euddle up by my stove, and there I get up  
another fire which warms fire itself. Life is so  
short that it is not wise to take roundabout ways,  
nor can we spend much time in waiting. Is it  
absolutely necessary, then, that we should do as

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22.%] 10 HARRISON BLAKE. 265  
  
we are doing? Are we chiefly under obligations  
to the devil, like Tom Walker? Though it is  
late to leave off this wrong way, it will seem  
early the moment we begin in the right ways  
instead of mid-afternoon, it will be early morn-  
ing with us. We have not got half way to dawn  
yet.  
  
As for the lectures, I feel that I have some-  
thing to say, especially on Traveling, Vague-  
ness, and Poverty ; but I cannot come now. I  
will wait till T am fuller, and have fewer engage-  
ments. Your suggestions will help me much  
to write them when Lam ready. I am going to  
Haverhill tomorrow, surveying, for a week or  
more. You met me on my last errand thither.  
  
T trust that you realize what an exaggerater 1  
am,— that I lay myself out to exaggerate when-  
ever I have an opportunity, — pile Pelion upon  
Ossa, to reach heaven so. Expect no trivial  
truth from me, unless I am on the witnessstand.  
T will come as near to lying as you can drive a  
coach-and-four. If it isn’t thus and so with me,  
it is with something. I am not particular whether  
T get the shells or meat, in view of the latter's  
worth.  
  
I soe that I have not at all answered your let-  
ter, but there is time enough for that,  
  
2 A Musuchusetts town, the birthplace of Whittier.

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266 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. [185,  
  
‘10 HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Concono, December 19, 185.  
  
Mr. Buake,—My debt has accumulated so  
that T should have answered your last letter at  
once, if I had not been the subject of what is  
called a press of engagements, having a lecture  
to write for last Wednesday, and surveying  
more than usual besides. It has been a kind of  
running fight with me,— the enemy not always  
behind me, I trust,  
  
‘True, a man cannot lift himself by his own  
waistbands, because he cannot get out of him-  
self; but he can expand himself (which is bet-  
ter, there being no up nor down in nature), and  
so split his waistbands, being already within  
himself.  
  
‘You speak of doing and being, and the van-  
ity, real or apparent, of much doing. ‘The suck-  
ers—I think it is they—make nests in our  
river in the spring of more than a cartload of  
‘small stones, amid which to deposit their ova.  
‘The other day I opened a muskrat’s house, It  
was made of weeds, five feet broad at base, and  
three feet high, and far and low within it was  
little cavity, only a foot in diameter, where the  
rat dwelt. It may seem trivial, this piling up  
‘of weeds, but so the raco of muskrats is pre-  
served. We must heap up a great pile of doing,

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20.5] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 267  
  
for a small diameter of being. Is it not imper-  
ative on us that we do something, if we only  
work in a treadmill? And, indeed, some sort  
of revolving is necessary to produce a centre  
and nucleus of being. What exercise is to the  
body, employment is to the mind and morals.  
Consider what an amount of drudgery must be  
performed,—how much humdrum and prosaie  
labor goes to any work of the least value. ‘There  
are so many layers of mere white lime in every  
shell to that thin inner one so beautifully tinted.  
Let not the shell-fsh think to build his house of  
that alone; and pray, what are its tints to him?  
Is it not his smooth, close-fitting shirt merely,  
whose tints are not to him, being in the dark,  
but only when he is gone or dead, and his shell  
is heaved up to light, a wreck upon the beach,  
do they appear. With him, too, it is a Song of  
the Shirt, Work, — work, —work!”" And the  
work is not merely a police in the gross sense,  
but in the higher sense a discipline. If it is  
surely the means to the highest end we know,  
can any work be humble or disgusting? Will it,  
not rather be elevating as a ladder, the means  
by which we are translated ?  
  
How admirably the artist is made to accom.  
plish his self-culture by devotion to his art! ‘The  
wood-sawyer, through his effort to do his work  
well, becomes not merely a better wood-sawyer,

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268 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1883,  
  
but measurably a better man. Few are the men  
that can work on their navels,—only some Brah-  
mins that I have heard of. To the painter is  
given’ some paint and canvas instead; to the  
Irishman a hog, typical of himself, In a thou-  
sand apparently humble ways men busy them-  
selves to make some right take the place of some  
wrong,—if it is only to make a better paste-  
blacking,—and they are themselves so much  
the better morally for it.  
  
You say that you do not sueceed much. Does  
it concern you enough that you do not? Do you  
work hard enough at it? Do you get the benefit  
of discipline out of it? If so, persevere. Is it  
a more serious thing than to walk a thousand  
miles in a thousand successive hours? Do you  
get any corns by it? Do you ever think of hang-  
ing yourself on account of failure?  
  
If you are going into that line,—going to  
besiege the city of God, — you must not only be  
strong in engines, but prepared with provisions  
to starve out the garrison, An Irishman came  
to see me to-day, who is endeavoring to get. his  
family out to this New World. He rises at half  
past four, milks twenty-eight cows (which has  
swollen the joints of his fingers), and eats his  
breakfast, without any milk in his tea or coffee,  
before six; and so on, day after day, for six and  
a half dollars a month; and thus he keeps his

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7.96] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 269  
  
virtue in him, if he does not add to it; and he  
regards mo as a gentleman able to assist him ;  
but if I ever get to be a gentleman, it will be by  
working after my fashion harder than he does.  
If my joints are not swollen, it must be because  
I deal with the teats of celestial cows before  
breakfast (and the milker in this case is always  
allowed some of the milk for his breakfast), to  
say nothing of the flocks and herds of Admetus  
afterward.  
  
It is the art of mankind to polish the world,  
and every one who works is scrubbing in some  
part.  
  
If the work is high and far,  
  
‘You mast not only sim aright,  
‘But draw the bow with all your might.  
  
‘You must qualify yourself to use a bow which  
no humbler archer can bend.  
  
Work, — work, — work!”  
‘Who shall know it for a bow? It is not of yow-  
tree. It is straighter than a ray of light; flexi-  
bility is not known for one of its qualities.  
  
   
  
December 22,  
  
So far I had got when I was called off to sur-  
vey. Pray read the life of Haydon the painter,  
if you have not. It is a small revelation for  
these latter days; a great satisfaction to know  
that he has lived, though he is now dead, Have

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210 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1853,  
  
you met with the letter of a Turkish cadi at the  
end of Layard’s “ Ancient Babylon”? that also  
is refreshing, and a capital comment on the  
whole book which precedes it,— the Oriental  
genius speaking through him.  
  
‘Those Brahmins \* put it through.” ‘They come  
off, or rather stand still, conquerors, with some  
withered arms or legs at least to show; and  
they are said to have cultivated the faculty of  
abstraction to a degree unknown to Europeans.  
IE we cannot sing of faith and triumph, we will  
sing our despair. We will be that kind of bird.  
‘There are day owls, and there are night owls,  
and each is beautiful and even musical while  
about its business.  
  
‘Might you not find some positive work to do  
with your back to Church and State, letting  
your back do all the rejection of them? Can  
you not go upon your pilgrimage, Peter, along  
‘the winding mountain path whither you face?  
A step more will make those funereal ‘church  
bells over your shoulder sound far and sweet as  
a natural sound.  
  
“Work, — work, — work!  
Why not make a very large mud-pie and bake  
it in the sun! Only put no Church nor State  
into it, nor upset any other pepper-box that  
way. Dig out a woodehuck, —for that has no-  
thing to do with rotting institutions. Go ahead.

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#t.%] TO HARRISON BLAKE. om  
  
‘Whether a man spends his day in an ecstasy  
‘or despondency, he must do some work to show  
for it, even as there are flesh and bones to show  
for him. We are superior to the joy we ex-  
perience.  
  
Your last two letters, methinks, have more  
nerve and will in them than usual, as if you had  
erected yourself more. Why are not they good  
work, if you only had a hundred correspondents  
to tax you?  
  
‘Make your failure tragieal by the earnestness  
and steadfastness of your endeavor, and then it  
will not differ from success. Prove it to be the  
inevitable fate of mortals, — of one mortal, —if  
you can.  
  
‘You said that you were writing on Immor-  
tality. I'wish you would communicate to me  
what you know about that. You are sure to  
live while that is your theme.  
  
‘Thus I write on some text which a sentence  
of your letters may have furnished.  
  
T think of coming to see you as soon as I get  
a new coat, if I have money enough left. I will  
write to you again about it.  
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxconp, January 21, 1854,  
  
Mr. Buakr,—My coat is at last done, and  
my mother and sister allow that I am so far in

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272 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (184,  
  
a condition to go abroad. I feel as if I had  
gone abroad the moment I put it on. It is, as  
usual, a production strange to me, the wearer, —  
invented by some Count D’Orsay; and the ma-  
ker of it was not acquainted with any of my real  
depressions or elevations. He only measured  
a peg to hang it on, and might have made the  
loop big enough to go over my head. It requires  
a not quite innocent indifference, not to say in-  
solence, to wear it. Ah! the process by which  
we get our coats is not what it should be.  
Though the Church declares it righteous, and  
its priest pardons me, my own good genius tells  
me that it is hasty, and coarse, and false. I  
expect a time when, or rather an integrity by  
which, a man will get his coat as honestly and  
as perfectly fitting as a tree its bark. Now our  
garments are typical of our conformity to the  
ways of the world, i. ¢., of the devil, and to  
some extent react on us and poison us, like that  
shirt which Hercules put on.  
  
T think to come and see you next week, on  
Monday, if nothing hinders. I have just re-  
turned from court at Cambridge, whither T was  
called as a witness, having surveyed a water-  
privilege, about which there is a dispute, since  
you were here.  
  
Ah! what foreign countries there are, greater  
in extent than the United States or Russia, and

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a %] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 213  
  
with no more souls to a square mile, stretching  
xy on every sidle from every human being  
with whom you have no sympathy. Their hu-  
manity affects me as simply monstrous. Rocks,  
earth, brute beasts, comparatively are not so  
strange to me. When I sit in the parlors and  
kitchens of some with whom my business brings  
me—I was going to say in contact — (business,  
like misery, makes strange bedfellows), I feel a  
sort of awe, and as forlorn as if I were cast  
away on a desolate shore. I think of Riley's  
Narrative! and his sufferings. You, who soared  
like a merlin with your mate through the realms  
of wether, in the presence of the unlike, drop at  
once to earth, a meyp amorphous squab, divested  
of your airinflated pinions. (By the way, ex-  
cuse this writing, for I am using the stub of the  
last feather I chance to possess.) You travel on,  
however, through this dark and desert world ;  
you see in the distance an intelligent and sym-  
pathizing lineament; stars come forth in the  
dark, and oases appear in the desert.  
  
But (to retumn to the subject of coats), we  
are wellnigh smothered under yet more fatal  
coats, which do not fit us, our whole lives long.  
Consider the cloak that our employment or sta-  
tion is; how rarely men treat each other for  
  
   
  
1 An American seaman, wrecked on the coast of Arshia, —  
‘once a popalar book,

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214 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1883,  
  
what in their true and naked characters they  
are; how we uso and tolerate pretension ; how  
the judge is clothed with dignity which does not  
belong to him, and the trembling witness with  
humility that does not belong to him, and the  
criminal, perchance, with shame or impudence  
which no more belong to him. It does not mat-  
ter so much, then, what is the fashion of the  
cloak with which we cloak these cloaks. Change  
the coat ; put the judge in the criminal-box, and  
the criminal on the bench, and you might think  
that you had changed the men.  
  
No doubt the thinnest of all cloaks is con-  
scious deception or lies; it is sleazy and frays  
‘out; it is mot close-woven, like cloth; but ite  
meshes are a coarse network. A man ean afford  
to lie only at the intersection of the threads ;  
but truth puts in the filling, and makes a consis-  
tent stuff.  
  
Tmean merely to suggest how much the sta-  
tion affects the demeanor and self-respectability  
of the parties, and that the difference between  
the judge’s coat of cloth and the criminal’s is  
insignificant compared with, or only partially  
significant of, the difference between the coats  
which their respective stations permit them to  
wear. What airs the judge may put on over  
his coat which the criminal may not! The  
judge's opinion (sententia) of the criminal sen-

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t.3t] TQ HARRISON BLAKE. 215  
  
‘tences him, and is read by the clerk of the  
court, and published to the world, and executed  
by the sheriff ; but the criminal’s opinion of the  
judge has the weight of a sentence, and is pub-  
lished and executed only in the supreme court  
of the universe, —a court not of common pleas.  
How much juster is the one than the other?  
‘Men are continually sentencing each other ; but,  
whether we be judges or criminals, the sentence  
is inoffectual unless we continue ourselves.  
  
Tam glad to hear that I do not always limit  
your vision when you look this way; that you  
sometimes see the light through me; that I am  
here and there windows, and not all dead wall.  
Might not the community sometimes petition a  
man to remove himself as a nuisance, a dark-  
ener of the day, a too large mote?  
  
70 HARRMON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
  
Coxconn, August 8, 1854.  
  
‘Mn. Branr,— Methinks I have spent a rather  
unprofitable summer thus far. I have been too  
much with the world, as the poet might say.t  
‘The completest performance of the highest du-  
ties it imposes would yield me but little satis-  
faction. Better the neglect of all such, because  
your life passed on a level where it was impossi-  
ble to recognize them. Latterly, I have heard  
  
1 “Tho world ia too mach with ws.” —Wordnvorth,

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216 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1854,  
  
the very flies buzz too distinetly, and have ac-  
cused myself because I did not still this super-  
ficial din. We must not be too easily distracted  
by the erying of children or of dynasties. ‘The  
Irishman erects his sty, and gets drunk, and  
jabbers more and more under my eaves, and I  
‘am responsible for all that filth and folly. I  
find it, as ever, very unprofitable to have much  
todo with men. It is sowing the wind, but not  
reaping even the whirlwind; only reaping an  
‘unprofitable calm and stagnation. Our conver-  
sation is a smooth, and civil, and never-ending  
speculation merely. I take up the thread of it,  
again in the morning, with very much such cour-  
‘age as the invalid takes his prescribed Seidlitz  
powders. Shall I help you to some of the mack-  
erel? Tt would be more respectable if men, as  
has been said before, instead of being such pigmy  
desperates, were Giant Despairs. Emerson says  
that his life is so unprofitable and shabby for  
‘the most part, that he is driven to all sorts of  
resources, and, among the rest, to men. I tell  
him that we differ only in our resources. Mine  
is to get away from men. They very rarely  
affect me as grand or beautiful; but I know  
that there is a sunrise and a sunset every day.  
Tn the summer, this world is a mere watering-  
place, —a Saratoga, —drinking so many tum-  
Dlers of Congress water; and in the winter, is it

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=1.31] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 207  
  
any better, with its oratorios? I have seen more  
‘men than usual, lately ; and, well as I was ac-  
quainted with one, I am surprised to find what  
vulgar fellows they are. They do a little busi-  
ness commonly each day, in order to pay their  
board, and then they congregate in sitting-rooms  
and fecbly fabulate and paddle in the social  
slush; and when I think that they have suffi-  
ciently relaxed, and am prepared to seo them  
steal away to their shrines, they go unashamed  
to their beds, and take on a new layer of sloth.  
‘They may be single, or have families in their  
faineancy. 1 do not mect men who can have  
nothing to do with me because they have so  
much to do with themselves. However, I trust  
that a very few cherish purposes which they never  
declare. “Only think, for a moment, of a man  
about his affairs! How we should respect him !  
How glorious he would appear! Not working  
for any corporation, its agent, or president, but  
fulfilling the end of his being! A man about  
his business would be the eynosure of all eyes.  
‘The other evening I was determined that I  
would silence this shallow din; that I would  
walk in various directions and see if there was  
not to be found any depth of silence around.  
‘As Bonaparte sent out his horsemen in the Red  
Sea on all sides to find shallow water, so I sent  
forth my mounted thoughts to find deep water.

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218 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
I left the village and paddled up the river to  
Fair Haven Pond. As the sun went down, I  
saw a solitary boatman disporting on the smooth  
ake. The falling dews seemed to strain and  
purify the air, and I was soothed with an infi-  
nite stillness. I got the world, as it were, by  
the nape of the neck, and held it under in the  
tide of its own events, till it was drowned, and  
then I let it go down stream like a dead dog.  
‘Vast hollow chambers of silence stretched away  
on every side, and my being expanded in pro-  
portion, and filled them. Then first could I  
appreciate sound, and find it musical.  
  
But now for your news. Tell us of the year.  
  
1 A lady who made such a night voyage with Thoresn, years  
before, saya: “How wise he was to ask the elderly lady with  
' younger one for row on tho Concord River one moonlit  
night! The river that night waa as deep aa the heavens above;  
serene stars shone from its dopths, as far off as tho stars  
bore. Docp answered unto deep in our souls, a the boat  
aided ewiftly along, past low-lying felds, under overhanging  
‘rece. A neighbor's cow waded into the cool water,— she  
ecame at once a Behemoth, a river-horse, hippopotamus, or  
iver god. A dog barked, —he was Diana's hound, he waked  
Endymion. Suddenly we wore landed on # littlo isle; our  
‘boutman, our boat glided far off in the flood. We were left  
‘lone, in the power of the river-god; like two white binds we  
stood on this bit of ground, the river flowing about us ; only  
‘the eternal powers of nature around us, Timo for a prayer,  
perchanoe,—and back came the boat and oarsman} we wore  
ferred to our homes, —no question asked or answered. We  
Ihad drank of the cup of the night, —had felt the silence and  
the stara”

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a3] 70 HARRISON BLAKE. 279  
  
Have you fought the good fight? What is the  
state of your crops? Will your harvest answer  
well to the seed-time, and are you cheered by the  
prospect of stretching cornfields? Is there any  
blight on your fields, any murrain in your herds?  
Have you tried the size and quality of your po-  
tatoes? It does one good to see their balls  
dangling in the lowlands. Have you got your  
meadow hay before the fall rains shall have set  
in? Is there enough in your barns to keep your  
cattle over? Are you killing weeds nowadays?  
or have you earned leisure to go a-fishing? Did  
you plant any Giant Regrets last spring, such  
as T saw advertised? It is not a new species,  
but the result of cultivation and a fertile soil.  
‘They are excellent for sauce. How is it with  
your marrow squashes for winter use? Is there  
likely to be a sufficiency of fall feed in your  
neighborhood? What is the state of the springs?  
I read that in your county there is more water  
on the hills than in the valleys. Do you find it  
easy to get all the help you require? Work  
arly and late, and let your men and teams rest  
at noon. Be careful not to drink too much  
sweetened water, while at your hoeing, this hot  
weather. You can bear the heat much better  
for it.

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280 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1804,  
  
TO MARSTON WATSON (AT PLYMOUTH).  
Coxconp, September 19,1854,  
Dear Srr,—I am glad to hear from you and  
the Plymouth men again. The world still holds  
together between Concord and Plymouth, it  
seems. I should like to be with you while Mr.  
Alcott is there, but I cannot come next Sunday.  
I will come Sunday after next, that is, October  
Ast, if that will do; and look out for you at the  
depot. I do not like to promise more than one  
discourse. Is there a good precedent for two?  
  
‘The first of Thorean’s many lecturing visits to  
Worcester, the home of his friend, Blake, was  
in April, 1849, and from that time onward he  
‘must have read lectures there at least annually,  
until his last illness, in 1861-62, By 1854, the  
lecturing habit, in several places besides Con-  
cord, had become established ; and there was a  
constant interchange of visits and excursions  
with his friends at Worcester, Plymouth, New  
Bedford, ete. Soon after the publication of  
“Walden,” in the summer of 1854, Thoreau  
wrote these notes to Mr. Blake, touching on va-  
vious matters of friendly interest.

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2.31] T0 HARRISON BLAKE. 281  
  
0 HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER),  
Coxconn, September 21 1854.  
  
Buaxe,—I have just read your letter, but  
do not mean now to answer it, solely for want  
of time to say what I wish. I directed a copy  
of “Walden” to you at Ticknor’s, on the day of  
its publication, and it should have reached you  
before. Iam encouraged to know that it inter-  
ests you as it now stands, —a printed book, —  
for you apply a very severe test to it,—you  
make the highest demand on me. As for the  
excursion you speak of, I should like it right  
well, — indeed I thought of proposing the same  
thing to you and Brown, some months ago. Per-  
haps it would have been better if I had done so  
then ; for in that ease I should have been able  
to enter into it with that infinite margin to my  
views, — spotless of all engagements, — which I  
think so necessary. Asit is, I have agreed to go  
alecturing to Plymouth, Sunday after next (Oc-  
tober 1) and to Philadelphia in November, and  
thereafter to the West, if they shall want me 3  
and, as I have prepared nothing in that shape, I  
feel as if my hours were spoken for. However,  
I think that, after having been to Plymouth, I  
may take a day or two—if that date will suit  
you and Brown. A¢ any rate I will write you  
then.

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282 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 184,  
  
Conconn, October 5, 1854.  
  
After I wrote to you, Mr. Watson postponed  
my going to Plymouth one week, i. e. till next  
Sunday; and now he wishes me to carry my in-  
struments and survey his grounds, to which he  
has been adding. Since I want a little money,  
though I contemplate but a short excursion, I  
do not feel at liberty to decline this work. I do  
not know exactly how long it will detain me, —  
but there is plenty of time yet, and I will write  
to you again — perhaps from Plymouth.  
  
‘There is a Mr. Thomas Cholmondeley (pro-  
nounced Chumly) a young English author, stay-  
jing at our house at present, who asks me to  
teach him botany — i. e anything which I  
know; and also to make an excursion to some  
mountain with him. He is a well-behaved per-  
son, and possibly I may propose his taking that  
run to Wachusett with us — if it will be agreea-  
ble to you. Nay, if I do not hear any objection  
from you, I will consider myself at liberty to  
invite him.  
  
Conconn, Saturday ®t, Ontober 14,1854.  
  
T have just returned from Plymouth, where I  
have been detained surveying much longer than  
T expected. What do you say to visiting Wa-  
chusett next Thursday?” I will start at T} a.  
unless there is a prospect of a stormy day, go

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ant] NEW FRIENDS. 283  
  
by cars to Westminster, and thence on foot five  
or six miles to the mountain-top, where I may  
engage to meet you, at (or before) 12 m. If the  
weather is unfavorable, I will try again, on Fri-  
day, —and again on Monday. If a storm comes  
on after starting, I will seck you at the tavern  
in Princeton centre, as soon as circumstances  
will permit. I shall expect an answer at once,  
to clinch the bargain.  
  
‘The year 1854 was a memorable one in Tho-  
reau’s life, for it brought out his most successful  
book, \* Walden,” and introduced him to the no-  
tice of the world, which had paid small attention  
to his first book, the “Week,” published five  
years earlier. This year also made him acquainted  
with two friends to whom he wrote much, and  
who loved to visit and stroll with him around  
Concord, or in more distant places, — Thomas  
Cholmondeley, an Englishman from Shropshire,  
and Daniel Ricketson, a New Bedford Quaker,  
of liberal mind and cultivated tastes, —an au-  
thor and poet, aid fond of corresponding with  
poets,—as he did with the Howitts and William  
Bames of England, and with Bryant, Emerson,  
Channing, and Thoreau, in America. Few of the  
letters to Cholmondeley are yet found, being  
buried temporarily in the mass of family papers  
at Condover Hall, an old Elizabethan mansion

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284 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (184,  
  
near Shrewsbury, which Thomas Cholmondeley  
inherited, and which remains in his family’s pos-  
session since his own death at Florence in 1864.  
But the letters of the Englishman, recently  
printed in the “ Atlantic Monthly” (December,  
1893), show how sincere was the attachment of  
this ideal friend to the Concord recluse, and how  
well he read that character which the rest of  
England, and a good part of America, have been  
s0 slow to recognize for what it really was.  
‘Thomas Cholmondeley was the eldest. son of  
Rev. Charles Cowper Cholmondeley, rector of  
Overleigh, Cheshire, and of a sister to Reginald  
Heber, the celebrated bishop of Calcutta. He  
‘was born in 1823, and brought up at Hodnet, in  
Shropshire, where his father, a cousin of Lord  
Delamere, had succeeded his brotherinJaw as  
rector, on the departure of Bishop Heber for  
India, in 1823. ‘The son was educated at Oriel  
College, Oxford, —a friend, and perhaps pupil of,  
Arthur Hugh Clough, who gave him letters to  
Emerson in 1854, Years before, after leaving  
Oxford, he had gone with some'relatives to New  
Zealand, and before coming to New England, he  
had published a book, “ Ultima Thule,” describ-  
ing that Australasian colony of England, where  
he lived for part of a year. He had previously  
studied in Germany, and traveled on the Conti-  
nent, He landed in America the first time in

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ax. 31] THOREAU AND CHOLMONDELEY. 285  
  
August, 1854, and soon after went to Concord,  
where, at the suggestion of Emerson, he heeame  
‘an inmate of Mrs. Thoreau’s family. This made  
him intimate with Henry Thoreau for a month  
or two, and also brought him into acquaintance  
with Ellery Channing, then living across the  
main street of Concord, in the west end of the  
village, and furnishing to Thoreau a landing-  
place for his boat under the willows at the foot  
‘of Channing's small garden. Alcott was not  
then in Concord, but Cholmondeley made his  
acquaintance in Boston, and admired his charac-  
ter and manners,!  
  
‘With Channing and Thoreau the young Eng-  
lishman visited their nearest mountain, Wachu-  
sett, and in some of their walks the artist Rowse,  
who made the first portrait of Thoreau, joined,  
for he was then in Concord, late in 1854, en-  
graving the fine head of Daniel Webster from  
a painting by Ames, and this engraving he gave  
‘both to Thoreau and to Cholmondeley. In De-  
cember the Englishman, whose patriotism was  
  
+ Seo Memoir of Broneon Alco, pp. 485~104. ‘The remasle  
of Emeron quoted on p80, that Cholmondsley was "the  
ton of « Shropire aque,” was not atrictly correct, his father  
being & Cheshire clongyman of a younger branch of the ane  
cient race of Cholmondsloy. But he was the grandson of  
Shropehize squire (owner of land), for his mother was daugh-  
ter and sister of sich gentlemen, and it was er brother Rich-  
  
ard who prosented Reginald Hoher and Charles Cholmondeley  
‘to the living of Hodnet, near Markot Drayton.

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286 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (184,  
  
roused by the delays and calamities of England  
in her Crimean war, reselved to go home and  
raise a company, as he did, first spending some  
weeks in lodgings at Boston (Orange Street) in  
order to hear Theodore Parker preach and visit  
Harvard College, of which I was then a student,  
in the senior class, He visited me and my class-  
mate, Edwin Morton, and called on some of the  
Cambridge friends of Clough. In January,  
1855, he sailed for England, and there received  
the letter of Thoreau printed on pages 295-298.  
  
‘The acquaintance with Mr. Ricketson began  
by letter before Cholmondeley reached Concord,  
but Thoreau did not visit him until December,  
1854. Mr. Ricketson says, “In the summer of  
1854 I purchased, in New Bedford, a copy of  
“Walden” I had never heard of its author,  
‘but in this admirable and most original book I  
found so many observations on plants, birds, and  
natural objects generally in which I was also in-  
terested, that I felt at once I had found a con-  
genial spirit. During this season I was rebuild-  
ing a house in the country, three miles from  
New Bedford, and had erected a small building  
which was called my \* shanty ;’ and my family  
being then in my city house, I made this build-  
ing my temporary home. From it I addressed  
my first letter to the author of ‘Walden’ In  
reply he wrote, ‘I had duly received your very

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at.5t] THOREAU AND RICKETSON. 287  
  
kind and frank letter, but delayed to answer it  
thus long because I have little skill as a corre-  
spondent, and wished to send you something  
more than my thanks. I was gratified by your  
prompt and hearty acceptance of my book.  
Yours is the only word of greeting I am likely  
to receive from a dweller in the woods like my-  
self, — from where the whippoorwill and euckoo  
are heard, and there are better than moral  
clouds drifting, and real breezes blowing’ From  
that year until his death in 1862 we exchanged  
visite annually, and letters more frequently. He  
was much interested in the botany of our region,  
finding here many marine plants he had not, be-  
fore seen. When our friendship began, the ad-  
mirers of his only two published books were  
few; most prominent among them were Emer-  
son, Aleott, and Channing of Concord, Messrs.  
Blake and T. Brown of Woreester, Mr. Marston  
‘Watson of Plymouth, and myself. Many ac-  
cused him of being an imitator of Emerson;  
others thought him unsocial, impracticable, and  
ascetic. Now he was none of these; a more  
original man never lived, nor one more thor-  
oughly personifying civility ; no man could hold  
a finer relationship with his family than he.”  
  
In reply to Thoreau's letter just quoted, Mr.  
Ricketson wrote further of himself and his local-  
ity, and Thoreau thus continued :—

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288 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS, (18s,  
  
TO DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW TEDFORD)-  
Concono, October 1, 1854  
  
Dear Sm,— Your account excites in me a  
desire to see the Middleborough Ponds, of which  
T had already heard somewhat; as also some  
very beautiful ponds on the Cape, in Harwich,  
I think, near which I once passed. I have some-  
times also thought of visiting that remnant of  
‘our Indians still living near you. But then, you  
know, there is nothing like one’s native fields  
‘and lakes. The best news you send me is, not  
that Nature with yon is so fair and genial, but  
‘that there is one there who likes her so well.  
‘That proves all that was asserted.  
  
‘Homer, of course, you include in your list of  
lovers of Nature; and, by the way, let me men-  
tion here, — for this is “my thunder ” lately, —  
‘William Gilpin’s long series of books on the Pic-  
‘turesque, with their illustrations, If it chances  
that you have not met with these, I cannot just  
now frame a better wish than that you may one  
day derive as much pleasure from the inspection  
of them as I have.  
  
Much as you have told mo of yourself, you  
have still, I think, a little the advantage of me  
in this correspondence, for I have told you still  
more in my book. You have therefore the broad-  
est mark to fire at.

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1.91] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 289  
  
A young Englishman, Mr. Cholmondeley, is  
just now waiting for me to take a walk with  
him ; therefore excuse this very barren note  
from yours, hastily at last.  
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE.  
Coxcon, December 22 1854,  
  
Mr. Baxe,—I will lecture for your Lyceum  
on the 4th of January next; and I hope that I  
shall have time for that good day out of doors.  
‘Mr. Cholmondeley is in Boston, yet perhaps I  
may invite him to accompany me. I have en-  
gaged to lecture at New Bedford on the 26th  
inst., stopping with Daniel Ricketson, threo  
miles out of town; and at Nantucket on the  
28th, so that I shall be gone all next week.  
‘They say there is some danger of being weather-  
bound at Nantucket; but I see that others run  
the same risk. You had better acknowledge the  
receipt of this at any rate, though you should  
write nothing else; otherwise I shall not know  
whether you get its but perhaps you will not  
wait till you have seen me, to answer my letter  
(of December 19). I will tell you what I think  
of lecturing when I see you. Did you see the  
notice of “Walden” in the last “ Anti-Slavery  
Standard”? You will not be surprised if I tell  
you that it reminded me of you,

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290 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1854,  
  
‘As above mentioned, Thoreau went to lecture  
at Nantucket, and on his way spent a day or  
two with Mr. Ricketson, reaching his house on  
Christmas Day. His host, who then saw him for  
the first time, says: —  
  
“I had expected him at noon, but as he did  
  
not arrive, I had given him up for the day. In  
the latter part of the afternoon I was clearing  
off the snow from my front steps, when, looking  
up, I saw a man walking up the carriage-road,  
bearing a portmanteau in one hand and an um-  
brella in the other. He was dressed in a long  
overcoat of dark color, and wore a dark soft  
hat, I had no suspicion it was Thoreau, and  
rather supposed it was a peddler of small  
wares.”  
‘This was a common mistake to make. When  
Thoreau ran the gauntlet of the Cape Cod vil-  
lages, — “feeling as strange,” he says, “as if he  
were in a town in China,” —one of the old fish-  
ermen could not believe that he had not some-  
thing to sell. Being finally satisfied that it was  
not a peddler with his pack, the old man said,  
“Wal, it makes no odds what ‘tis you carry,  
s0 long as you carry Truth along with ye.” Mr.  
Ricketson soon came to the same conclusion  
about his visitor, and in the early September of  
1855 returned the visit.

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x3] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 291  
  
To HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
  
Concon, December 19,1854.  
  
‘Mr. Buaxe,—TI suppose you have heard of  
my truly providential meeting with Mr. T.  
Brown providential because it saved me from  
the suspicion that my words had fallen alto-  
gether on stony ground, when it tumed out that  
there was some Worcester soil there. You will  
allow me to consider that I correspond with him  
through you.  
  
I confess that I am a very bad correspondent,  
so far as promptness of reply is concerned; but  
then I am sure to answer sooner or later. The  
longer I have forgotten you, the more I remem-  
ber you. For the most part I have not been idle  
since I saw you. How does the world go with  
you? or rather, how do you get along without it?  
I have not yet learned to live, that I can see,  
and I fear that I shall not very soon. I find,  
however, that in the long run things correspond  
to my original idea, —that they correspond to  
nothing else so much; and thus a man may  
really be a true prophet without any great exer-  
tion. The day is never so dark, nor the night  
even, but that the laws at least of light still pre-  
vail, and so may make it light in our minds if  
they are open to the truth. ‘There is considera-  
ble danger that a man will be crazy between

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292 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (i804,  
  
dinner and supper; but it will not directly an-  
swer any good purpose that I know of, and it is  
just as easy to be sane, We have got to know  
what both life and death are, before we can be-  
gin to live after our own fashion. Let us be  
earning our ab-c’s as soon as possible. I never  
yet knew the sun to be knocked down and rolled  
through a mud-puddle; he comes out honor  
bright from behind every storm. Let us then  
take sides with the sun, seeing we have so much  
leisure. Let us not put all we prize into a foot-  
ball to be kicked, when a bladder will do as  
well.  
  
‘When an Indian is burned, his body may be  
broiled, it may be no more than a beefsteak.  
What of that? They may broil his Aeart, but  
they do not therefore broil his courage, —his  
principles. Be of good courage! That is the  
main thing.  
  
Tf a man were to place himself in an attitude  
to bear manfully the greatest evil that can be  
inflicted on him, he would find suddenly that  
there was no such evil to bear; his brave back  
would go a-begging. When Atlas got his back  
made up, that was all that was required. (In  
this case a priv., not pleon., and rrju.) The  
world rests on principles. The wise gods will  
never make underpinning of a man. But as  
Jong as he crouches, and skulks, and shirks his

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az.31] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 298  
  
work, every creature that has weight will be  
treading on his toes, and crushing him; he will  
himself tread with one foot on the other foot.  
  
The monster is never just there where we  
think he is. What is truly monstrous is our  
cowardice aiid sloth.  
  
Have no idle disciplines like the Catholic  
Church and others; have only positive and fruit-  
ful ones. Do what you know you ought to do.  
‘Why should we ever go abroad, even across the  
way, to ask a neighbor's advice? There is a  
nearer neighbor within us incessantly telling us  
how we should behave. But we wait for tho  
neighbor without to tell us of some false, easier  
way.  
  
They have a census-table in which they put  
down the number of the insane. Do you believe  
that they put them all down there? Why, in  
every one of these houses there is at least one  
man fighting or squabbling a good part of his  
time with a dozen pet demons of his own breod-  
ing and cherishing, which are relentlessly gnaw-  
ing at his vitals; and if perchance he resolve at  
length that he will courageously combat them,  
he says, “Ay! ay! I will attend to you after  
dinner!” And, when that time comes, he con-  
cludes that he is good for another stage, and  
veads a column or two about the Eastern War!  
Pray, to be in eamest, where is Sevastopol?

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294 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18s,  
  
Who is Menchikoft? and Nicholas behind there?  
who the Allies? Did not we fight a little (little  
enough to be sure, but just enough to make it  
interesting) at Alma, at Balaclava, at Inker-  
mann? We love to fight far from home. Ah!  
the Minié musket is the king of weapons. Well,  
let us get one then.  
  
I just put another stick into my stove, — a  
pretty large mass of white oak. How many men  
will do enough this cold winter to pay for the  
fuel that will be required to warm them? I sup-  
pose I have burned up a pretty good-sized tree  
tonight, —and for what? I settled with Mr.  
Tarbell for it the other day; but that wasn't  
the final settlement. I got off cheaply from him.  
At last, one will say, “Let us see, how much  
‘wood did you burn, sir?” And I shall shudder  
to think that the next question will be, “ What  
aid you do while you were warm?” Do we  
think the ashes will pay for it? that God is an  
ashaman? It is a fact that we have got to ren-  
der an account for the deeds done in the body.  
  
‘Who knows but we shall be better the next  
year than we have been the past? At any rate,  
I wish you a really new year, — commencing  
from the instant you read this, —and happy or  
unhappy, aecording to your deserts.  
  
   
  
   
  
The early part of 1855 was spent by Thomas

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2.31] TO THOMAS CHOLMONDELEY. 295  
  
   
  
Cholmondeley in a tiresome passage to England,  
whence he wrote (January 27) to say to Thoreau  
that he had reached Shropshire, and been com-  
missioned captain in the local militia, in prepa-  
ration for service at Sevastopol, but reminding  
his Concord friend of a half promise to visit,  
England some day. To this Thoreau made  
answer thus :  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
10 THOMAS CHOLMONDELEY (aT HODNET).  
Concono, Mans, February 7, 1855.  
  
‘Dear Cxotmoxvetey,—I am glad to hear  
that you have arrived safely at Hodnet, and that  
there is a solid piece of ground of that name  
which can support a man better than a floating  
plank, in that to me as yet purely historical  
England. But have I not seen you with my  
own eyes, a piece of England herself, and was  
not your letter come out to me thenee? I have  
now reason to believe that Salop is as real a  
place as Concord; with at least as good an un-  
derpinning of granite, floating on liquid fire. I  
congratulate you on having arrived safely at  
that floating isle, after your disagreeable pass-  
age in the steamer America. So are we not all  
making a passage, agreeable or disagreeable, in  
the steamer Earth, trusting to arrive at last at  
some less undulating Salop and brother’s house?  
  
Teannot say that I am surprised to hear that

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296 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
you have joined the militia, after what I have  
heard from your lips; but Iam glad to doubt if  
there will be occasion for your volunteering into  
the line. Perhaps I am thinking of the saying  
that it “is always darkest just before day.” I  
believe it is only necessary that England be fully  
awakened to a sense of her position, in order  
that she may right herself, especially as the  
weather will soon cease to be her foe. I wish  
I could believe that the cause in which you are  
embarked is the cause of the people of England.  
However, I have no sympathy with the idleness  
that would contrast this fighting with the teach-  
ings of the pulpit; for, perchance, more true  
virtue is being practiced at Sevastopol than in  
many years of peace. It is a pity that we seem  
to require a war, from time to time, to assure us  
that there is any manhood still left in man.  
Iwas much pleased with [J. J. G.] Wilkin.  
son’s vigorous and telling assault, on Allopathy,  
though he substitutes another and perhaps no  
stronger thy for that. Something as good on  
the whole conduct of the war would be of ser-  
vice. Cannot Carlyle supply it? We will not  
require him to provide the remedy. Every man  
to his trade. As you know, Iam not in any  
sense a politician. You, who live in that snug  
and compact isle, may dream of a glorious com-  
monwealth, but I have some doubts whether I

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xx.81] TO THOMAS CHOLMONDELEY. 29T  
  
and the new king of the Sandwich Islands shall  
pull together. When I think of the gold-diggers  
and the Mormons, the slaves and the slavehold-  
ers and the fiibustiers, I naturally dream of a  
glorious private life. No, I am not patriotie; I  
shall not meddle with the Gem of the Antilles.  
General Quitman! eannot count on my aid, alas  
for him! nor can General Pierce?  
  
T still take my daily walk, or skate over Con-  
cord fields or meadows, and on the whole have  
more to do with nature than with man. We  
have not had much snow this winter, but have  
had some remarkably cold weather, the mercury,  
February 6, not rising above 6° below zero dur-  
ing the day, and the next morning falling to  
26°. Some ice is still thirty inches thick about  
us. A rise in the river has made uncommonly  
good skating, which I have improved to the ex-  
tent of some thirty miles a day, fifteen out and  
fifteen in.  
  
Emerson is off westward, enlightening the  
Hamiltonians [in Canada] and others, mingling  
his thunder with that of Niagara. Channing  
still sits warming his five wits —his sixth, you  
know, is always limber—over that stove, with  
  
? Quitman, aided porhaps by Law  
ing to capture Cuba with “ Slibuse  
  
2 Thon President of the United Statas, whose lifo Haw-  
‘home had written in 1852,

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298 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. L888,  
  
the dog down cellar. Lowell has just been ap-  
pointed Professor of Belles-Lettres in Harvard  
University, in place of Longfellow, resigned,  
and will go very soon to spend another year in  
Europe, before taking his seat.  
  
Tam from time to time congratulating myself  
on my general want of success as a lecturer;  
apparent want of success, but is it not a real tri-  
umph? I do my work clean as I’ go along, and  
they will not be likely to want me anywhere  
again. So there is no danger of my repeating  
myself, and getting to a barrel of sermons,  
which you must upset, and begin again with.  
  
‘My father and mother and sister all desire to  
be remembered to you, and trust that you will  
never come within range of Russian bullets. Of  
course, I would rather think of you as settled  
down there in Shropshire, in the camp of the  
English people, making acquaintance with your  
men, striking at the root of the evil, perhaps  
assaulting that rampart of cotton bags that you  
tell of. But it makes no odds where a man goes  
or stays, if he is only about his business.  
  
Let me hear from you, wherever you are, and  
believe me yours ever in the good fight, whether  
before Sevastopol or under the wreken.  
  
‘While Cholmondeley’s first letter from Eng-  
Iand was on its way to Concord, Thoreau was

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a3] THOREAU IN CAMBRIDGE, 299  
  
‘one day making his occasional call at the Har-  
vard College Library (where he found and was  
allowed to take away volumes relating to his  
‘manifold studies), when it occurred to him to  
call at my student-chamber in Holworthy Hall,  
and there leave a copy of his “ Week.” I had  
never met him, and was then out; the occasion  
of his call was a review of his two books that  
had come out a few woeks earlier in the Har-  
vard Magazine,” of which I was an editor and  
might be supposed to have had some share in  
the criticim. The volume was left with my  
classmate Lyman, accompanied by a message  
that it was intended for the eritie in the Maga-  
zine. Accordingly, I gave it to Edwin Morton,  
who was the reviewer, and notified Thoreau by  
letter of that fact, and of my hope to see him  
soon in Cambridge or Concord.! To this he  
replied in a few days as below:  
  
   
  
11 had been visiting Emerson occasionally for a year oF  
‘bro,and Jew Alcott well at this time ; waa also intimate with  
Cholmondeley inthe autumn of 1854, but had never seen Tho-  
eau; a fact which shows how recluse were then his habit,  
‘The letter below, and the long one describing his trip to Min-  
‘nesota, ware the only ones T received from him in a friendship  
‘of seven sears. See Sanbora's Thoreau, pp. 195-200, Edwin  
Morton was my claizmate. See pp. 286, 353, 440.

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800 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (38%,  
  
TO F. B, SANBORN (AT HAMPTON FALLS, N. H.).  
Conoono, February 2, 185.  
  
Dear Sir, —I fear that you did not get the  
note which I left with the Librarian for you,  
and so will thank you again for your politeness.  
was sorry that I was obliged to go into Boston  
almost immediately. However, I shall be glad  
to see you whenever you come to Concord, and  
Iwill suggest nothing to discourage your com-  
ing, so far as I am concerned; trusting that you  
now what it is to take a partridge on the wing.  
You tell me that the author of the criticism is  
‘Mr. Morton, I had heard as much,—and in-  
eed guessed more. I have latterly found Con-  
cord nearer to Cambridge than I believed 1  
should, when I was leaving my Alma Mater;  
and hence you will not be surprised if even I  
feel some interest in the suocess of the “Har  
vard Magazine.”  
  
Believe me yours truly,  
Henry D. Taonzav.  
  
At this time T was under engagement with  
Mr. Emerson and others in Concord to take  
charge of a small school there in March; and  
did so without again seeing the author of “ Wal-  
den” in Cambridge. Soon after my settlement  
at Concord, in the house of Mr. Channing, just

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a3] ‘TO HARRISON BLAKE. 301  
  
opposite Thoreau’s, he made an evening call on  
me and my sister (April 11, 1855), but I had  
already met him more than once at Mr. Emer-  
son’s, and was even beginning to take walks  
with him, as frequently happened in the next  
six years. In the following summer I began  
to dine daily at his mother’s table, and thus saw  
him almost every day for three years.  
  
0 HARRISON BLAKE (aT WORCESTER).  
Concox, Jane 27,1855.  
  
‘Mr, Buaxe, —I have been sick and good for  
nothing but to lie on my back and wait for  
something to turn up, for two or three months.  
‘This has compelled me to postpone several  
things, among them writing to you, to whom T  
am s0 deeply in debt, and inviting you and  
Brown to Concord,—not having brains -ade-  
quate to such an exertion. I should feel a little  
less ashamed if I could give any name to my  
disorder, —but I cannot, and our doctor cannot  
help me to it,—and I will not take the name of  
any disease in vain, However, there is one con-  
solation in being sick; and that is the possibile  
ity that you may recover to a better state than  
you were ever in before. I expected in the win-  
ter to be deep in the woods of Maine in my  
canoe, long before this; but Iam so far from  
this that I can only take a languid walk in Con-  
cord streets.

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802 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1885,  
  
T do not know how the mistake arose about  
the Cape Cod excursion. ‘The nearest I have  
come to that with anybody is this: About a  
month ago Channing proposed to me to go to  
‘Truro on Cape Cod with him, and board there  
a while, —but I declined. For a week past,  
however, I have been a little inclined to go there  
and sit on the seashore a week or more; but I  
do not venture to propose myself as the compan-  
ion of him or of any peripatetic man. Not that  
I should not rejoice to have you and Brown or  
C. sitting there also. I am not sure that C.  
really wishes to go now; and as I go simply for  
the medicine of it, I should not think it worth  
the while to notify him when I am about to take  
my bitters. Since I began this, or within five  
minutes, I have begun to think that I will start,  
for Truro next Saturday morning, the 80th. I  
do not know at what hour the packet leaves  
Boston, nor exactly what kind of accommoda-  
tion I shall find at Truro.  
  
T should be singularly favored if you and  
Brown were there at the same time; and though  
you speak of the 20th of July, I will be so bold  
as to suggest your coming to Coneord Friday  
night (when, by the way, Garrison and Phillips  
hold forth here), and going to the Cape with  
me. ‘Though we take short walks together there,  
vwe can have Zong talks, and you and Brown will

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0.51] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 308  
  
have time enough for your own excursions be-  
sides,  
  
I received a letter from Cholmondeley last  
winter, which I should like to show you, as well  
as his book! He said that he had “accepted  
the offer of a captaincy in the Salop Militia,”  
and was hoping to take an active part in the war  
before long.  
  
I thank you again and again for the encour  
agement your letters are to me. But I must  
stop this writing, or I shall have to pay for it.  
  
   
  
Nowra Tau, July 8 185,  
  
‘There being no packet, I did not leave Bos-  
ton till last Thursday, though I came down on  
‘Wednesday, and Channing with me. There is  
no public house here; but we are boarding with  
‘Mr. James Small, the keeper, in a little house  
attached to the Highland Lighthouse. It is trae  
the table is not so clean as could be desired,  
but I have found it much superior in that re-  
spect to the Provincetown hotel. They are what  
is called “good livers.” Our host has another  
larger and very good house, within a quarter of  
a mile, unoceupied, where he says he ean accom-  
modate several more. He is a very good man  
to deal with, —has often been the representative  
of the town, and is perhaps the most intelligent  
  
1 The book was Uitina Thule, describing New Zealand.

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804 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (188,  
  
man in it. I shall probably stay here as much  
as ten days longer: board $3.50 per week. So  
you and Brown had better come down forthwith.  
You will find either the schooner Melrose or an-  
other, or both, leaving Commerce Street, or else  
'T Wharf, at 9 a.m. (it commonly means 10),  
‘Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, —if not  
other days. We left about 10 A. ., and reached  
Provincetown at 5 P. M.,—a very good run, A  
stage runs up the Cape every morning but Sun-  
day, starting at 4} A. m.,and reaches the post-  
office in North Truro, seven miles from Prov-  
incetown, and one from the lighthouse, about  
6 o'dlock. If you arrive at P. before night, you  
can walk over, and leave your baggage to be  
sent. You can also come by cars from Boston  
to Yarmouth, and thence by stage forty miles  
more,— through every day, but it costs much  
more, and is not so pleasant. Come by all  
means, for it is the best placo to sce the ocean  
in these States. I hope I shall be worth mect-  
  
ing.  
  
   
  
aly 14,  
  
You say that you hope I will excuse your fre-  
quent writing. I trust you will exeuse my in-  
frequent and curt writing until I am able to  
resume my old habits, which for three months I  
have been compelled to abandon. Methinks I  
am beginning to be better. I think to leaye the

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m.] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 805,  
  
Cape next Wednesday, and so shall not see you  
here; but I shall be glad to meet you in Con-  
cord, though I may not be able to go before the  
mast, in a boating excursion, This is an admir-  
le place for coolness and sea-bathing and re-  
tirement. You must come prepared for cool  
weather and fogs.  
  
P.S.—There is no mail up till Monday  
morning.  
  
   
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcono, September 28, 1555,  
  
‘Mn. Buaxe,—The other day I thought that  
my health must be better,—that I gave at last,  
a sign of vitality, — because I experienced a  
slight chagrin, But I do not see how strength  
is to be got into my legs again. ‘These months  
of feebleness have yielded few, if any, thoughts,  
though they have not passed without serenity,  
such as our sluggish Musketaquid suggests. I  
hope that the harvest is to come, I trust that  
you have at least warped up the stream a little  
daily, holding fast by your anchors at night,  
since I saw you, and have kept my place for me  
while I have been absent,  
  
‘Mr. Ricketson of New Bedford has just made  
me a visit of a day and a half, and I have had a  
quite good time with him, He and Channing  
have got on particularly well together. He is

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806 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 1886,  
  
a man of very simple tastes, notwithstanding his  
wealth; a lover of nature: but, above all, singu-  
larly frank and plain-spoken. I think that you  
might enjoy meeting him.  
  
Sinoerity is a great but rare virtue, and we  
pardon to it much complaining, and the betrayal  
‘of many weaknesses. R, says of himself, that  
he sometimes thinks that he has all the infirm-  
ities of genius without the genius ; is wretched  
without a hair-pillow, ete.; expresses a great  
and awful uncertainty with regard to “God,”  
“Death,” his “ immortality ;” says, “If I only  
knew,” ete. He loves Cowper's “Task” better  
than anything else; and thereafter, perhaps,  
‘Thomson, Gray, and even Howitt. He has evi-  
dently suffered for want of sympathizing com-  
panions. He says that he sympathizes with  
much in my books, but much in them is naught  
to him, — “ namby-pamby,” — “stuff,” —“mys-  
tical.” Why will not I, having common sense,  
write in plain English always; teach men in  
detail how to live a simpler life, ete.; not go off  
into —? But I say that I have no scheme  
about it, —no designs on men at all; and, if I  
had, my mode would be to tempt them with the  
fruit, and not with the manure. To what end  
do I lead a simple life at all, pray? ‘That I may  
teach others to simplify their lives? — and so all  
our lives be simplified merely, like an algebraic

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r.38] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 807  
  
formula? Or not, rather, that I may make use  
of the ground I have cleared, to live more wor-  
thily and profitably? I would fain lay the most  
stress forever on that which is the most impor-  
tant, — imports the most to me,— though it were  
only (what it is likely to be) a vibration in the  
air. As a preacher, I should be prompted to  
tell men, not so much how to get their wheat-  
bread cheaper, as of the bread of life compared  
with which that is bran. Let a man only taste  
these loaves, and he becomes a skillful economist  
‘at once, Hell not waste much time in earning  
those. Don’t spend your time in drilling sol-  
diers, who may turn out hirelings after all, but  
give to undrilled peasantry a country to fight  
for. The schools begin with what they call the  
elements, and where do they end?  
  
Twas glad to hear the other day that Higgin-  
son and —— were gone to Ktaadn; it must be  
0 much better to go to than a Woman's Rights  
or Abolition Convention ; better still, to the de-  
lectable primitive mounts within you, which you  
have dreamed of from your youth up, and seen,  
perhaps, in the horizon, but never climbed.  
  
But how do you do? Is the air sweet to you?  
Do you find anything at which you can work,  
accomplishing something solid from day to day?  
Have you put sloth and doubt behind, consider-  
ably?—had one redeeming dream this summer ?

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808 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
I dreamed, last night, that I could vault over  
any height it pleased me, That was something 5  
and Icontemplated myself with a slight satisfac-  
tion in the morning for it.  
  
‘Methinks I will write to you. Methinks you  
will be glad to hear. We will stand on solid  
foundations to one another, —I a column planted  
on this shore, you on that. We meet the same  
sun in his rising. We were built slowly, and  
have come to our bearing. We will not mutu-  
ally fall over that we may meet, but will grandly  
and eternally guard the straits. Methinks I see  
an inscription on you, which the architect made,  
the stucco being worn off to it. The name of  
that ambitious worldly king is crumbling away.  
see it toward sunset in favorable lights. Each  
must read for the other, as might a sailer-by.  
Be sure you are star-y-pointing still. How is it  
on your side? I will not require an answer  
until you think I have paid my debts to you.  
  
I have just got a letter from Ricketson, urg-  
ing me to come to New Bedford, which possibly  
I may do. He says I can wear my old clothes  
there.  
  
Let me be remembered in your quiet house.

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=x.88] 10 DANIEL RICKETSON. 309  
  
70 DANIEL RICKEMON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Concons, September 27,1856.  
  
Frrexp Rickersox,—I am sorry that you  
were obliged to leave Concord without seeing  
more of it,—its river and woods, and various  
pleasant walks, and its worthies. I assure you  
that I'am mone the worse for my walk with you,  
but on all accounts the better. Methinks T am  
regaining my health; but I would like to know  
first what it was that ailed me.  
  
T have not yet conveyed your message to Mr,  
Hosmer,! but will not fail to do so. ‘That idea  
of occupying the old house is a good one,—quite  
feasible, —and you could bring your hair-pillow  
with you. It is an inn in Concord which I had  
not thought of,—a philosopher’s inn. That  
large chamber might make a man’s idea expand  
proportionably. It would be well to have an  
interest in some old chamber in a deserted house  
in every part of the country which attracted us,  
  
1 Thia was Edmund Hosmer, 2 Concord farmer, before men-  
tioned ana frond of Emerson, who waa fond of quoting hia  
sagacions and often cynical remarks. He had entertained  
‘Gronge Curtis and the Alcoa a his farm on the \* Tarp,”  
toutheat of Timeron's; but now was living on « part of the  
(1d manor of Governor Winthrop, which soon pamed to the  
‘ownorahp of the Hunte; and his house which Mr. Ricketson  
Dropied to late was the “old Hunt farmbonse;"—Iin truth  
  
‘built for the Winthrope two centuries before. “Tt was soon  
‘after tora down.

Page-9817

810 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (188,  
  
‘There would be no such place to receive one’s  
guests as that. If old furniture is fashionable,  
why not go the whole house at once? I shall  
endeavor to make Mr. Hosmer believe that the  
old house is the chief attraction of his farm, and  
that it is his duty to preserve it by alll honest  
appliances. You might take a lease of it in per-  
\_petuo, and done with it.  
  
Tam so wedded to my way of spending a day,  
—require such broad margins of leisure, and such  
complete wardrobe of old clothes, — that I am  
illitted for going abroad. Pleasant is it some-  
times to sit at home, on a single egg all day, in  
your own nest, though it may prove at last to be  
an egg of chalk. The old coat that I wear is  
Concord; it is my morning-robe and study-gown,  
my working dress and suit of ceremony, and my  
nightgown after all. Cleave to the simplest ever.  
Home,—home,—home, Cars sound like cares  
to me.  
  
Tam accustomed to think very long of going  
anywhere, —am slow to move. I hope to hear  
‘a response of the oracle first. However, I think  
that I will try the effect of your talisman on the  
iron horse next Saturday, and dismount at Tar-  
kiln Hill. Perhaps your sea air will be good for  
me. I conveyed your invitation to Channing,  
but he apparently will not come.  
  
Excuse my not writing earlier; but I had not  
decided.

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zn8] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 311.  
  
TO DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD),  
Coxcono, October 12, 1855,  
  
‘Mr. Rickersox,—I fear that you had a  
lonely and disagreeable ride back to New Bed-  
ford through the Carver woods and so on,—  
perhaps in the rain, too, and I'am in part an-  
swerable for it. I feel very much in debt to  
you and your family for the pleasant days I  
spent at Brooklawn. Tell Arthur and Walton?  
that the shells which they gave me are spread  
out, and make quite a show to inland eyes. Mo-  
thinks I still hear the strains of the piano, the  
violin, and the flageolet blended together. Ex.  
ceuse me for the noise which I believe drove you  
to take refuge in the shanty. ‘That shanty is  
indeed a favorable place to expand in, which I  
fear I id not enough improve.  
  
On my way through Boston I inguired for  
Gilpin's works at Little, Brown & Co.'s, Mon-  
r0e’s, Ticknor’s, and Burnham’s. They have not  
got them. They told me at Little, Brown &  
Cos that his works (not complete), in twelve  
vols., 80, were imported and sold in this coun-  
try five or six years ago for about fifteen dollars.  
‘Their terms for importing are ten per cent on  
the cost. I copied from the “London Catalogue  
  
} Sona of Mr. Ricketson; the second, a sculptor, modeled  
‘he medallion head of Thoreaa engraved for this book.

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812 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1885,  
  
of Books, 1846-51,” at their shop, the following  
list of Gilpin’s Works : —  
  
Gilpin (Wm), Dialogues on Various Subjects, Sra. .  
Cadel.  
  
—— Bauays on Picturesque Subjects. 8vo. 15s, Cadell.  
  
—— Exposition of the New Testament. 2 vol. Sro. 16s.  
  
Longman.  
——Foreat Scenery, by Sir T. D. Lander. 2 vole. ro,  
18s. ‘Smith &  
—— Lectures on the Catechiam, 12ma. 8. 6d.  
‘Longman.  
—— Lives of the Reformers, 2 ola 12mo. 8.  
Rivington,  
—— Sermons Hustrative and Practical. 8vo. 122  
Hatehard,  
— Sermons to Country Congregations. 4 vols. ro. £1  
16s. Longman.  
  
——Toar in Cambridge, Norfolk, &e. Sve. 18s. Cadell.  
——Toar of the River Wye, T2mo. 4s. With plates,  
  
80, Te Cadell,  
Gilpin (W. S. (?)), Hints on Landscape Gantening. Royal  
‘ro. 1. Cadell.  
  
Beside these, I remember to have read ono  
volume on “Prints;” his “Southern Tour”  
(1775) ; “Lakes of Cumberland,” two vols. ;  
“Highlands of Scotland and West of England,”  
two vols.— WN. B. There must be plates in  
every volume.  
  
T still see an image of those Middleborough  
Ponds in my mind’s eye, — broad shallow lakes,  
with an iron mine at the bottom,—compara-  
tively unvexed by sails, —only by Tom Smith

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=t.3] 70 DANIEL RICKETSON. 818  
  
and his squaw, Sepits, “Sharper.” I find my  
map of the Stato to be the best I have seen of  
that district. It is a question whether the islands  
of Long Pond or Great Quitticus offer the great-  
est attractions to a Lord of the Isles. ‘That  
plant which I found on the shore of Long Pond  
chances to be a rare and beautiful flower, — the  
Sabattia chloroides, — referred to Plymouth.  
  
In a Desoription of Middleborough in the  
Hist. Coll., vol. iii., 1810, signed Nehemiah Ben-  
net, Middleborough, 1793, it is said: “There  
is on the easterly shore of Assawampsitt Pond,  
on the shore of Betty's Neck, two rocks which  
have curious marks thereon (supposed to be done  
by the Indians), which appear like the steppings  
of a person with naked feet which settled into  
the rocks; likewise the prints of a hand on sev-  
eral places, with a number of other marks; also  
there is a rock on a high hill a little to the east-  
ward of the old stone fishing wear, where there  
is the print of a person’s hand in said rock.”  
  
«It would be well to look at those rocks again  
more carefully; also at the rock on the hill.  
  
I should think that you would like to explore  
Sinpatuct Pond in Rochester,—it is so large  
and near. It is an interesting fact that the ale-  
wives used to ascend to it, —if they do not still,  
—both from Mattapoisett and through Great  
Quitticus.

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814 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1885,  
  
‘There will be no trouble about the chamber  
in the old house, though, as I told you, Mr. Hos-  
mer may expect some compensation for it. He  
says, “Give my respects to Mr. Ricketson, and  
tell him that I cannot be at a large expense to  
preserve an antiquity or curiosity. Nature must  
do ita work.” “But,” say I, “he asks you only  
not to assist nature.”  
  
70 DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
  
Coxcon, October 16,185.  
  
Frten Rroxersox,—I have got. both your  
letters at once. You must not think Concord  
so barren a place when Channing’ is away.  
‘There are the river and fields left yet; and I,  
though ordinarily a man of business, should  
have some afternoons and evenings to spend  
with you, I trust, — that is, if you could stand  
#0 much of me. If you can spend your time  
profitably here, or without ennui, having an oc-  
casional ramble or “2te-i-t2te with one of the na-  
tives, it will give me pleasure to have you in the  
neighborhood. You see I am preparing you for  
our awful unsocial ways, —keeping in our dens  
a good part of the day,—sueking our claws per-  
haps. But then we make a religion of it, and  
that you cannot but respect.  
  
2 Mr. Channing had gone, October, 1855, to live in New Bed-  
ford, and help edit the Mercury there.

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ar.38] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 815  
  
If you know the taste of your own heart, and  
like it, come to Concord, and I’ll warrant you  
enough here to season the dish with, — ay, even  
though Channing and Emerson and I were all  
away. We might paddle quietly up the river.  
Then there are one or two more ponds to be  
‘seen, ete.  
  
I should very much enjoy further rambling  
with you in your vicinity, but must postpone it  
for the present. To tell the truth, Iam plan-  
ning to get seriously to work after these long  
months of inefficiency and idleness. I do not  
know whether you are haunted by any such  
demon which puts you on the alert to pluck the  
fruit of each day as it passes, and store it safely  
in your bin. True, it is well to live abandonedly  
from time to time; but to our working hours  
that must be as the spile to the bung. So for a  
ong season I must enjoy only a low slanting  
gleam in my mind’s eye from the Middleborough  
Ponds far away.  
  
‘Methinks Iam getting a little more strength  
into those knees of mine; and, for my part, I  
‘believe that God does delight in the strength of  
a man’s legs.

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816 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
70 HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcoun, December 9, 1885.  
  
Mn. Braxe,—Thank you! thank you for  
going a-wooding with me,—and enjoying it,—  
for being warmed by my wood fire. I have in-  
deed enjoyed it much alone. I see how I might  
enjoy it yet more with company,—how we might  
help each other to live. And to be admitted to  
Nature's hearth costs nothing. None is ex-  
cluded, but excludes himself. You have only  
to push aside the curtain.  
  
Tam glad to hear that jou were there too.  
There are many more such voyages, and longer  
ones, to be made on that river, for it is the water  
of life. ‘The Ganges is nothing to it, Observe  
its reflections, —no idea but is familiar to it.  
‘That river, though to dull eyes it seems terres-  
trial wholly, flows through Elysium. What pow-  
ers bathe in it invisible to villagers! Talk of  
its shallowness, —that hay-carts can be driven  
through it at midsummer; its depth passeth my  
understanding. If, forgetting the allurements  
of the world, T could drink deeply enough of it  
if, cast adrift from the shore, I could with com-  
plete integrity float on it, I should never be seen  
on the Milldam again! If there is any depth in  
  
1 The centre of Concord village, where tho postaice and  
‘shops are, —so called from an old mill-dam where now is a

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21.38] TO HARRISON BLAKE. S17  
  
me, there is a corresponding depth in it, It is  
the cold blood of the gods. I paddle and bathe  
in their artery.  
  
I do not want a stick of wood for so trivial a  
use as to burn even, but they get it over night,  
and carve and gild it that it may please my eye.  
‘What persevering lovers they are! What infi-  
nite pains to attract and delight us! ‘They will  
supply us with fagots wrapped in the daintiest  
packages, and freight paid; sweetscented woods,  
and bursting into flower, and resounding as if  
‘Orpheus had just left them,— these shall be our  
fuel, and we still prefer to chaffer with the wood-  
merchant !  
  
‘The jug we found still stands draining bottom  
up on the bank, on the sunny side of the house.  
That river,—who shall say exactly whence it  
came, and whither it goes? Does aught that  
flows come from a higher source? Many things  
drift downward on its surface which would en-  
rich a man. If you could only be on the alert  
all day, and every day! And the nights are as  
long as the days.  
  
Do you not think you could contrive thus to  
get woody fibre enough to bake your wheaten  
bread with? Would you not perchance have  
tasted the sweet crust of another kind of bread  
in the mean while, which ever hangs ready baked  
on the bread-fruit trees of the world ?

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818 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 18s,  
  
‘Talk of burning your smoke after the wood  
has been consumed! There is a far more impor-  
tant and warming heat, commonly lost, which  
precedes the burning of the wood. It is the  
smoke of industry, which is incense, I had been  
20 thoroughly warmed in body and spirit, that  
when at length my fuel was housed, I came near  
selling it to the ash-man, as if I had extracted  
all its heat.  
  
‘You should have been here to help me get in  
my boat. The last time I used it, November  
27th, paddling up the Assabet, I saw a great  
round pine log sunk deep in the water, and with  
labor got it aboard. When I was floating this  
home so gently, it occurred to me why I had  
found it. It was to make wheels with to roll my  
oat into winter quarters upon. So I sawed off  
two thick rollers from one end, pierced them for  
whecls, and then of a joist which I had found  
drifting on the river in the summer I made an  
axletree, and on this I rolled my boat out.  
  
Miss Mary Emerson is here, — the youngest  
person in Concord, though about eighty, —and  
the most apprehensive of a genuine thought;  
‘earnest to know of your inner life; most stimu-  
  
3 Tho aunt of R. W. Emerton, then eighty-one years old, an  
‘admirer of Thoreau, her notes to him show. For an account  
of her ave Emerson's Lecturer and Biographical Sketches, yp.  
Bi1-404,

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4x38] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 819  
  
lating society; and exceedingly witty withal.  
Sho says they called her old when she was young,  
and she has never grown any older. I wish you  
could see her.  
  
My books? did not arrive till November 80th,  
the cargo of the Asia having been complete when  
they reached Liverpool. I have arranged them  
in a case which I made in the mean while, partly  
of river boards. I have not dipped far into the  
new ones yet. One is splendidly bound and il-  
luminated. They are in English, French, Latin,  
Greek, and Sanserit. I have not made out the  
significance of this godsend yet.  
  
Farewell, and bright dreams to you!  
  
0 DANIEL RICKETSON (aT NEW BEDFORD).  
  
Conconn, December 25, 1855.  
  
Fruexp Ricxersox,—Though you have not  
shown your face here, I trust that you did not  
interpret my last note to my disadvantage. I  
remember that, among other things, I wished to  
break it to you, that, owing to engagements, I  
should not be able to show you so much atten-  
tion as I could wish, or as you had shown to me.  
How we did scour over the country! I hope  
your horse will live as long as one which I hear  
  
1 Tho books on India, Egypt, eta, sent by Cholmondeloy.  
Seo p. 821. They are now divided betwoen the Concord  
Public Library and the Libraries of Alcot, Blake, Emerson,  
Sanborn, oe.

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820 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
just died in the south of France at the age of  
forty. Yet I had no doubt you would get quite  
enough of me. Do not give it up so easily. The  
old house is still empty, and Hosmer is easy to  
troat with.  
  
Channing was here about ten days ago. I  
told him of my visit to you, and that he too must  
go and see you and your country.’ This may  
have suggested his writing to you.  
  
‘That island lodge, especially for some wocks  
in a summer, and new explorations in your viein-  
ity, are certainly very alluring; but such are my  
engagements to myself, that I dare not promise  
to wend your way, but will for the present only  
heartily thank you for your kind and generous  
offer. When my vacation comes, then look out.  
  
‘My legs have grown considerably stronger,  
and that is all that ails me.  
  
But I wish now above all to inform you,—  
though I suppose you will not be particularly  
interested, — that Cholmondeley has gone to the  
Crimea, “a complete soldier,” with a design,  
when he returns, if he ever returns, to buy a  
cottage in the South of England, and tempt me  
over ; but that, before going, he busied himself  
in buying, and has caused to be forwarded to me  
  
1 Me. Channing became a frequent vitor at Brooklawn, in  
  
the yours of his residence at New Bedford, 1850-58. See  
pea,

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er. 38.) TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 321  
by Chapman, a royal gift, in the shape of twenty-  
  
one distinct works (one in nine volumes, —  
forty-four volumes in all), almost exclusively re-  
lating to ancient Hindoo literature, and scarcely  
one of them to be bought in America! I am  
familiar with many of them, and know how to  
prize them. I send you information of this as  
T might of the birth of a child.  
‘Please remember me to all your family.  
  
1 These books were ordered by Cholmondeley in London,  
‘and sent to Boston just as ho was starting for the Crimean  
war, in Ootober, 1855, calling them “a nest of Indian books.”  
‘They included Mil's History of British India, several transla-  
tions of the sacred books of India, and one of them in Sanserit  
‘the works of Bunsen, so far aa then published, and other val  
able books. In the note accompanying this gift, Cholmonde-  
ley said, Tehink Inover found s0 much kindaess in all my  
travola os in your country of Now England.” In retum,  
‘Thoreau sont his English friend, in 1857, his own Week, Em-  
erson's poms, Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass, and FL.  
Olmsted's book on the Southern States (then preparing for  
the secession which they attempted four years later). ‘This  
‘was pethaps the frst eopy of Whitman seen in England, and  
when Cholmondeley began to read it to his stepfather, Rev. Z.  
‘Macaulay, at Hodvet, that clorgyman declared he would not  
Ihoar it, and threatened to throw it in the fire. On reading the  
Week (he had received Walden from Thoreau when frat in  
America), Cholmondeley wrote me, “Would you tell. dear  
‘Thorean that the lines I admire so much in his Week begin  
‘hoe: —  
  
   
  
   
  
“Lon-anchored stow,  
‘Newfoundland lr ee  
  
In my mind the best thing he ever wrota.”

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822 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 186,  
  
TO DANIEL RIOKENON (aT NEW NEDFORD).  
  
Coxconn, March 5, 1856.  
  
Dear Stm,—T have been out of town, else I  
should have acknowledged your letter before.  
‘Thongh not in the best mood for writing, I will  
say what I can now. You plainly have a rare,  
though a cheap, resource in your shanty. Per-  
haps the time will come when every country-seat  
will have one,—when every country-seat will  
be one. T would advise you to see that shanty  
business out, though you go shanty-mad. Work  
your vein till it is exhausted, or conducts you  
toa broader one; so that Channing shall stand  
before your shanty, and say, “That is your  
house.”  
  
‘This has indeed been a grand winter for me,  
and for all of us. I am not considering how  
much I have enjoyed it. What matters it how  
happy or unhappy we have been, if we have  
minded our business and advanced our affairs.  
Thave made it a part of my business to wade in  
the snow and take the measure of the ice. The  
ice on our pond was just two feet thick on the  
first of March; and I have today been survey-  
ing wood-lot, where I sank. about two feet at  
every step.  
  
Ttis high time that you, fanned by the warm  
breezes of the Gulf Stream, had begun to “Jay,”

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=t.35] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. \_—828  
  
for even the Concord hens have, though one  
wonders where they find the raw material of  
egg-shell here. Beware how you put off your  
laying to any later spring, else your cackling  
will not have the inspiring early spring sound.  
  
‘As for visiting you in April, though I am  
inclined enough to take some more rambles in  
your neighborhood, especially by the seaside, I  
dare not engage myself, nor allow you to expect,  
me. The truth is, I have my enterprises now as  
ever, at which I tug with ridiculous feebleness,  
‘but admirable perseverance, and cannot say when  
I shall be sufficiently fancy-free for such an ex:  
cursion.  
  
You have done well to write a lecture on  
Cowper. In the expectation of getting you to  
read it here, I applied to the curators of our  
coum; but, alas, our Lyceum has been a failure  
this winter for want of funds. It ceased some  
weeks since, with a debt, they tell me, to be car-  
ried over to the next year’s account. Only one  
more lecture is to be read by a Signor Some-  
body, an Italian, paid for by private subscription,  
as a deed of charity to the lecturer. ‘They are  
not rich enough to offer you your expenses even,  
though probably a month or two ago they would  
have been glad of the chance.  
  
4 Tho Concord Lycoum, founded in 1820, and still extant,  
‘hough not performing ite original function of lectures and  
debates. See pp. 61, 185, ete

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824 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (186,  
  
However, the old house has not failed yet.  
‘That offers you lodging for an indefinite time  
after you get into it; and in the mean while I  
offer you bed and board in my father’s house, —  
always excepting hair-pillows and new-fangled  
bedding.  
  
Remember me to your family,  
  
TO DANIEL RICKETSON (aT NEW BEDORD)-  
  
Coxcono, March 21,1856.  
  
Frrexp Ricxersox, — I was surprised to  
hhear the other day that Channing was in New  
Bedford. When he was here last (in December,  
T think), he said, like himself, in answer to my  
inquiry where he lived, “ that he did not know  
the name of the place ;” so it has remained in a  
degree of obscurity to me. I am rejoiced to  
hear that you are getting on so bravely with  
him and his verses. He and I, as you know,  
have been old cronies,’ —  
  
“Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade and sil,  
‘Together both, ere the high lowes appeared  
  
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,  
‘Wo drove afield, and both together heared,” ate.  
  
“But O, the heavy change,” now he is gone,  
  
1 Eilory Channing is mentioned, though not by name, in the  
Week (pp. 211, 461), and in Walden (p. 414). He was the  
comrade of Thoreau in Berkshire, and on the Hudson, in New  
“Hampshire, Canada, and Cape Cod, and in many rambles nearer  
Concord. He was also a companion of Hawthorne in his river  
‘Yoyages, a mentioned in the Mosses.

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2.98] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 825  
  
‘The Channing you have seen and described is  
the real Simon Pure. You have seen him.  
Many a good ramble may you have together !  
‘You will see in him still more of the same kind  
to attract and to puzzle you. How to serve him  
most effectually has long been a problem with  
his friends, Perhaps it is left for you to solve  
it. suspect that the most that you or any one  
can do for him is to appreciate his genius, —  
to buy and read, and cause others to buy and  
read his poems. That is the hand which he  
has put forth to the world, —take hold of that.  
Review them if you can,—perhaps take the  
risk of publishing something more which he may  
write. Your knowledge of Cowper will help  
you to know Channing. He will accept sym-  
pathy and aid, but he will not bear questioning,  
unless the aspects of the sky are particularly  
auspicious. He will ever be ‘reserved and  
enigmatic,” and you must deal with him at  
arm’s length, I’ have no secrets to tell you  
concerning him, and do not wish to call obvious  
exeellences and defects by far-fetched names,  
Nor neod I suggest how witty and poetic he is,  
and what an inexhaustible fund of good fellow-  
ship you will find in him.

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826 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 1s,  
  
70 HARRION BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Conoono, March 13, 1858.  
  
Mn, Biaxe,—It is high time I sent you a  
word. I have not heard from Harrisburg since  
offering to go there, and have not been invited  
to lecture anywhere else the past winter. So  
you see I am fast growing rich. This is quite  
right, for such is my relation to the lecture-goers,  
I should be surprised and alarmed if there were  
‘any great call for me. I confess that I am con-  
siderably alarmed even when I hear that an indi-  
vidual wishes to meet me, for my experience  
teaches me that we shall thus only be made cer-  
tain of a mutual strangeness, which otherwise we  
might never have been aware of.  
  
Thave not yet recovered strength enough for  
such a walk as you propose, though pretty well  
again for cireumseribed rambles and chamber  
work. Even now, I am probably the greatest  
walker in Concord, — to its disgrace be it said.  
I remember our walks and talks and sailing in  
the past with great satisfaction, and trust that  
‘we shall have more of them erelong,—have more  
woodings-up, —for even in the spring we must.  
still seek “ fuel to maintain our fires.”  
  
‘As you suggest, we would fain value one an-  
other for what we are absolutely, rather than  
relatively. How will this do for a symbol of  
sympathy ?

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38] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 827  
  
‘As for compliments, even the stars praise me,  
and I praise them. ‘They and I sometimes be-  
Jong to a mutual admiration society. Is it not  
so with you? I know you of old. Are you not  
tough and earnest to be talked at, praised, or  
blamed? Must you go out of the room because  
you are the subject of conversation? Where  
will you go to, pray? Shall we look into the  
“Letter Writer” to see what compliments are  
admissible? T am not afraid of praise, for I have  
practiced it on myself. As for my deserts, I  
never took an account of that stock, and in this,  
connection care not whether I am deserving or  
not. When I hear praise coming, do I not ele-  
vate and arch myself to hear it like the sky, and  
as impersonally? Think I appropriate any of it,  
to my weak legs? No. Praise away till all is  
Blue.  
  
T see by the newspapers that the season for  
making sugar is at hand. Now is the time,  
whether you be rock, or white-maple, or hickory.  
T trust that you have prepared a store of sap-  
tubs and sumach-spouts, and invested largely in  
kettles. Early the first frosty morning, tap your  
maples, —the sap will not run in summer, you

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828 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1806,  
  
know. It matters not how little juice you get,  
if you get all you can, and boil it down. I made  
just one crystal of sugar once, one twentieth of  
an inch eube, out of a pumpkin, and it suf-  
ficed. ‘Though the yield be no greater than  
that, this is not less the season for it, and it will  
bbe not the less sweet, nay, it will be infinitely  
the sweeter.  
  
Shall, then, the maple yield sugar, and not  
man? Shall the farmer be thus active, and surely  
have so much sugar to show for it, before this  
very March is gone,—while I read the newspa-  
per? While he works in his sugar-camp let me  
work in mine,—for sweetness is in me, and to  
sugar it shall come, — it shall not all go to leaves  
and wood. Am I not a sugar-maple man, then ?  
Boil down the sweet sap which the spring causes  
to flow within you. Stop not at syrup, —go  
on to sugar, though you present the world with  
but a single erystal,—a orystal not made from  
trees in your yard, but from the new life that  
stirs in your pores. Cheerfully skim your kettle,  
and watch it set and crystallize, making a holi-  
day of it if you will. Heaven will be propitious  
to you as to him,  
  
Say to the farmer, There is your crop; here  
is mine. Mine is a sugar to sweeten sugar with.  
If you will listen to me, I will sweeten your whole  
load, — your whole life.

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2.88] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 829  
  
‘Then will the callers ask, Where is Blake?  
He is in his sugar-camp on the mountain-side.  
Let the world await him. ‘Then will the little  
boys bless you, and the great boys too, for such  
sugar is the origin of many condiments, — Blak-  
ians in the shops of Worcester, of new form,  
with their mottoes wrapped up in them. Shall  
men taste only the sweetness of the maple and  
the cane the coming year?  
  
‘A walk over the crust to Asnybumskit, stand.  
ing there in its inviting simplicity, is tempting  
to think of, — making a fire on the snow under  
some rock! The very poverty of outward na-  
ture implies an inward wealth in the walker.  
What a Goleonda is he conversant with, thaw-  
ing his fingers over such a blaze! But —  
but —  
  
‘Have you read the new poem, “The Angel in  
the House”? Perhaps you will find it good for  
  
you.  
  
   
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcon, May 21, 1850  
Mr. Buaxe,—I havo not for a long time  
been putting such thoughts together as I should  
like to read to the company you speak of. I  
have enough of that sort to say, or even read, but  
not time now to arrange it. Something I have  
prepared might prove for their entertainment or

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880 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. [188,  
  
refreshment perchance; but T would not like to  
have a hat carried round for it, I have just  
‘been reading some papers to see if they would  
do for your company; but though I thought  
pretty well of them as long as I read them to  
myself, when I got an auditor to try them on, I  
felt that they would not answer. How could I  
lot you drum up a company to hear them? In  
fine, what I have is either too scattered or loosely  
arranged, or too light, or else is too scientific and.  
matter of fact (I run 2 good deal into that of  
late) for so hungry a company.  
  
T am still a learner, not a teacher, feeding  
somewhat omnivorously, browsing both stalk and  
leaves; but I shall perhaps be enabled to speak  
with the more precision and authority by and  
by, — if philosophy and sentiment are not buried  
under a multitude of details.  
  
I do not refuse, but accept your invitation,  
only changing the time. I consider myself in-  
vited to Worcester once for all, and many thanks  
to the inviter. As for the Harvard excursion,!  
will you let me suggest another? Do you and  
  
1 This war the town of Harvand, not the college. Perhaps  
tho excursion was to visit Fruitlands, whore Aleott and Lane  
Ihad established their short-lived community, in boantifal  
‘pot near Still River, an afluent of the Nashua, and half way  
from Concord to Wachusett.“ Amobumakit,” mentioned in  
1 former letter, is the highest hill near Worcester, as “ Nob-  
soot” ia the highest near Conoord. Both have Indian names.

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21.33] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 38t  
  
Brown come to Concord on Saturday, if the  
weather promises well, and spend the Sunday  
here on the river or hills, or both. So we shall  
save some of our money (which is of next impor-  
tance to our souls), and lose —T do not know  
what. You say you talked of coming here be-  
fore ; now do it. Ido not propose this because I  
think that T am worth your spending time with,  
but because I hope that we may prove flint and  
steel toone another. Tt is at most only an hour's  
ride farther, and you can at any rate do what  
you please when you get here.  
  
‘Then we will see if we have any apology to  
offer for our existence. So come to Concord, —  
come to Concord, —come to Concord! or— your  
suit shall be defaulted.  
  
‘As for the dispute about solitude and society,  
any comparison is impertinent. Tt is an idling  
down on the plain at the base of a mountain, in-  
stead of climbing steadily to its top. Of course  
you will be glad of all the society you can get to  
goupwith. Will you go to glory with me? is the  
burden of the song. I love society so much that  
T swallowed it all at a gulp,— that is, all that  
came in my way. It is not that we love to be  
alone, but that we love to soar, and when we do  
soar, the company grows thinner and thinner till  
‘there is none at all. It is either the Tribune! on  
  
1 The New York newspaper.

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882 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
the plain, a sermon on the mount, or a very pri-  
vate ecstasy still higher up. We are not the less  
to aim at the summits, though the multitude does  
not ascend them. Use all the society that will  
abet you. But perhaps I do not enter into the  
spirit of your talk. ‘  
  
In the spring of 1856, Mr. Aloott, then living  
in Walpole, N. H., visited Concord, and while  
there suggested to Thoreau that the upper valley  
of the Connecticut, in which Walpole lies, was  
good walking-ground, and that he would be glad  
to sce him there. When autumn began to hover  
in the distance, Thoreau recalled this invitation,  
and sent the letter below.  
  
TO BRONSON ALCORT (A” WALPOLE, N. 1.)  
Cosconn, September 1, 1858,  
  
‘Mr. Atcorr,—I remember that, in the  
spring, you invited me to visit you. I feel in-  
clined to spend a day or two with you and on  
your hills at this season, retuming, perhaps, by  
‘way of Brattleboro, What if T should take the  
cars for Walpole next Friday morning? Are  
you at home? And will it be convenient and  
agreeable to you to see me then? I will await  
an answer.  
  
I am but poor company, atd it will not be  
worth the while to put yourself out on my a0-

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=x. TO BRONSON ALCOTT. 333  
  
count; yet from time to time I have some  
thoughts which would be the better for an air-  
ing. I also wish to get some hints from Sep-  
tember on the Connecticut to help me under.  
stapd that season on the Concord ; to snuff the  
musty fragranee of the decaying year in the  
primitive woods. There is considerable cellar-  
room in my nature for such stores; a whole row  
of bins waiting to be filled, before I can cele  
brate my Thanksgiving. Mould is the richest  
of soils, yet Jam not mould. Tt will always be  
found that one flourishing institution exists and  
battens on another mouldering one. The Pres-  
ent itself is parasitic to this extent.  
‘Your fellow-traveler,  
Henry D. Tuoreav.  
  
As fortune would have it, Mr. Alcott was  
then making his arrangements for a conversa  
tional tour in the vicinity of New York; but he  
renewed the invitation for himself, while repeat  
ing it in the name of Mrs. Aleott and his daugh-  
ters. ‘Thoreau made the visit, I believe, and  
some weeks later, at the suggestion of Mr. Al-  
cott, he was asked by Marcus Spring of New  
York to read lectures and survey their estate for  
community at Perth Amboy, N. J., in which  
‘Mr. Spring and his friends, the Birneys, Welds,  
Grimkés, ete., had united for social and educa-

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884 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
tional purposes. It was a colony of radical opin-  
ions and old-fashioned culture; the Grimkés  
having been bred in Charleston, S. C., which  
they left by reason of their opposition to negro  
slavery, and the elder Birney having held slayes  
in Alabama until his conscience bade him eman-  
cipate them, after which he, too, could have no  
secure home among slaveholders. He was the  
first. presidential candidate of the voting Aboli-  
tionists, as Lincoln was the last ; and his friend,  
Theodore Weld, who married Miss Grimké, had  
been one of the early apostles of emancipation  
in Ohio. Their circle at Eagleswood appealed  
to Thoreau’s sense of humor, and is described by  
him in the next letter.  
  
In October, 1856, Mr. Spring, whom Mr. Al-  
ott: was then visiting, wrote to Thoreau inviting  
him to come to Eagleswood, give lectures, and  
survey two hundred acres of land belonging to  
the community, laying out streets and making a  
map of the proposed village. Thoreau accepted  
the proposal, and soon after wrote the following  
letter, which Miss Thoreau submitted to Mr.  
Emerson for publication, with other letters, in  
the volume of 1865; but he returned it, inscribed  
Not printable at present.” ‘The lapse of time  
thas removed this objection.

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2.9] 70, SOPHIA THOREAU. 835  
  
170 SOPHIA THOREAU.  
(Diret] Exauewoon, Penen Axnoy, N. Jy  
‘Saturday eve, November 1, 1858,  
  
‘Dear Sopnta,—TI have hardly had time and  
repose enough to write to you before. I spent  
the afternoon of Friday (it seems some months  
ago) in Worcester, but failed to see [Harrison]  
Blake, he having “gone to the horse-race” in  
Boston ; to atone for which I have just received  
a letter from him, asking me to stop at Worees-  
ter and lecture on my return. I called on  
[Theo.] Brown and [T. W.] Higginson ; in the  
evening came by way of Norwich to New York  
in the steamer Commonwealth, and, though it  
was so windy inland, had a perfectly smooth pas-  
sage, and about as good a sleep as usually at  
home. Reached New York about seven A.  
too late for the John Potter (there wasn’t any  
Jonas), so I spent the forenoon there, called on  
Greeley (who was not in), met [F. A. T.] Bel-  
lew in Broadway and walked into his workshop,  
read at the Astor Library, ete. T arrived here,  
about thirty miles from New York, about five  
p.m. Saturday, in company with Miss E. Pea.  
body, who was returning in the same covered  
wagon from the Landing to Eagleswood, which  
last place she has just left for the winter.  
  
This is a queer place, There is one large long

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836 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (186,  
  
stone building, which cost some forty thousand  
dollars, in which I do not know exactly who or  
how many work (one or two familiar faces and  
more familiar names have turned up), a few  
shops and offices, an old farmhouse, and Mr.  
Spring’s perfectly private residence, within  
twenty rods of the main building. The city of  
Perth Amboy is about as big as Concord, and  
Eagleswood is one and a quarter miles south-  
west of it, on the Bay side. The central fact  
here is evidently Mr. [Theodore] Weld’s school,  
recently established, around which various other  
things revolve. Saturday evening I went to the  
schoolroom, hall, or what not, to see the children  
and their teachers and patrons dance. Mr.  
Weld, a kindlooking man with a long white  
beard, danced with them, and Mr. [E. J.] Cut.  
ler, his assistant (lately from Cambridge, who is  
acquainted with Sanborn), Mr. Spring, and oth-  
ers. This Saturday evening dance is a regular  
thing, and it is thought something strange if you  
don’t attend. They take it for granted that you  
want society!  
  
‘Sunday forenoon I attended a sort of Quaker  
meeting at the same place (the Quaker aspect  
and spirit prevail here, —Mrs. Spring says,  
“Does thee not?”"), where it was expected that  
the Spirit would move me (I having been previ-  
ously spoken to about it); and it, or something

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7.9] TO SOPHIA THOREAU. 387  
  
else, did,—an inch or so. I said just enough  
to sot them a little by the ears and make it,  
lively. I had excused myself by saying that I  
could not adapt myself to a particular audience;  
for all the speaking and lecturing here have ref-  
erence to the children, who are far the greater  
part of the audience, and they are not so bright  
as New England children. Imagine them sit-  
ting close to the wall, all around a hall, with old  
Quaker-looking men and women here and there.  
‘There sat Mrs. Weld [Grimké] and her sister,  
‘wo elderly gray-headed ladies, the former in ex-  
treme Bloomer costume, which was what you  
may call remarkable; Mr. Arnold Buffum, with  
broad face and a great white beard, looking like  
a pier-head made of the cork-tree with the bark  
on, as if he could buffet a considerable wave ;  
James G. Birney, formerly candidate for the  
presidency, with another particularly white head  
and beard; Edward Palmer, the anti-money man  
(for whom communities were made), with his  
ample beard somewhat grayish. Some of them,  
T suspect, are very worthy people. Of course  
you are wondering to what extent all theso make  
one family, and to what extent twenty. Mrs.  
Kirkland? (and this a name only to me) I saw.  
She has just bought alot here. ‘They all know  
  
2 Mr. Caroline Kirkland, wife of Prof. William Kiskland,  
then of New York, —a writer of wit and famo at that time.

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888 FRIENDS.AND FOLLOWERS. (156,  
  
more about your neighbors and acquaintances  
than you suspected.  
  
On Monday evening I read the Moose story  
to the children, to their satisfaction. Ever sinco  
I have been constantly engaged in surveying  
Eagleswood,— through woods, salt marshes, and  
along the shore, dodging the tide, through  
bushes, mud, and beggar ticks, having no time  
to look up or think where Iam. (It takes ten  
or fifteen minutes before each meal to pick the  
beggar ticks out of my clothes ; burrs and the  
rest are left, and rents mended at the first con-  
venient opportunity.) I shall be engaged per-  
haps as much longer. Mr. Spring wants me to  
help him about setting out an orchard and vine-  
yard, Mr. Bimey asks me to survey a small  
piece for him, and Mr. Alcott, who has just come  
down here for the third Sunday, says that, Gree-  
ley (I left my name for him) invites him and  
me to go to his home with him next Saturday  
morning and spend the Sunday.  
  
‘It seems a twelvemonth since I was not here,  
‘but I hope to got settled deep into my den again  
erelong. The hardest thing to find here is soli-  
tude—and Concord. I am at Mr. Spring’s  
hhouse. Both he and she and their family are  
quite agreeable.  
  
I want you to write to me immediately (just  
left off to talk French with the servant man),

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at.®] 10 HARRISON BLAKE. 339  
  
and let father and mother put in a word. To  
thom and to Aunts, love from  
‘Henry.  
  
‘The date of this visit to Eagleswood is worthy  
of note, because in that November Thoreau  
made the acquaintance of the late Walt Whit-  
man, in whom he ever after took a deep interest,  
Accompanied by Mr. Alcott, he called on Whit-  
‘man, then living at Brooklyn; and I remember  
the calm enthusiasm with which they both spoke  
of Whitman upon their return to Concord.  
“Three men,” said Emerson, in his funeral  
eulogy of Thoreau, “have of late years strongly  
impressed Mr. Thoreau, —John Brown, his In-  
dian guide in Maine, Joe Polis, and a third per-  
‘son, not known to this audience.” This last was  
Whitman, who has since become well known to  
a larger audience.  
  
   
  
70 HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
  
BaourawooD, N.J., November 19, 1856,  
  
‘Mr. Buaxe, —I have been here much longer  
than I expected, but have deferred answering  
you, because I could not foresee when I should  
return. I do not know yet within three or four  
days. ‘This uncertainty makes it impossible for  
‘me to appoint a day to meet you, until it shall be  
too late to hear from you again. I think, there-

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340 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (188,  
  
fore, that I must go straight home. I feel some  
objection to reading that “ What shall it profit”  
lecture again in Worcester; but if you are  
quite sure that it will be worth the while (it is  
a grave consideration), I will even make an  
independent journey from Concord for that  
purpose. I have read three of my old lectures  
(hat included) to the Eagleswood people, and,  
unexpectedly, with rare success, —i. e., I was  
aware that what I was saying was silently taken  
in by their ears.  
  
‘You must excuse me if I write mainly a busi-  
ness letter now, for Iam sold for the time, —  
am merely Thoreau the surveyor here, —and  
solitude is scarcely obtainable in these parts.  
  
‘Alcott has been here three times, and, Satur-  
day before last, I went with him and Greeley, by  
invitation of the last, to G.'s farm, thirty-six  
miles north of New York. The next day A.  
and I heard Beecher preach; and what was  
‘more, we visited Whitman the next morning (A.  
had already seen him), and were much inter-  
ested and provoked. He is apparently the  
greatest democrat the world has soen. Kings  
and aristocracy go by the board at once, as they  
have long deserved to. A remarkably strong  
though coarse nature, of a sweet disposition, and  
much prized by his friends. Though peculiar and  
rough in his exterior, his skin (all over (?)) red,

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8] 70 HARRISON BLAKE. Sat  
  
he is essentially a gentleman, Iam still some-  
what in a quandary about him,—feel that he  
is essentially strange to me, at any rate; but I  
am surprised by the sight of him. He is very  
broad, but, as I have said, not fine. He said  
that I misapprehended him. I am not quite  
sure that Ido. He told us that he loved to ride  
up and down Broadway all day on an omnibus,  
sitting beside the driver, listening to the roar  
of the carts, and sometimes gesticulating and  
doclaiming Homer at the top of his voice. He  
has long been an editor and writer for the news-  
Papers, — was editor of the “ New Orleans Cres-  
cent” once; but now has no employment but  
to read and write in the forenoon, and walk in  
the afternoon, like all the rest of the seribbling  
gentry.  
  
I shall probably be in Concord next week ; 50  
you can direct to me there.  
  
   
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcono, December 6, 1856.  
Mr. Braxe,—I trust that you got a note  
from me at Eagleswood, about a fortnight ago.  
T passed through Worcester on the morning of  
the 25th of November, and spent several hours  
from 8.30 to 6.20) in the travelers’ room at the  
depot, as in a dream, it now seems. As the first  
Harlem train unexpectedly connected with the

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842 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. {1886,  
  
first from Fitchburg, I did not spend the forenoon  
with you as T had anticipated, on account of  
baggage, ete. If it had been a seasonable hour,  
I should have seen you, —i. e., if you had not  
gone to a horse-race. But think of making a  
all at half past three in the morning! (would  
it not have implied a three o’clock in the morn-  
ing courage in both you and me?) as it were,  
ignoring the fact that mankind are really not at  
home, — are not out, but so deeply in that they  
cannot be seen, —nearly half their hours at this  
season of the year.  
  
I walked up and down the main street, at half  
past five, in the dark, and paused long in front  
of Brown's store, trying to distinguish its fea-  
tures ; considering whether I might safely leave  
his “Putnam ” in the door-handle, but concluded  
not to risk it. Meanwhile a watchman (?)  
seemed to be watching me, and T moved off  
Took another tum round there, and had the  
very earliest offer of the Transcript? from an  
urchin behind, whom I actually could not so, it  
was so dark. So I withdrew, wondering if you  
and B, would know if I had been there. You  
little dream who is occupying’ Worcester when  
you are all asleep. Several things occurred  
there that night which I will venture to say were  
not put into the Transcript. A cat caught a  
  
1A Woresstor newspaper

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at, 0] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 848  
  
monse at the depot, and gave it to her kitten  
to play with. So that world-famous tragedy  
goes on by night as well as by day, and nature is  
emphatically wrong. Also I saw a young Irish-  
man kneel before his mother, as if in prayer,  
while she wiped a cinder out of his eye with her  
tongue; and I found that it was never too late  
or early?) to learn something. These things  
transpired while you and B, were, to all practical  
purposes, nowhere, and good for nothing, — not  
even for society, —not for horse-races, —nor  
the taking back of a “Putnam’s Magazine.” It  
is true, I might have recalled you to life, but it  
would have been a cruel act, considering the  
kkind of life you would have come back to.  
  
However, I would fain write to you now by  
broad daylight, and report to you some of my  
life, such as it is, and recall you to your life,  
which is not always lived by you, even by day-  
light. Blake! Brown! are you awake? are  
you aware what an ever-glorious morning this  
is, — what longexpected, never-to-be-repeated  
opportunity is now offered to get life and know:  
ledge?  
  
For my part, I am trying to wake up,—to  
wring slumber out of my pores ; for, generally,  
Ttake events as unconcernedly as a fence post,  
—absorb wet and cold like it, and am pleasantly  
tickled with lichens slowly spreading over me,

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844 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS, [186,  
  
Could I not be content, then, to be a cedar post,  
which lasts twenty-five years? Would I not  
rather be that than the farmer that set it? or  
he that preaches to the farmer? and go to the  
heaven of posts at last? I think T should like  
that as well as any would like it. But I should  
not care if I sprouted into a living tree, put  
forth leaves and flowers, and bore fruit.  
  
Tam grateful for what I am and have. My  
thanksgiving is perpetual. It is surprising how  
eontented one can be with nothing definite, —  
only a sense of existence. Well, anything for  
variety. I am ready to try this for the next ten  
thousand years, and exhaust it. How sweet to  
think of ! my extremities well charred, and my  
intellectual part too, 90 that there is no danger  
of worm or rot for a long while. My breath is  
sweetto me. O how] laugh when I think of my  
vague, indefinite riches. No run on my bank  
can drain it, for my wealth is not possession but  
enjoyment.  
  
‘What are all these years made for? and now  
another winter comes, so much like the last?  
Can't we satisfy the beggars once for all?  
  
Have you got in your wood for this winter?  
‘What else have you got in? Of what use a  
great fire on the hearth, and a confounded little  
fire in the heart? Are you prepared to make a  
decisive campaign, — to pay for your costly tui-

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2.3] T0 HARRISON BLAKE. 845  
  
tion, — to pay for the suns of past summers, —  
for happiness and unhappiness lavished upon.  
you?  
  
‘Does not Time go by swifter than the ewift-  
‘est equine trotter or racker?  
  
Stir up Brown. Remind him of his duties,  
which outrun the date and span of Worcester’s  
years past and to come. Tell him to be sure  
that he is on the main street, however narrow it  
may be, and to have a lit sign, visible by night  
‘as well as by day.  
  
‘Are they not pationt waiters, — they who wait  
for us? But even they shall not be losers.  
  
December 7.  
  
‘That Walt Whitman, of whom I wrote to you,  
is the most interesting fact to me at present. I  
have just read his second edition (which he  
gave me), and it has done me more good than  
any reading for a long time. Perhaps I remem-  
er best the poem of Walt Whitman, an Amer-  
ican, and the Sun-Down Poem. There are two  
or three pieces in the book which are disagreo-  
able, to say the least ; simply sensual. He does  
not celebrate love at all. It is as if the beasts  
spoke. I think that men have not been ashamed  
of themselves without reason. No doubt there  
have always been dens where such deeds were  
unblushingly recited, and it is no merit to com-

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846 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. \_ {116,  
  
pete with their inhabitants. But even on this  
side he has spoken more truth than any Ameri-  
ican or modern that I know. I have found his  
poem exhilarating, encouraging. As for its  
sensuality, —and it may turn out to be less  
sensual than it appears, — I do not so much  
wish that those parts were not written, as that  
men and women were so pure that they could  
read them without harm, that is, without under-  
standing them. One woman told me that no  
woman could read it, —as if a man could read  
what a woman could not. Of course Walt  
‘Whitman can communicate to us no experience,  
and if we are shocked, whose experience is it  
that we are reminded of ?  
  
On the whole, it sounds to me very brave and  
American, after whatever deductions. I do not  
believe that all the sermons, so called, that have  
been preached in this land put together are  
equal to it for preaching.  
  
‘We ought to rejoice greatly in him. He oc-  
casionally suggests something a little more than  
human. You can't confound him with the other  
inhabitants of Brooklyn or New York. How  
they must shudder when they read him! He is  
awfully good.  
  
‘To be sure I sometimes feel a little imposed  
on. By his heartiness and broad generalities he  
puts me into a liberal frame of mind prepared

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xn] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 347  
  
to see wonders,— as it were, sets me upon a  
hill or in the midst of a plain, —stirs me well  
up, and then — throws in a thousand of brick.  
‘Though rude, and sometimes ineffectual, it is a  
great primitive poem, —an alarum or trumpet-  
note ringing through the American camp.  
Wonderfully like the Orientals, too, considering  
that when I asked him if he had read them, he  
answered, “No: tell me about them.”  
  
I did not get far in conversation with him, —  
two more being present, —and among the few  
things which I chanced to say, I remember that  
‘one Was, in answer to him as representing Amer-  
ica, that I did not think much of America or of  
polities, and so on, which may have been some-  
what of a damper to him.  
  
Since I have seen him, I find that I am not  
disturbed by any brag or egoism in his book. He  
may turn out the least of a braggart of all, hav-  
ing a better right to be confident.  
  
‘He is a great fellow.  
  
‘There is in Aleott’s diary an account of this  
interview with Whitman, and the Sunday morn-  
ing in Ward Beecher’s Brooklyn church, from  
which a few passages may be taken. Hardly any  
person met by either of these Concord friends in  
their later years made so deep an impression on  
both as did this then almost unknown poet and

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848 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. [iss8,  
  
thinker, concerning whom Cholmondeley wrote  
to Thoreau in 1857: “Is there actually such a  
man as Whitman? Has any one seen or han-  
dled him? His is a tongue ‘not understanded”  
of the English people. I find the gentleman  
altogether left out of the book. It is the first  
book I have ever seen which I should call a  
“new book.’”  
  
Mr. Alcott writes under date of November 7,  
1856, in New York: “Henry Thorean arrives  
from Eagleswood, and sees Swinton, a wise young  
Scotchman, and Walt Whitman’s friend, at my  
room (15 Laight Street), — Thoreau declining  
to accompany me to Mrs. Botta’s parlors, as in-  
vited by her. He sleeps here. (November 8.)  
‘We find Greeley at the Harlem station, and ride  
with him to his farm, where we pass the day, and  
return to sleep in the city, — Greeley coming in  
with us; Alice Cary, the authoress, aecompany-  
ing us also. (Sunday, November 9.) We cross  
the ferry to Brooklyn, and hear Ward Beecher  
at the Plymouth Church. It was a spectacle,  
—and himself the Preacher, if preacher there be  
anywhere now in pulpits. His auditors had to  
weep, had to laugh, under his potent magnetism,  
while his doctrine of justice to all men, bond and  
free, was grand. House, entries, aisles, galleries,  
all were crowded. Thoreau called it pagan, but  
I pronounced it good, very good,— the best I

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an.) 70 B. B. WILEY. 349  
  
had witnessed for many a day, and hopeful for  
the coming time, At dinner at Mrs, Manning’s  
‘Miss M. S. was there, curious to see Thoreau.  
‘After dinner we called on Walt Whitman (Tho-  
reau and I), but finding him out, we got ail we  
could from his mother, a stately, sensible matron,  
believing absolutely in Walter, and telling us  
how good he was, and how wise when a boy; and  
how his four brothers and two sisters loved him,  
and still take counsel of the great man he has  
grown to be. We engaged to call again early in  
the morning, when she said Walt would be glad  
to see us. (Monday, 10th.) Mrs. Tyndale of  
Philadelphia goes with’ us to see Walt, — Walt  
the satyr, the Bacchus, the very god Pan. We  
sat with him for two hours, and much to our de-  
light; he promising to call on us at the Interna-  
tional at ten in the morning to-morrow, and there  
have the rest of it.” Whitman failed to call at  
his hour the next day.  
  
0 B. B. WILEY (AT CHICAGO).  
  
Coxcon, December 12,1858,  
Mr. Witer,!— It is refreshing to hear of  
your earnest purpose with respect to your cul-  
ture, and I can send you no better wish than that  
1B, B, Wiley, then of Providence, sinco of Chicago, had  
  
‘written to Thoreau, Septamber 4, for a copy of the Wook,  
‘which the author was then selling on his own account, baving

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350 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (186,  
  
you may not be thwarted by the cares and temp-  
tations of life. Depend om it, now is the ac-  
cepted time, and probably you will never find  
yourself better disposed or freer to attend to  
your culture than at this moment. When They  
who inspire us with the idea are ready, shall not  
wo be ready also’?  
  
I do not remember anything which Confucius  
has said directly respecting man’s “ origin, pur-  
pose, and destiny.” He was more practical than  
that. He is full of wisdom applied to human  
relations, — to the private life, — the family, —  
government, ete. It is remarkable that, accord-  
ing to his own account, the sum and substance  
of his teaching is, as you know, to do as you  
would be done by.  
  
He also said (I translate from the French),  
“Conduct yourself suitably towards the persons  
of your family, then you will be able to instruct  
and to direct a nation of men.”  
  
“To nourish one’s self with a little rice, to  
drink water, to have only his bended arm to sup-  
port his head, is a stato which has also its satis.  
faction. To be rich and honored by iniquitous  
bought back the unsalable fst edition from hin publisher,  
Munros. In « letter of October 31, to which the above ix  
reply, he montiona takiog a wall with Charlos Newcomb, then  
of Providence, now of London, — ono ofthe Dial cotsibators,  
‘nd a opecial fiend of Emerson then inquires about Conta  
‘ia, the Hindoo philosophers, and Swedenborg.

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arm] 70 B. B. WILEY. 351  
  
means is for me as the’ floating cloud which  
passes.”  
  
As soon as a child is born he must respect  
its facultios: the knowledge which will come to  
it by and by does not resemble at all its present  
state. If it arrive at the age of forty or fifty  
years without having learned anything, it is no  
more worthy of any respect.” This last, I think,  
will speak to your condition.  
  
But at this rate I might fill many letters.  
  
Our acquaintance with the ancient Hindoos is  
not at all personal. The full names that ean be  
relied upon are very shadowy. It is, however,  
tangible works that we know. The best I think  
of are the Bhagvat Geeta (an episode in an  
ancient heroic poem called the Mahabarat), the  
Vedas, the Vishnu Purana, the Institutes of  
Menu, ete.  
  
T cannot say that Swedenborg has been di-  
reetly and practically valuable to me, for I have  
not been a reader of him, except to a slight ex-  
tent; but Ihave the highest regard for him, and  
trust that I shall read his works in some world  
or other. He had a wonderful knowledge of our  
interior and spiritual life, though his illumina-  
tions are occasionally blurred by trivialities. He  
comes nearer to answering, or attempting to an-  
swer, literally, your questions concerning man’s  
origin, purpose, and destiny, than ‘any of the

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852 = FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 18s,  
  
worthies I have referred to. But I think that that  
is not altogethor a recommendation ; since such  
an answer to these questions cannot be diseov-  
ered any more than perpetual motion, for which  
no reward is now offered. The noblest man it  
is, methinks, that knows, and by his life suggests,  
the most about these things. Crack away at  
‘these nuts, however, as long as you can, — the  
very exercise will ennoble you, and you may get  
something better than the answer you expect.  
  
70 B. B. WILEY (aT CHICAGO).  
  
Coxconn, April 2, 1867.  
‘Mn. Winey, —I soe that you are tuming a  
broad furrow among the books, but I trust that  
some very private journal all the while holds its  
own through their midst. Books can only reveal  
us to ourselves, and as often as they do us this  
service we lay them aside. I should say, read  
Goethe’s Autobiography, by all means, also Gib-  
‘bon’s, Haydon the Painter's, and our Franklin's  
of course; perhaps also Alfier’s, Benvenuto  
Cellini’s, and De Quincey’s “Confessions of an  
Opium-Eater,” —since you like autobiography.  
I think you must read Coleridge again, and fur-  
ther, skipping all his theology, i. e., if you value  
preciso definitions and a discriminating use of  
language. By the way, read De Quincey’s Remi-  
niscences of Coleridge and Wordsworth,

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an 0] 70 B. B. WILBY. 858  
  
How shall we account for our pursuits, if they  
are original? We get the language with which  
to describe our various lives out of a common  
mint. If others have their losses which they are  
busy repairing, so have I mine, and their hound  
and horse may perhaps be the symbols of some  
of them. But also I have lost, or am in danger  
of losing, a far finer and more ethereal treasure,  
which commonly no loss, of which they are con-  
scious, will symbolize. This I answer hastily  
and with some hesitation, according as I now  
understand my words. . . «  
  
‘Methinks a certain polygamy with its troubles  
is the fate of almost all men. ‘They are married  
to two wives: their genius (a celestial muse),  
  
2 When in 1855 or 1868"Thoresn started to wade serom fom  
Daxbory to Clark's Inland, and wan psked wp by «Shing.  
ont in tho deepwater and landed onthe“ backside ” of the  
itland (coe lator to Mr: Watson of April 25, 1959), Edward  
‘Watson (Uncle Ha”), wan ei’ round” to we that every-  
thing wan sight alonguore nd encounter tho unexpected  
‘visitor. “How did you come here ?"" “Oh, from Duxbury,”  
‘eid Thorens, snd they walked to tho old Watton hoo to-  
tothe. "You ayn one of our books,” aid Unlo Ea, that  
ou once lat a hove and « hound and a dove, —now Tabould  
iike to know what you meant by that?” \* Why, orerzbody  
Ian met with laos, have ne chy 2” Hm, — petty way  
annver a fellow!” aid Mr. Watson but {noms thin wan he  
‘mal answer, In the long dinig-room of the old hone that  
tight heat by the window and told the sary of the Nome  
rorager to New England, ~ perhaps to that very island and  
the Garnet near by,— a9 Morton fancion in his review of  
‘Thora ia tho Harvard Magazine (anary, 185).

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854 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1886,  
  
and also to some fair daughter of the earth.  
Unless these two were fast friends before mar  
riage, and so are afterward, there will be but  
little peace in the house,  
  
‘To MARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcon, December 31, 1858.  
  
‘Mr. Buaxe,—I think it will not be worth  
‘tho while for me to come to Worcester to lecture  
at all this year. It will be better to wait till I  
‘am — perhaps unfortunately — more in that line,  
‘My writing has not taken the shape of lectures,  
and therefore I should be obliged to read one of  
three or four old lectures, the best of which I  
have read to some of your auditors before. I  
carried that one which I call “ Walking, or the  
Wild,” to Amherst, N. HL, the evening of that  
cold ‘Thursday, and I am to reid another at  
Fitchburg, February 3. I am simply their hired  
man, This will probably be the extent of my  
lecturing hereabouts.  
  
‘must depend on meeting Mr. Wasson some  
other time,  
  
Perhaps it always costs me more than it comes  
to to lecture before a promiscuous audience. It  
  
1 This was when he spoke in the vestry of the Calvinistio  
chareh, and said, on bis return to Concord that he hoped  
hh had done something to upheavo and demolish the structure  
shore,” — the verry being beneath the church.

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1.9] 10 HARRISON BLAKE. 855  
  
is an irreparable injury done to my modesty even,  
—I become so indurated.  
  
O solitude! obscurity! meanness! I never  
triumph so as when I have the least success in  
my neighbor's eyes. ‘The lecturer gets fifty dol-  
lars a night; but what becomes of his winter?  
‘What consolation will it be hereafter to have  
fifty thousand dollars for living in the world?  
I should like not to exchange any of my life for  
money.  
  
‘These, you may think, are reasons for not leo-  
turing, when you have no great opportunity. It  
is even go, perhaps. I could lecture on dry oa  
leaves ; I could, but who could heat me? If I  
were to try it on any large audience, I fear it  
would be no gain to them, and a positive loss to  
me. Ishould have behaved rudely toward my  
rustling friends.?  
  
1 Notwithitanding thin unwillingness to lecture, Thorean.  
id speak at Worcester, Febroary 13, 1851, on Walking,”  
Dut serupulously added to hia consent (February 6), I told  
Brown it had not been much altered since I read it in Worces-  
tor; but now I think of i, much of it must have been now to  
you, because, having sinco divided it into two, I am able to  
read what before I omitted. Noverthelea, I should Hike to  
bhava it understood by hore whom it concerns, that T am  
invited to read in public (if it be so) what I havo already  
rad, in part, to a private audience.” This throws some light  
  
‘method of preparing lectures, which were afterwards  
published aa essays; they were made up from his journals, and  
‘ew entrics expanded thom.

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856 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1351,  
  
Tam surveying, instead of lecturing, at pres-  
ent. Let me have a skimming from your “ pan  
of unwrinkled cream.”  
  
‘TO DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Conconn, April 1, 1867  
  
Dear Ricxersox, —I got your note of wel-  
come night before last. I expect, if the weather  
is favorable, to take the 4.30 train from Boston  
to-morrow, Thursday, P. m., for I hear of no noon  
train, and shall be glad to find your wagon at  
‘Tarkiln Hill, for I see it will be rather late for  
going across lots.  
  
Thave seen all the spring signs you mention,  
and a few more, even here. Nay, I heard one  
frog peep nearly a week ago,— methinks the  
very first one in all this region. I wish that  
there were a few more signs of spring in myself ;  
however, I take it that there are as many within  
‘us as we think we hear without us. I am decent  
for a steady pace, but not yet for a race. T have  
‘little cold at present, and you speak of rheu-  
matism about the head and shoulders. Your  
frost is not quite out, I suppose that the earth  
itself has a little cold and rheumatism about  
these times; but all these things together pro-  
duce a very fair general result. In a concert,  
you know, we must sing our parts fecbly some-  
times, that we may not injure the general effect.

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7.9] ‘TO HARRISON BLAKE, 857  
  
I should n’t wonder if my two-year-old invalidity  
hhad been a positively charming feature to some  
amatenrs favorably located. Why not a blasted  
‘man as well as a blasted tree, on your lawn?  
  
If you should happen not to see me by the  
train named, do not go again, but wait at home  
for me, or a note from yours,  
  
Hexey D. Tnorgav.  
  
0 HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Cowcouo, April 17,1857.  
  
‘Mr. Brake, —T returned from New Bedford  
night before last. I met Alcott there, and learned.  
from him that probably you had gone to Con-  
cord. I am very sorry that I missed you. I  
had expected you earlier, and at last thought  
that I should get back before you came; but I  
ought to have notified you of my absence. How-  
ever, it would have been too late, after I had  
made up my mind to go. I hope you lost no-  
thing by going a little round.  
  
T took out the celtis seeds at your request, at  
the time we spoke of them, and left them in the  
chamber on some shelf or other. If you have  
found them, very well; if you have not found  
them, very well; but tell Hale of it, if you see  
  
4 Rav. Bawand E. Hale, thon pastor at Worcester. Others  
aentioned in the leter aro Rev. David A. Wamon and Dr  
  
‘Seth Rogers, —the latter a physician with whom Mr. Wasson  
‘was Living in Worcester.

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858 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (861,  
  
him. My mother says that you and Brown and  
Rogers and Wasson (titles left behind) talk of  
coming down on me some day. Do not fail to  
come, one and all, and within a week or two, if  
possible; else I may be gone again. Give me  
a short notice, and then come and spend a day  
on Concord River, —or say that you will come  
if it is fair, unless you are confident of bringing  
fair weather with you. Come and be Concord,  
as I have been Worcestered.  
  
‘Perhaps you came nearer to me for not find-  
ing me at home; for trains of thought the more  
connect when trains of cars do not. If I had  
actually met you, you would have gone again;  
but now Ihave not yet dismissed you. I hear  
what you say about personal relations with joy.  
It is as if you had said, “I value the best and  
finest part of you, and not the worst. I can even  
endure your very near and real approach, and  
prefer it to a shake of the hand.” This inter-  
course is not subject to time or distance.  
  
T have a very long new and faithful letter  
from Cholmondeley, which I wish to show you.  
He speaks of sending me more books !!  
  
If I were with you now, I could tell you much  
of Ricketson, and my visit to New Bedford; but  
I do not know how it will be by and by. I  
should like to have you meet R., who is the  
frankest man I know. Alcott and he get along

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7.9] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 859  
  
very well together. Channing has returned to  
Concord with me,— probably for a short visit  
only.  
  
Consider this a business letter, which you  
know counts nothing in the game we play. Re-  
member me particularly to Brown.  
  
TO HARRION DLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcono, June 6, 1857, 9.1.  
  
‘Mn. Buaxe, —I have just got your note, but  
Tam sorry to say that this very morning I sent  
a note to Channing, stating that I would go with  
him to Cape Cod next week on an excursion  
which we have been talking of for some time.  
If there were time to communicate with you, I  
should ask you to come to Concord on Monday,  
before I go; but as it is, I must wait till I come  
back, which I think will be about ten days hence.  
I do not like this delay, but there seems to be a  
fate in it. Perhaps Mr. Wasson will be well  
enough to come by that time. I will notify you  
of my return, and shall depend on seeing you  
all,  
  
June 23d. I returned from Cape Cod last  
evening, and now take the first opportunity to  
invite you men of Worcester to this quiet Med-  
iterranean shore. Can you come this week on  
Friday, or next Monday? I mention the earli-  
‘est days on which I suppose you can be ready.

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860 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1881,  
  
If more convenient, name some other time within  
ten days. I shall be rejoiced to see you, and to  
act the part of skipper in the contemplated  
  
voyage. I have just got another letter from  
Cholmondeley, which may interest you some-  
what.  
  
‘TO MARSTON WATSON (AT PLYMOUTH).  
Coxcond, Angust 17, 1857.  
  
Mz. Warsox,—I am much indebted to you  
for your glowing communication of July 20th.  
I had that very day left Concord for the wilds  
of Maine; but when I returned, August 8th, two  
‘out of the six worms remained nearly, if not  
quite, as bright as at first, Iwas assured. Tn  
their best estate they had excited the admira-  
tion of many of the inhabitants of Concord. Tt  
was a singular coincidence that I should find  
these worms awaiting me, for my mind was full  
‘of a phosphorescence which I had seen in the  
woods. I have waited to learn something more  
about them before acknowledging the receipt of  
them. I have frequently met with glow-worms  
in my night walks, but am not sure they were  
the same kind with these. Dr. Harris once de-  
seribed to me a larger kind than I had found,  
“nearly as big as your little finger;” but he  
does not name them in his report.  
  
‘The only authorities on Glow-worms which I

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2.40] TO MARSTON WATSON. 361  
  
chance to have (and I am pretty well provided),  
are Kirby and Spence (the fullest), Knapp  
(‘Journal of a Naturalist”), “The Library of  
Entertaining Knowledge” (Rennie), a French  
work, ete., ete.; but there is no minute, scientific  
description in any of these, This is apparently  
a female of the genus Lampyris ; but Kirby  
and Spence say that there are nearly two hun-  
dred species of this genus alone. ‘The one com-  
monly referred to by English writers is the  
Lampyria noctiluea ; but judging from Kirby  
and Spence’s description, and from the descrip-  
tion and plate in the French work, this is not  
that one, for, besides other differences, both say  
that the light proceeds from the abdomen. Per-  
haps the worms exhibited by Durkee (whose  
statement to the Boston Society of Natural His-  
tory, second July meeting, in the “Traveller”  
of August 12, 1857, I send you) were the same  
with these. I do not see how they could be the  
L. noctiluea, as he states.  
  
Texpect to go to Cambridge before long, and  
if T got any more light on this subject I will in-  
form you. ‘The two worms are still alive.  
  
T shall be glad to receive the Drosera at any  
time, if you chance to come across it. I am  
looking over Loudon’s “ Arboretum,” which we  
have added to our Library, and it occurs to  
me that it was written expressly for you, and

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362 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
that you cannot avoid placing it on your own  
shelves.  
  
T should have been glad to see the whale, and  
might perhaps have done so, if I had not at that  
time been seeing “ the elephant” (or moose) in  
the Maine woods. I have been associating for  
about a month with one Joseph Polis, the chief  
man of the Penobscot tribe of Indians, and  
have learned a great deal from him, which I  
should like to tell you sometime.  
  
To MARSTON WATSON (aT PLYMOUTH).  
Coxconn, April 25,1858  
  
Dear Sir,—Your unexpected gift of poar-  
trees reached me yesterday in good condition,  
and I spent the afternoon in giving them a good  
setting out; but I fear that this cold weather  
may hurt them. However, I am inclined to  
think they are insured, since you have looked on  
them. It makes one’s mouth water to read their  
names only. From what I hear of the extent of  
your bounty, if a reasonable part of the trees  
‘mneceed, this transplanting will make a new era  
for Concord to date from.  
  
Mine must be a lucky star, for day before  
yesterday I received @ box of Mayflowers from  
Brattleboro, and yesterday morning your pear-  
trees, and at evening a humming-bird’s nest from  
Worcester. ‘This looks like fairy housekeeping.

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x40] TO MARSTON WATSON. 863  
  
I discovered two new plants in Concord last  
winter, the Labrador Tea (Ledum latifolium),  
and Yew (Tamis baccata).  
  
By the way, in January I communicated with  
Dr. Durkee, whose report on Glow-worms I sent  
you, and it appeared, as I expected, that ho  
(and by his account, Agassiz, Gould, Jackson,  
and others to whom he showed them) did not  
consider them a distinct species, but a variety  
of the common, or Lampyris noctiluca, some of  
which you got in Lincoln. Durkes, at least, has  
never seen the last. I told him that I had no  
doubt about their being a distinct species. His,  
‘however, were luminous throughout every part  
of the body, as those which you sent me wero  
not, while I had them.  
  
Ts nature as full of vigor to your eyes as ever,  
or do you detect some falling off at last? Is the  
mystery of the hog’s bristle cleared up, and with  
it that of our life? Tt is the question, to the  
exclusion of every other interest.  
  
T am sorry to hear of the burning of your  
‘woods, but, thank Heaven, your great ponds and  
your sea cannot be burnt. I love to think of  
your warm, sandy wood-roads, and your breezy  
island out in the sea, What a prospect you can  
get every morning from the hilltop east of your  
house!? I think that even the heathen that I  
  
1 Marston Watson, whoee uncle, Edward Wataon, with hin

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864 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1881,  
  
am could say, or sing, or dance, morning prayers  
there of some kind.  
  
Please remember me to Mra. Wataon, and to  
the rest of your family who are helping the sun  
shine yonder.  
  
‘TO DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Coxconn, Augurt 18, 1857.  
  
Dear Srr,— Your Wilson Flagg? seems a  
  
serious person, and it is encouraging to hear  
  
nephews, owned the“ roory iland” whore Thoress had vi-  
Sted hin fiends (Clas Ilan the only one in Plymouth Bay),  
‘aad built his own Bouse, Hilade," onthe slope of oe of the  
Iills above Plymoath tows, and there laid out ine park and  
garden, which Thorean surveyed for him in tho autamn of  
154, Alcott and Mr. Watson carying the chain. For a do-  
scription of Hilde, we Channing's Wanderer (Benton, 1871)  
fad loots Sonncs and Canconts (Boston: Roberts, 1882).  
Te was a vila much visited by Emerson, Alcott, Channing,  
‘Thoreau, Gorge Bradford, and the Tramoendontaliss gener.  
ally. Me, Wats gradasted at Harvard two year ater Tho-  
reat, and in an old diary says: Tromenber Thoreat in tho  
calloge yard (1856) wih downcast choughtfal look intent, aa  
if he wore searching for something; alwaya in a groon com,  
—sgreen because the authorities required black, -  
in. letter ho sey: Thavo always heard te Maden in tho  
‘aut’ waa Mrs. Watson, —Mary Ruaell Watson, — and T sup-  
‘owe ther is no doubt of Tay be prejudind, but I havo  
Always thought it one of hia bert things, —and T have highly  
valued his Wines, I find in my Dial, No. 6, U havo writen six  
new stanzas in the margin of Frisnship, nd they are num-  
ered to show how they should run. I think Mx. Brown gave  
‘hem tomo.”  
  
1A writer on scenery and natural history, who ootlived

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7.40] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 365  
  
of @ contemporary who recognizes Nature so  
squarely, and selects such a theme as “ Barns.”  
(would rather Mount Auburn” were omit-  
ted.) But he is not alert enough. He wants  
stirring up with a pole. He should practice  
‘turning a series of somersets rapidly, or jump  
up and see how many times he ean strike his  
feet together before coming down. Let him  
make the earth tum round now the other way,  
and whet his wits on it, whichever way it goes,  
as on a grindstone; in short, see how many  
ideas he can entertain at once.  
  
His style, as I remember, is singularly vague  
(L refer to the book), and, before I got to the  
end of the sentences, I was off the track. If  
you indulge in long periods, you must be sure  
to have a snapper at the end. As for style of  
writing, if one has anything to say, it drops  
from him simply and directly, as a stone falls to  
the ground. There are no two ways about it,  
but down it comes, and he may stick in the  
points and stops wherever he can get a chance,  
New ideas come into this world somewhat like  
falling meteors, with a flash and an explosion,  
and perhaps somebody's castle-roof perforated.  
To try to polish the stone in its descent, to give  
it a peculiar turn, and make it whistle a tune,  
‘Thorean, and never forgave him for the remark about “tin  
sg up with a polo,” which really might have boon las graphic.

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366 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1851,  
  
perchance, would be of no use, if it were pos-  
sible. Your polished stuff turns out not to be  
meteoric, but of this earth. However, there is  
plenty of time, and Nature is an admirable  
schoolmistress.  
  
Speaking of correspondence, you ask me if I  
“cannot turn over a new leaf in that line.” I  
certainly could if I were to receive it but just  
then I looked up and saw that your page was  
dated “ May 10,” though mailed in August, and  
it occurred to mo that I had seen you since that  
date this year. Looking again, it appeared that  
your note was written in ’56!! However, it  
was a new leaf to me, and I turned it over with  
as much interest as if it had been written the  
day before. Perhaps you kept it so long in  
order that the manuscript and subject-matter  
might be more in keeping with the old-fashioned  
paper on which it was written.  
  
I traveled the length of Cape Cod on foot,  
soon after you were here, and, within a few days,  
have returned from the wilds of Maine, where  
T have made a journey of three hundred and  
twenty-five miles with a canoe and an Indian,  
and a single white companion, — Edward Hoar  
Esq., of this town, lately from California, —e  
‘traversing the headwaters of the Kennebec, Pe-  
nobscot, and St. John’s.  
  
Can't you extract any advantage out of that

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er. 40.] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 367  
  
depression of spirits you refer to? It suggests.  
to me cider-mills, wine-presses, ete., ote. All  
kinds of pressure or power should be used and  
made to turn some kind of machinery.  
  
Channing was just leaving Concord for Plym-  
outh when I arrived, but said he should be here  
again in two or three days.  
  
‘Please remember me to your family, and say  
that I have at length learned to sing Tom Bow-  
lin according to the notes.  
  
   
  
‘70 DANIEL RICKEISON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
  
Coxconn, September 9, 1857.  
Fare Rickersox, —I thank you for your  
ind invitation to visit you, but I have taken so  
many vacations this year, —at New Bedford,  
Cape Cod, and Maine,— that any more relaxa-  
tion — call it rather dissipation — will cover me  
with shame and disgrace. I have not earned  
what I have already enjoyed. As some heads  
cannot carry much wine, so it would seem that  
Tcannot bear so much society as you can. I  
~ have an immense appetite for solitude, like an  
infant for sleep, and if I don’t get enough of  
it this year, I shall ery all the next.  
  
‘My mother’s house is full at present ; but if it  
were not, I would have no right to invite you  
hither, while entertaining such designs as I have  
hinted at, However, if you care to storm the

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868 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1st,  
  
town, I will engage to take some afternoon  
walks with you, — retiring into profoundest aoli-  
tude the most sacred part of the day.  
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER),  
Coxconn, August 18 1857  
  
‘Mn. Braxe,—Fifteenthly. It seems to me  
that you need some absorbing pursuit. It does  
not matter much what it is, so it be honest.  
Such employment will be favorable to your de-  
velopment in more characteristic and important  
directions. You know there must be impulse  
‘enough for steerage way, though it be not to-  
‘ward your port, to prevent your drifting help-  
lessly on to rocks or shoals. Some sails are  
set for this purpose only. There is the lange  
fleet of scholars and men of science, for instance,  
always to be seen standing off and on every  
coast, and saved thus from running on to reefs,  
who will at last run into their proper haven, we  
trust.  
  
It is a pity you were not here with Brown and  
Wiley. I think that in this case, for a rarity,  
the more the merrier.  
  
‘You perceived that I did not entertain the  
idea of our going together to Maine on such an  
excursion as Thad planned. The more I thought  
of it, the more imprudent it appeared to me.  
I did think to have written to you before

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1.40] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 369  
  
going, though not to propose your going also;  
but I went at last very suddenly, and could only  
have written a business letter, if I had tried,  
when there was no business to be accomplished.  
I have now returned, and think I have had a  
quite profitable journey, chiefly from associating  
with an intelligent Indian. My companion,  
Edward Hoar, also found his account in it,  
though he suffered considerably from being  
obliged to carry unusual loads over wet and  
rough “carries,” —in one instance five miles  
through a swamp, where the water was fre-  
quently up to our knees, and the fallen timber  
higher than our heads. He went over the  
ground three times, not being able to carry all  
his load at once. ‘This prevented his ascending  
Ktaadn. Our best nights were those when it  
rained the hardest, on account of the mosquitoes.  
I speak of these things, which were not unex-  
pected, merely to account for my not inviting  
you.  
  
Having returned, I flatter myself that the  
world appears in some respects a little larger,  
and not, as usual, smaller and shallower, for  
having extended my range. I have made a  
short excursion into the new world which the In-  
dian dwells in, or is. He begins where we leave  
off. Tt is worth the while to detect. new facul-  
ties in man, —he is so much the more divine 5

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870 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (881,  
  
and anything that fairly excites our admiration  
expands us. ‘The Indian, who can find his way  
s0 wonderfully in the woods, possesses so much  
intelligence which the white man does not, —  
and it increases my own capacity, as well as  
faith, to observe it. I rejoice to find that intel-  
ligence flows in other channels than I knew. It  
redeems for me portions of what seemed bru-  
tish before.  
  
It is a great satisfaction to find that your  
oldest convictions are permanent. With re-  
gard to essentials, I have never had occasion  
to change my mind. The aspect of the world  
varies from year to year, as the landscape is  
differently clothed, but I find that the truth is  
still true,and I never regret any emphasis which  
it may have inspired. Ketaadn is there still, but  
much more surely my old conviction is there,  
resting with more than mountain breadth and  
weight on the world, the source still of fertiliz-  
ing streams, and affording glorious views from  
its summit, if I can get up to it again. As the  
mountains still stand on the plain, and far  
more unchangeable and permanent, — stand  
still grouped around, farther or nearer to my  
‘maturer eye, the ideas which I have entertained,  
—the everlasting teats from which wo draw our  
nourishment,

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0] 70 HARRISON BLAKE. 3mL  
  
110 HARRISON BEAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcono, November 19, 1857.  
  
Mr. Braxe,— You havo got the start again,  
Ie was I that owed you a letter or two, if I mis-  
take not.  
  
They make a great ado nowadays about hard  
times ;1 but I think that the community gener-  
ally, ministers and all, take a wrong view of the  
matter, though some of the ministers preaching  
according to a formula may pretend to take a  
right one. This general failure, both private  
and public, is rather oceasion for rejoicing, as  
reminding us whom we have at the helm, — that  
justice is always done. If our merchants did not  
moat of them fail, and the banks too, my faith in  
the old laws of the world would be staggered.  
‘The statement that ninety-six in a hundred doing  
such business surely break down is perhaps the  
sweetest fact that statistics have revealed, —ex-  
hilarating as the fragrance of sallows in spring.  
Does it not say somewhere, “ The Lord reigneth,  
let the earth rejoice”? If thousands are thrown  
out of employment, it suggests that they were  
not well employed. Why don’t they take the  
hint? It is not enough to be industrious ; s0 are  
the ants, What are you industrious about?  
  
‘The merchants and company have long laughed  
  
4 The panie of 1857, — the worst since 1857.

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872 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 181,  
  
at transcondentalism, higher laws, ete., crying,  
“None of your moonshine,” as if they were an-  
chored to something not only definite, but sure  
and permanent. If there was any institution  
which was presumed to rest on asolid and secure  
basis, and more than any other represented this  
Doasted common sense, prudence, and practical  
talent, it was the bank ; and now those very banks  
are found to be mere reeds shaken by the wind.  
Scarcely one in the Iand has kept its promise,  
Tt would seem as if you only need live forty years  
in any age of this world, to see its most promis-  
ing government become the government of Kan-  
sas,and banks nowhere. Not merely the Brook  
Farm and Fourierite communities, but now the  
community generally has failed. But there is  
the moonshine still, serene, beneficent, and un-  
changed. Hard times, I say, have this value,  
among others, that they show us what such prom-  
{ses are worth, — where the sure banks are. I  
heard some merchant praised the other day be-  
cause he had paid some of his debts, though it  
took nearly all he had (why, I’ve done as much  
as that myself many times, and a little more),  
and then gone to board. What if he has? I  
hope he’s got a good boarding-place, and can  
pay for it, It’s not everybody that can, How-  
ever, in my opinion, it is cheaper to keep house,  
—i. ¢., if you don’t keep too big a one.

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1.40) TO HARRISON BLAKE. 3878  
  
‘Men will tell you sometimes that “money ’s  
hard.” ‘That shows it was not made to eat, I  
say. Only think of a man in this new world, in  
his log cabin, in the midst of a corn and potato  
patch, with a sheepfold on one side, talking about  
money being hard! So are flints hard; there is  
no alloy in them. What has that to do with his  
raising his food, cutting his wood (or breaking  
it), keoping indoors when it rains, and, if need  
be, spinning and weaving his clothes? Some of  
those who sank with the steamer the other day  
found out that money was heavy too. ‘Think of  
‘a man’s priding himself on this kind of wealth,  
as if it greatly enriched him. As if one strug-  
gling in mid-ocean with a bag of gold on his  
back should gasp out, “I am worth a hundred  
thousand dollars.” I'see them straggling just  
as ineffectually on dry land, nay, even more  
hopelessly, for, in the former case, rather than  
sink, they will finally lot the bag go; but in the  
latter they are pretty sure to hold and go down  
with it. I see them swimming about in their  
great-coats, collecting their rents, really getting  
their dues, drinking bitter draughts which only  
increase their thirst, becoming more and more  
water-logged, till finally they sink plumb down  
to the bottom. But enough of this.  
  
Have you ever read Ruskin’s books? If not,  
I would recommend you to try the second and

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814 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (x8,  
  
third volumes (not parts) of his“ Modern Paint-  
ers.” I am now reading the fourth, and have  
read most of his other books lately. ‘They are  
singularly good and encouraging, though not  
without erudeness and bigotry. ‘The themes in  
the volumes referred to are Infinity, Beauty,  
Imagination, Love of Nature, ete.,—all treated  
ina very living manner. I am rather surprised  
by them. It is remarkable that these things  
should be said with reference to painting chiefly,  
rather than literature, ‘The “Seven Lamps of  
Architecture,” too, is made of good stuff; but,  
‘as I remember, there is too much about art in it  
for me and the Hottentots. We want to know  
about matters and things in general. Our house  
is as yet a hut.  
  
‘You must have beon enriched by your solitary  
walk over the mountains, I suppose that I feel  
the same awe when on their summits that many  
do on entering a church. To see what kind of  
earth that is on which you have a house and gar-  
den somewhere, perchance! It is equal to the  
lapse of many years, You must ascend a moun-  
tain to learn your relation to matter, and so to  
your own body, for it is at home there, though  
you are not. It might have been composed  
there, and will have no farther to go to return  
to dust there, than in your garden; but your  
spirit inevitably comes away, and brings your

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2.40.) TO HARRISON BLAKE. 815  
  
body with it, if it lives. Just as awful really,  
and as glorious, is your garden. See how I can  
play with my fingers! ‘They are the funniest  
companions I have ever found. Where did they  
come from? What strange control I have over  
them! TWhoamI? What are they?— those  
little peaks — call them Madison, Jefferson, La-  
fayette. What is the matter? My fingers ten,  
Tay. Why, erelong, they may form the top-  
most crystal of Mount Washington. I go up  
there to see my body’s cousins. ‘There are some  
fingers, toes, bowels, ete., that I take an interest  
in, and therefore I am interested in all their  
relations.  
  
‘Let me suggest a theme for you: to state to  
yourself precisely and completely what that walle  
over the mountains amounted to for you, —re-  
‘turning to this essay again and again, until you  
are satisfied that all that was important in your  
experience is in it. Give this good reason to  
yourself for having gone over the mountains, for  
mankind is ever going over a mountain. Don’t  
suppose that you can tell it precisely the first  
dozen times you try, but at ’em again, especially  
when, after a sufficient pause, you suspect that  
you are touching the heart or summit of the mat-  
ter, reiterate your blows there, and account for  
the mountain to yourself. Not that the story  
need be long, but it will take a long while to

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816 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. [1881,  
  
make it short. It did not take very long to get  
over the mountain, you thought; but have you  
got over it indeed? If you have been to the top  
of Mount Washington, let me ask, what did you  
find there? ‘That is the way they prove wit-  
nesses, you know. Going up there and being  
blown on is nothing. We never do much climb-  
ing while we are there, but we eat our luncheon,  
ete. very much as at home. It is after we get  
hhome that we really go over the mountain, if ever.  
‘What did the mountain say? What did the  
mountain do?  
  
T keep a mountain anchored off eastward a lit.  
tle way, which I ascend in my dreams both awake  
and asleep. Its broad base spreads over a vil-  
lage or two, which do not know it; neither does  
it know them, nor do I when I ascend it. I can  
see its general outline as plainly now in my mind  
as that of Wachusett. I do not invent in the  
least, but state exactly what I see. I find that  
I go up it when I am light-footed and earnest.  
Tt ever smokes like an altar with its sacrifice. I  
am not aware that a single villager frequents it  
or knows of it. I keep this mountain to ride  
instead of a horse.  
  
‘Do you not mistake about seeing Moosehead  
Lake from Mount Washington? That must be  
about one hundred and twenty miles distant, or  
nearly twice av far as the Atlantic, which Inst

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#240] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 3IT  
some doubt if they can see thence. Was it not  
  
Umbagog?  
  
‘Dr. Solger! has been lecturing in the vestry  
in this town on Geography, to Sanborn’ schol-  
ars, for several months past, at five P. at, Emer-  
on and Aleott have been to hear him. I was  
surprised when the former asked me, the other  
day, if T was not going to hear Dr. Solger. What,  
to be sitting in a meeting-house cellar at that time  
of day, when you might possibly be outdoors!  
T never thought of such a thing, What was  
the sun made for? If he does not prize day-  
light, Ido, Let him lecture to owls and dor-  
mice. He must be a wonderful lecturer indeed  
who can keep me indoors at such an hour,  
when the night is coming in which no man can  
walk,  
  
Are you in want of amusement nowadays?  
Then playa little at the game of getting a living.  
‘There never was anything equal to it, Do it  
temperately, though, and don’t sweat. Don't let  
this secret out, for I have a design against the  
  
   
  
1 Reinhold Solger, Ph. D—a very intellotaal and well-  
taught Prussian, who was one of the lecturer for @ year or two  
‘at my “ Concord School,” the enceassor of tho Concord Acad-  
my,” in which the children of the Emerton, Alcott, Haw-  
thorne, Hoar, and Ripley families were taught, At this date  
the lectures were given in the vestry of the parish church,  
which Thoreau playfully tormed ‘a meeting-house cella.” Tt  
was there that Louisa Aleott acted plays.

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818 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (801,  
  
Opera. Orxra!! Pass along the exclamations,  
devil?  
  
Now is the time to become conversant with  
your wood-pile (this comes under Work for the  
Month), and be sure you put some warmth into  
it by your mode of getting it. Do not consent  
to be passively warmed. An intense degree of  
that is the hotness that is threatened. But 2  
positive warmth within can withstand the fiery  
furnace, as the vital heat of a living man can  
withstand the heat that cooks meat,  
  
After returning from the last of his three ex-  
editions’ to the Maine woods (in 1846, 1853,  
and 1857), Thorean was appealed to by his  
friend Higginson, then living in Woreester, for  
information concerning a proposed excursion  
from Woreester into Maine and Canada, then  
ut little visited by tourists, who now go there  
in droves. He replied in this long letter, with  
its minute instructions and historical references.  
‘The Arnold mentioned is General Benedict Ar-  
nold, who in 1775-76 made a toilsome march  
through the Maine forest with a small New Eng-  
land army for the conquest of Canada, while  
young John Thoreau, Henry's grandfather, was  
establishing himself as a merchant in Boston  
(not yot evacuated by British troops), previous  
to his marriage with Jane Burns,  
  
2 Hxclamation points and printer's devil.

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1.40.) 70 T. W. HIGGINSON. 379  
  
TOT. W. MIGGINGON (AT WORCESTER).  
  
Coxconn, January 28, 1858.  
  
Dear St, — It would be perfectly practicn-  
ble to go to the Madawaska the way you pro-  
pose. As for the route to Quebec, I do not find  
the Sugar Loaf Mountains on my maps. The  
most direct and regular way, a8 you know, is  
substantially Montresor’s and Arnold’s and the  
younger John Smith’s— by the Chauditre; but  
this is less wild. If your object is to see the St.  
Lawrence River helow Quebec, you will proba-  
bly strike it at the Rivitre du Loup. (Vide  
‘Hodge's account of his excursion thither via the  
Allegash, —I believe it is in the second Report  
on the Geology of the Public Lands of Maine  
and Massachusetts in ’37.) I think that our  
Indian last summer, when we talked of going to  
the St. Lawrence, named another route, near the  
‘Madawaska, — perhaps the St. Francis, — which  
would save the long portage which Hodge made.  
  
I do not know whether you think of ascend-  
ing the St. Lawrence in a canoe; but if you  
should, you might be delayed not only by the  
current, but by the waves, which frequently run  
too high for a canoe on such a mighty stream.  
Tt would be a grand excursion to go to Quebee  
by the Chanditre, descend the St. Lawrence to  
the Riviére du Loup, and return by the Mada

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880 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
waska and St. John’s to Frederickton, or far  
ther,—almost all the way down stream—a very  
important consideration.  
  
went to Moosehead in company with a party  
of four who were going achunting down the Alle-  
gash and St. John’s, and thence by some other  
stream over into the Restigouche, and down that  
to the Bay of Chaleur, —to be gone six weeks.  
Onur northem terminus was an island in Heron  
Lake on the Allegash. (Vide Colton’s railroad  
and township map of Maine.)  
  
‘The Indian proposed that we should return to  
Bangor by the St. John’s and Great Schoodie  
Lake, which we had thought of ourselves; and  
he showed us on the map where we should be  
each night. It was then noon, and the next day  
night, continuing down the Allogash, we should  
have been at the Madawaska settlements, having  
made only one or two portages; and thereafter,  
on the St. John’s there would be but one or two  
‘more falls, with short carries; and if there was  
not too much wind, we eould go down that  
stream one hundred miles a day. It is settled  
all the way below Madawaska, He knew the  
route well. He even said that this was easier,  
and would take but little more time, though  
much farther, than the route we decided on, —  
ie,by Webster Stream, the East Branch, and  
main Penobscot to Oldtown; but he may have

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a. 40.) 70 T. W. HIGGINSON. 381  
  
wanted a longer job. We preferred the latter,  
not only because it was shorter, but because, as  
ho said, it was wilder.  
  
‘We went about three hundred and twenty-five  
miles with the canoe (including sixty miles of  
stage between Bangor and Oldtown); were out  
twelve nights, and spent about $40 apicce, —  
which was more than was necessary. We paid  
the Indian, who was a very good one, $1.50 per  
day and 50 cents a week for his eanoe. This is  
enough in ordinary seasons. I had formerly  
paid 82 for an Indian and for white batteau-  
men.  
  
Tf you go to Madawaska ina leisurely man-  
ner, supposing no delay on account of rain or  
the violence of the wind, you may reach Mt.  
Kineo by noon, and have the afternoon to ex-  
plore it. The next day you may get to the head  
of the lake before noon, make the portage of  
two and a half miles over a wooden railroad, and  
drop down the Penobscot half a dozen miles.  
‘The third morning you will perhaps walk half a  
mile about Pine Stream Falls, while the Indian  
runs down, —cross the head of Chesuncook,  
each the junction of the Caucomgomock and  
Umbazookskus by noon, and ascend the latter  
to Umbazookskus Lake that night. If it is low  
water, you may have to walk and carry a little  
on the Umbazookskus before entering the lake.

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882 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (188,  
  
‘The fourth morning you will make the carry of  
two miles to Mud Pond (Allegash Water), — and  
a very wet carry it is, —and reach Chamberlain  
Lake by noon, and Heron Lake, perhaps, that,  
night, after a couple of very short carries at the  
outlet of Chamberlain. At the end of two days  
more you will probably be at Madawaska. Of  
course the Indian can paddle twice as far in a  
day as he commonly does.  
  
Perhaps you would like a few more details.  
‘We used (three of us) exactly twenty-six pounds  
of hard bread, fourteen pounds of pork, three  
pounds of coffee, twelve pounds of sugar (and  
could have used more), besides a little tea, In-  
dian meal, and rice, — and plenty of berries and  
moose-meat. This was faring very luxuriously.  
T had not formerly carried coffee, sugar, or rice.  
But for solid food, I decide that it is not worth  
the while to carry anything but hard bread and  
pork, whatever your tastes and habits may be.  
‘These wear best, and you have no time nor  
dishes in which to cook anything else, Of  
course you will take a little Indian meal to fry  
fish in; and half a dozen lemons also, if you  
have sugar, will be very refreshing, —for the  
water is warm.!  
  
2 Channing says (Thoreau, p- 35): “Thorean made for  
himself a knapsack, with partitions for books and papers, —  
India-rubber cloth, strong. and large-spaced, — the common

Page-9890

a0] 70 T. W. HIGGINSON. 383  
  
To save time, the sugar, coffee, tea, salt, ete.  
should be in separate watertight bags, labeled,  
and tied with a leathern string; and all the pro-  
visions and blankets should be put into two  
large India-rubber bags, if you can find them  
watertight. Ours were not. A four-quart tin  
pail makes a good kettle for all purposes, and  
tin plates are portable and convenient. Don't  
forget an India-rubber knapsack, with a large  
flap, — plenty of dishcloths, old newspapers,  
strings, and twenty-five feet of strong cord. Of  
India-rubber clothing, the most you ean wear, if  
any, is a very light coat, —and that you cannot  
work in. I could be more particular, —but per-  
haps have been too much so already.  
  
Of his habits in mountain-climbing, Channing  
says:1 “He ascended such hills as Monadnoe  
by his own path; would lay down his map on  
the summit and draw a line to the point he pro-  
posed to visit below,— perhaps forty miles away  
on the landscape, and set off bravely to make the  
‘short-cut’ The lowland people wondered to  
  
‘knapancks being unspaced. After trying the merit of cocoa,  
  
coffee, water, and the like, tea was put down asthe fliity of  
  
‘8 walking travail,—ten plenty, strong, with enough augar,  
  
‘mado in a tin pint cup. He commended every party to carry  
  
‘a jank of heavy eako’ with plums in it, —having found by  
  
long experience that after toil it wan a capital refreshment”  
P Thoreau, the Poet-Natwralie, pp. 38-38,

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384 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
see him scaling the heights as if he had lost his  
way, or at his jumping over their cow-yard  
fences,—asking if he had fallen from the clouds,  
In awalk like this he always carried his um-  
brella; and on this Monadnoc trip, when about  
‘a mile from the station (in Troy, N. H.), a tor  
rent of rain came down; without the umbrella  
his books, blankets, maps, and provisions would  
all have been spoiled, or the morning lost by de-  
lay. On the mountain there being a thick, soak-  
ing fog, the first object was to camp and make  
tea. He spent five nights in camp, having built,  
another hut, to get varied views. Flowers, binds,  
lichens, and the rocks were carefully examined,  
all parts of the mountain were visited, and as  
accurate map as could be made by pocket com-  
pass was carefully sketched and drawn out, in  
the five days spent there,—with notes of the  
striking aerial phenomena, incidents of travel  
and natural history. ‘The outlook across the val-  
ley over to Wachusett, with its thunder-storms  
and battles in the cloud; the farmers’ back-  
yards in Jaffrey, where the family cotton can be  
seen bleaching on the grass, but no trace of the  
pigmy family; the dry, soft air all night, the  
lack of dew in the morning ; the want of water,  
—a pint being a good deal,— these, and similar  
things make up some part of such an excur-  
sion.”

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40] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 885  
  
Tho Monadnoc excursion above mentioned  
began June 8d, and continued three days. It  
inspired Thoreau to take a longer mountain  
tour with his neighbor and friend, Edward  
Hoar, to which these letters relate, giving the  
ways and means of the journey, —a memorable  
one to all concerned.  
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxconn, June 2, 185, 84.  
‘Mn. Buaxe,— Edward Hoar and I propose  
to start for the White Mountains in a covered  
‘wagon, with one horse, on the morning of Thurs-  
day the 1st of July, intending to explore the  
monntain tops botanically, and camp on them  
at least several times. Will you take a seat in  
the wagon with us? Mz. Hoar prefers to hire  
the horse and wagon himself. Let us hear by  
‘express, as soon as you can, whether you will  
join us here by the earliest train Thursday  
‘morning, or Wednesday night. Bring your map  
of the mountains, and as much provision for the  
road as you can,—hard bread, sugar, tea, mest,  
etc.,— for we intend to live like gipsies ; also,  
a blanket and some thick clothes for the moun-  
tain top.  
  
July Ist. Last Monday evening Mr. Edward  
Hoar said that he thought of going to the White

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886 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. \_[1088,  
  
‘Mountains. I remarked casually that I should  
ike to go well enough if I could afford it  
‘Whereupon he declared that if I would go with  
him, he would hire a horse and wagon, #0 that  
the ride would cost me nothing, and we would  
explore the mountain tops bofanically, camping  
on them many nights. The next morning I  
suggested you and Brown’s accompanying us  
in another wagon, and we could all camp and  
cook, gipsy-like, along the way,—or, perhaps,  
if the horse could draw us, you would like to  
bear half the expense of the horse and wagon,  
and take a seat with us, He liked either propo-  
sition, but said, that if you would take a seat  
with us, he would prefer to hire the horse and  
wagon himself. You could contribute something  
else if you pleased. Supposing that Brown  
would be confined, I wrote to you accordingly,  
‘by express on Tuesday morning, via Boston,  
stating that we should start to-day, suggesting  
provision, thick clothes, ete., and asking for an  
answer; but I have not received one. I have  
just heard that you may be at Sterling, and now  
write to say that we shall still be glad if you  
will join us at Senter Harbor, where we expect  
to be next Monday moming. In any case, will  
you please direct a letter to us there at once?

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en] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 387  
  
120 DANIEL RIOKENON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Conconn, June 20, 1858  
  
Fru Rickersox,—I am on the point of  
starting for the White Mountains in a wagon  
with my neighbor Edward Hoar, and I write to  
you now rather to apologize for not writing, than  
‘to answer worthily your three notes. I thank  
you heartily for them. You will not care for a  
little delay in acknowledging them, since your  
date shows that you can afford to wait. Indeed,  
my head has been so full of company, ete., that  
Teould not reply to you fitly before, nor ean I  
now.  
  
As for preaching to men these days in the  
‘Walden strain, is it of any consequence to  
preach to an audience of men who can fail, or  
who can be revived? ‘There are few beside. Is  
it any success to interest these parties? If a  
man has speculated and failed, he will probably  
do these things again, in spite of you or me. I  
confess that it is rare that I rise to sentiment in  
my relations to men, — ordinarily to a mere pa-  
tient, or may bo wholesome, good-will. I can  
imagine something more, but the truth compels  
me to regard the ideal and the actual as two  
things.  
  
Channing has come, and as suddenly gone,  
and left a short poem, “Near Home,” pub-

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888 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. [1888  
  
lished (2) or printed by Munroe, which I have  
hardly had time to glance at. As you may  
guess, I learn nothing of you from him.  
  
‘You already foresee my answer to your invita-  
tion to make you a summer visit: I am bound  
for the mountains. But I trust that you have  
vanquished, ore this, those dusky demons that  
seem to lurk around the Head of the River.!  
You know that this warfare is nothing but a  
kind of nightmare, and it is our thoughts alone  
which give those unworthies any body or exist-  
ence. :  
  
I made an excursion with Blake, of Worces-  
ter, to Monadnoc, a few weeks since. We took  
our blankets and food, spent two nights on the  
mountain, and did not go into a house.  
  
‘Alcott: has been very busy for a long time re-  
pairing an old shell of a house, and I have seen  
very little of him? I have looked more at the  
houses which birds build: Watson made us all  
very generous presents from his nursery in the  
spring. Especially did he remember Aloott.  
  
Excuse me for not writing any more at pres-  
ent, and remember me to your family.  
  
1 Near which, at New Bedford, Mr. Ricketaon ied.  
  
2 This was the "Orchard Hose,” near Hawthorne's“ Way-  
side.” Tho eatate on which it stands, now owned by Dr. W.  
"T Haris, wan aurved for Mr. Alott by Thoreau in October,  
1887.

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zr4] WHITE MOUNTAIN TRIP. 889  
  
In July, 1858, as mentioned in this letter to  
Mr. Ricketson, Thoreau journeyed from Con-  
cord to the White Mountains, first visited with  
his brother John in 1889, His later companion  
was Edward Hoar, a botanist and lover of na-  
‘ture, who had been a magistrate in California,  
and in boyhood a comrade of Thoreau in shoot-  
ing excursions on the Concord meadows. ‘They  
journeyed in a wagon and Thoreau disliked the  
loss of independence in choice of camping-places  
involved in the care of a horse. He complained  
also of the magnificent inns (“mountain houses”)  
that had sprung up in the passes and on the  
plateaus since his first visit. Give me,” he  
said, “a spruce house made in the rain,” such  
as he and Channing afterward (1860) made on  
Monadnoe in his last trip to that mountain.  
‘The chief exploit in the White Mountain trip  
‘was a visit to Tuckerman’s Ravine on Mt. Wash-  
ington, of which Mr. Hoar, some years before  
his death (in 1893), gave me an account, con-  
taining the true anecdote of Thoreau’s finding  
the arnica plant when he needed it.  
  
On their way to this rather inaccessible chasm,  
‘Thoreau and his comrade went first to what  
was then but 2 small tavern on the “ tip-top”  
of Mt. Washington. It was a foggy day; and  
when the landlord was asked if he could furnish  
a guide to Tuckerman’s Ravine, he replied:

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890 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 888,  
  
“Yes, my brother is the guides but if he went  
to-day he could never find his way back in this  
fog.” “Well,” said Thoreau, “if we cannot  
have a guide we will find it ourselves; and he  
at once produced a map he had made the day  
before at-a roadside inn, where he had found a  
wall map of the mountain region, and climbed  
‘on a table to copy that portion he needed. With  
this map and his pocket-compass he “struck a  
beeline,” said Mr. Hoar, for the ravine, and soon  
‘came to it, about a mile away. ‘They went safely  
down the steep stairs into the chasm, where  
they found the midsummer iceberg they wished  
to see. But as they walked down the bed of the  
Peabody River, flowing from this ravine, over  
bowlders five or six feet high, the heavy packs on  
their shoulders weighed them down, and finally,  
‘Thoreau’s foot slipping, he fell and sprained his  
ankle, He rose, but had not limped five steps  
from the place where he fell, when he said, Here  
is the arnica, anyhow,” — reached out his hand  
and plucked the Arnica mollis, which he had  
not before found anywhere. Before reaching  
the mountains they had marked in their botany  
books forty-six species of plants they hoped to  
find there, and before they came away they had  
found forty-two of them.  
  
‘When they reached their camping-place, far-  
ther down, Thoreau was so lame he could not

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xx.41] WHITE MOUNTAIN TRIP. 391  
  
move about, and lay there in the camp several  
days, eating the pork and other supplies they  
‘had in their packs, Mr. Hoar going each day to  
the inn atthe mountain summit. ‘This eamp was  
in a thicket of dwarf firs at the foot of the ra-  
vine, where, just before his accident, by careless-  
ness in lighting a fire, some acres of the moun-  
tain woodland had been set on fires but this  
proved to be the signal for which Thoreau had  
told his Woreester friends to watch, if they  
wished to join him on the mountain. TI had  
told Blake,” sag Thoreau in his journal, “to  
look out for a smoke-gnd a white tent. We had  
made a smoke sure enough. We slept five in  
the tent that night, and found it quite warm.”  
‘Mr. Hoar added: “In this journey Thoreau  
insisted on our carrying heavy packs, and rather  
despised persons who complained of the bunten.  
‘He was chagrined, in the Maine woods, to find  
his Indian, Joe Polis (whom, on the whole, he  
admired), excited and tremulous at sight of a  
moose, 60 that he could scarcely load his gun  
properly. Joe, who was a good Catholic, wanted  
us to stop traveling on Sunday and hold a  
meeting ; and when we insisted on going for-  
ward, the Indian withdrew into the woods to  
say his prayers, —then came back and picked  
up the breakfast things, and we paddled on,  
‘As to Thoreau’s courage and manliness, nobody

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892 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. \_{188,  
  
who had seen him among the Penobscot rocks  
and rapids— the Indian trusting his life and  
hia canoe to Henry's skill, promptitude, and  
nerve — would ever doubt it.”  
  
Channing says:? “In his later journeys, if  
his companion was footsore or loitered, he stead-  
ily pursued his road. Once, when a follower was  
done up with headache and incapable of motion,  
hoping his associate would comfort him and per-  
haps afford him a sip of tea, he said, ‘There are  
people who are sick in that way every morning,  
and go about their affairs,’ and then marched off  
about his. In such limits, so inevitable, was he  
compacted. ... This tone of mind grew out of no  
insensibility ; or, if he sometimes looked coldly  
on the suffering of more tender natures, he  
sympathized with their afflictions, but could do  
nothing to admire them. He would not injure  
a plant unnecessarily. At the time of the John  
Brown tragedy, Thoreau was driven sick. So  
  
2 Channing's Thoreaw, pp. 8,8, 9. Channing himself was,  
no doubt the “follower” and "companion \* bere mentioned  
to peron ao frequently walked with ‘Thoreau in his long e2-  
carson. ‘They wore together in New Boston, N. HL, whon  
‘he miniter mentioned inthe Week reproved Thorean for not  
going to meeting on Sunday. When I frst lived in Conoord  
(Gare, 1855), and aaked the innkeeper what Sunday services  
the village bold, be replied: “There® the Orthodox, an’ the  
‘Unitarian, an’ th’ Walden Pond Association,” — meaning by  
the last what Emorson called the Walkera” — those who  
‘ambled inthe Walden woods on Sunday,

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x4] 70 DANIEL RICKETSON. 898  
  
the country’s misfortunes in the Union war acted  
on his feelings with great force: he used to say  
he ‘could never recover while the war lasted.’”  
Hawthome had an experience somewhat similar,  
though he, too, was of stern stuff when need was,  
and had much of the old Salem sea-captains in  
his sensitive nature.  
  
‘70 DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Coxcono, November 8, 1858.  
  
Furey Rickersox,—I was much pleased  
with your lively and lifelike account of your  
voyage. You wore more than repaid for your  
trouble after all. ‘The coast of Nova Scotia,  
which you sailed along from Windsor westward,  
is particularly interesting to the historian of this  
country, having been settled earlier than Plym-  
outh, Your “Isle of Haut” is properly “Isle  
Haute,” or the High Island of Champlain’s map.  
‘There is another off the coast of Maine. By the  
way, the American elk, of American authors  
(Cervus Canadensis), is a distinct animal from  
the moose (Cervus alees), though the latter is  
called elk by many.  
  
You drew a very vivid portrait of the Austra-  
Jian, — short and stout, with a pipe in his mouth,  
and his book inspired by beer, Pot First, Pot  
Second, ete. I suspect that he must. be pot-  
bellied withal. Methinks I see the smoke going

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894 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (188,  
  
‘up from him as from a cottage on the moor. If  
hhe does not quench his genius with his beer, it  
may burst into a clear flame at last. However,  
perhaps he intentionally adopts the low style.  
  
‘What do you mean by that ado about smoking,  
and my “purer tastes”? I should like his pipe  
as well as his beer, at least. Neither of them is  
s0 bad as to be “highly connected,” which you  
say he is, unfortunately. No! I expect no-  
thing but pleasure in “ smoke from your pipe.”  
  
‘You and the Australian must have put your  
heads together when you concocted those titles,  
—with pipes in your mouths over a pot of beer.  
I suppose that your chapters are, Whiff the  
First, Whiff the Second, ete. But of course it  
is a more modest expression for “Fire from my  
Genius.”  
  
‘You must have been very busy since you came  
back, or before you sailed, to have brought out  
your History, of whose publication I had not  
heard. I suppose that I have read it in the  
“Mercury.” Yet I am curious to see how it  
ooks in a volume, with your name on the title-  
age.  
  
T am more curious still about the poems,  
Pray put some sketches into the book: your  
shanty for frontispiece; Arthur and Walton’s  
bost (if you can) running for Cuttyhunk in a  
tremendous gale; not forgetting “Be honest

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a4] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 395  
  
boys,” ete., near by; the Middleborough Ponds,  
with a certain island looming in the distance ;  
the Quaker meeting-house, and the Brady House,  
if you like; the villagers catching smelts with  
dip-nets in the twilight, at the Head of the  
River, ete., ete. Lot it be a local and villageous  
book as much as possible. Let some one make  
characteristic selection of mottoes from your  
shanty walls, and sprinkle them in an irregular  
manner, at all angles, over the flyleaves and  
margins, as a man stamps his name in a hurry ;  
and also canes, pipes, and jackknives, of all your  
patterns, about the frontispiece. I can think of  
plenty of devices for tail-pieces. Indeed, I should  
like to see a hairpillow, accurately drawn, for  
‘one; a cat, with a bell on, for another; the old  
horse, with his age printed in the hollow of his  
ack; half a cocoanut shell by a spring; a  
sheet of blotted paper ; a settle occupied by a  
settler at full length, ete., ete., ete. Call all the  
arta to your aid.  
  
Don’t wait for the Indian Summer, but bring  
it with you.  
  
P.S,—Let me ask a favor. Iam trying to  
write something about the autumnal tints, and  
I wish to know how much our trees differ from  
English and European ones in this respect.  
‘Will you observe, or learn for me, what English  
‘or European trees, if any, still retain their leaves

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896 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1888,  
  
in Mr, Amold’s garden (the gardener will sup-  
ply the true names); and also if the foliage of  
any (and what) European or foreign trees there  
have been brilliant the past month. If you will  
do this you will greatly oblige me. I return the  
newspaper with this,  
  
‘TO DANTEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
  
Coxoon, November 28, 1858,  
Frrexp Rickersoy,—I thank you for your  
“History.”? Though I have not yet read it  
again, I have looked far enough to see that I  
like the homeliness of it; that is, the good, old-  
fashioned way of writing, as if you actually lived  
where you wrote. A man’s interest in a single  
bluebird is worth more than a complete but dry  
list of the fauna and flora of a town. It is also  
a considerable advantage to be able to say at  
any time, “If R. is not here, here is his book.”  
Aleott being here, and inquiring after you  
(whom he has been expecting), I lent the book  
to him almost immediately. He talks of going  
‘West the latter part of this week. Channing is  
here again, as I am told, but I have not seen  
him.  
T thank you also for the account of the trees.  
  
1 OF Now Bedford, frat published in tho Mercury of that  
ty, while Channing was one of the editors, and afterwards in  
volume.

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at.) TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 3897  
  
Tt was to my purpose, and I hope you got some-  
thing out of it too. I suppose that the cold  
weather prevented your coming here. Suppose  
you try @ winter walk on skates, Please re-  
member me to your family.  
  
Late in November, 1858, Cholmondeley, who  
had not written for a year and six months, eud-  
denly notified Thoreaa from Montreal that he  
was in Canada, and would visit Concord the  
next week. Accordingly he arrived early in  
December, and urged his friend to go with him  
to the West Indies. John Thoreau, the father,  
was then in his last illness, and for that and  
other reasons Thoreau could not accept the in-  
vitation ; but he detained Cholmondeley in Con-  
cord some days, and took him to New Bedford,  
December 8th, having first written this note to  
‘Mr. Ricketson :—  
  
“Thomas Cholmondeley, my English ac-  
quaintance, is here, on his way to the West  
Indies. He wants to see New Bedford, a whal-  
ing town. I tell him I would like to introduce  
him to you there, — thinking more of his seeing  
you than New Bedford. So we propose to come  
your way to-morrow. Excuse this short notice,  
for the time is short, If on any account it is,  
  
. inconvenient to see us, you will treat us accord-  
  
ingly.”

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898 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. {88,  
  
Of this visit and his English visitor, Mr.  
Ricketson wrote in his journal the next day :  
“We were all much pleased with Mr.  
Cholmondeley. He is a tall spare man, thirty-  
five years of age, of fair and fresh complexion,  
‘blue eyes, light brown and fine hair, nose small  
and Roman, beard light and worn full, with a  
mustache. A man of fine culture and refinement  
of manners, educated at Oriel College, Oxford,  
of an old Cheshire family by his father, a clergy-  
man. He wore a black velvet sack coat, and  
lighter colored trousers,—a sort of genteel  
traveling suit ; perhaps a cap, but by no means  
a fashionable ‘castor.’ He reminded me of  
our dear friend, George William Curtis.” Few  
greater compliments could this diarist give than  
to compare a visitor to Curtis, the lamented.  
‘Mr. Cholmondeley left Concord for the South,  
going as far as to Virginia, in December and  
Tanuary ; then came back to Concord the 20th  
of January, 1859, and after a few days returned  
to Canada, and thence to England by way of  
Jamaica, He was in London when Theodore  
Parker reached there from Santa Cruz, in  
Tune, and ealled on him, with offers of service ;  
but does not seem to have heard of Parker's  
death till I wrote him in May, 1861. At my  
parting with him in Concord, he gave me money  
with which to buy grapes for the invalid father

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ari] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 399  
  
of Thoreau, —an instance of his constant. con-  
sideration for others; the Thoreaus hardly af.  
fording such luxuries as hothouse grapes for  
the sick. Sophia Thoreau, who perhaps was  
more appreciative of him than her more stoical  
brother, said after his death, “We have always  
had the truest regard for him, as a person of  
rare integrity, great benevolence, and the sin-  
cerest friendliness.” This well describes the  
man whose every-lay guise was literally set  
down by Mr. Ricketson,  
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Concono, January 1, 1850,  
‘Mr. Braxe,—TIt may interest you to hear  
that Cholmondeley has been this way again, via  
Montreal and Lake Huron, going to the West  
Indies, or rather to Weiss-nicht-wo, whither he  
‘urges me to accompany him. He is rather more  
demonstrative than before, and, on the whole,  
what would be called “a good fellow,” —is a  
man of principle, and quite reliable, but very  
peculiar. I have been to New Bedford with  
‘him, to show him a whaling town and Ricket-  
son. I was glad to hear that you had called on  
R. How did you like him? I suspect that  
‘you did not see one another fairly.  
Thave lately got back to that glorious society  
called Solitude, where we meet our friends con-

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400 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (180,  
  
tinually, and can imagine the outside world also  
to be peopled. Yet some of my acquaintance  
would fain hustle me into the almshouse for  
the sake of society, as if I were pining for that  
diet, when I seem to myself a most befriended  
‘man, and find constant employment. However,  
they do not believe @ word I say. ‘They have  
got a club, the handle of which is in the Parker  
House at Boston, and with this they beat me  
from time to time, expecting to make me tender  
‘or minced meat, so fit for a club to dine off.  
  
“ Hlerenln wih hin cl  
  
‘Tho Dragon did drab  
  
‘But More of More Hall,  
  
With nothing a al,  
  
He slew the Dragon of Wantley.”  
Ah! that More of More Hall knew what fair  
play was. Channing, who wrote to me about it  
‘once, brandishing the club vigorously (being set  
on by another, probably), says now, seriously,  
that he is sorry to find by my letters that I am  
“absorbed in politics,” and adds, begging my  
pardon for his plainness, \* Beware of an extrano-  
‘ous life!” and so he does his duty, and washes  
his hands of me. I tell him that it is as if he  
should say to the sloth, that fellow that creeps  
so slowly along a tree, and cries ai from time to  
time, “Beware of dancing!”  
  
‘The doctors are all agreed that I am suffer-

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rd] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 401  
  
ing for want of society. Was never a case like  
it, First, I did not know that I was suffering at  
all. Secondly, as an Irishman might say, I had  
thought it was indigestion of the society I got.  
‘As for the Parker House, I went there once,  
when the Club! was away, but I found it hard  
to see through the cigar smoke, and men were  
deposited about in chairs over the marble floor,  
as thick as logs of bacon in a smoke-house. It  
was all smoke, and no salt, Attic or other. ‘The  
only room in Boston which I visit with alacrity  
is the Gentlemen's Room at tho Fitchburg  
Depot, where I wait for tho cars, sometimes for  
two hours, in order to get out of town. Itis a  
paradise to the Parker House, for no smoking  
is allowed, and there is far more retirement.  
‘A large and respectable club of us hire it (Town  
and Country Club), and I am pretty sure to find  
  
2 The club with which Thoreaa here makes merry was tho  
Saturday Club, meeting at Parkers Hotel in Boston dhe last  
Setanlay in each month, of which Emerton, Agami, Longfel-  
low, Holmes, Lowel, Hoary James, and other mon of lettre  
‘rere member. "Thoteas, though invited, never seems to have  
sot with them, a» Chaming did, on one memorable ccason,  
last, described by Mr. Jame in a letter cited in the Me.  
noir of Bronson Alcat, who also occasionally dined with this  
lab. The conversation at Emersoa's next mentioned wat  
‘lao memorable forthe vigor with which Mins Mary meron,  
then eighty-four years old, rebuked Mr. James for what abo  
tought his dangerous Antinomian views concerning the moral  
law.

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402 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (188,  
  
some one there whose face is set the same way  
as my own.  
  
‘My last essay, on which I am still engaged, is  
called Autumnal Tints. I donot know how read-  
able (i. e., by me to others) it will be.  
  
T met Mr, James the other night at Emer.  
son's, at an Aleottian conversation, at which,  
however, Alcott did not talk much, being dis-  
tarbed by James's opposition. The latter is a  
hearty man enough, with whom you can differ  
very satisfactorily, on account of both his doc-  
trines and his good temper. He utters quasi  
philanthropic dogmas in a metaphysic dress;  
but they are for all practical purposes very  
erude. He charges society with all the crime  
‘committod, and praises the criminal for com-  
mitting it. But I think that all the remedies  
he suggests out of his head—for he goes no  
farther, hearty as he is—would leave us about  
where we are now. For, of course, it is not by  
a gift of turkeys on Thanksgiving Day that he  
proposes to convert the criminal, but by a true  
sympathy with each one, — with him, among the  
rest, who lyingly tells the world from the gal-  
lows that he has never been treated kindly by a  
single mortal since he was born. But it is not  
so easy a thing to sympathize with another,  
though you may have the best disposition to do  
it. There is Dobson over the hill. Have not

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aril] 70 HARRISON BLAKE. 403  
  
you and I and all the world been trying, ever  
‘ince he was born, to sympathize with him? (as  
doubiless he with us), and yet we have got no  
farther than to send him to the House of Cor-  
reetion once at least ; and he, on the other hand,  
as I hear, has sent us to another placo several  
times. This is the real state of things, as T un-  
derstand it, as least so far as James's remedies  
go. Weare now, alas! exercising what charity  
wo actually have, and new laws would not give  
us any more. But, perchance, we might make  
some improvements in the House of Correction.  
You and I are Dobson ; what will James do for  
us?  
  
Have you found at last in your wanderings a  
place where the solitude is sweet?  
  
‘What mountain are you camping on nowa-  
days? Though I had a good time at the moun-  
tains, I confess that the journey did not bear  
any fruit that I know of. I did not expect it  
would. ‘The mode of it was not simple and ad-  
venturous enough. You must first have made  
an infinite demand, and not unreasonably, but  
after a corresponding outlay, have an all-absorb-  
ing purpose, and at the same time that your feet  
bear you hither and thither, travel much more  
in imagination.  
  
To let the mountains slide,—live at home  
like a traveler. It should not be in vain that

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404 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 180  
  
these things are shown us from day to day. Is  
not each withered leaf that I see in my walks  
something which I have traveled to find? —  
traveled, who can tell how far? What a fool  
hhe must be who thinks that his El Dorado is  
anywhere but where he lives!  
  
‘We are always, methinks, in some kind of  
ravine, though our bodies may walk the smooth  
streets of Worcester. Our souls (I use this  
word for want of a better) are ever perched  
‘on its rocky sides, overlooking that lowland.  
(What a more than Tuckerman’s Ravine is the  
body itself, in which. the “ soul” is encamped,  
when you come to look into it! However,  
eagles always have chosen such places for their  
eyries.)  
  
Thus is it ever with your fair cities of the  
plain. ‘Their atreots may be paved with silver  
and gold, and six carriages roll abreast in them,  
but the real homes of the citizens are in the  
‘Tuckerman’s Ravines which ray out from that  
centre into the mountains round about, one for  
each man, woman, and child. ‘The masters of  
life have s0 ordered it. That is their beaw-ideal  
of a country seat, ‘There is no danger of being  
tuckered out before you get to it,  
  
So we live in Worcester and in Concord, each  
man taking his exercise regularly in his ravine,  
like a lion in his cage, and sometimes spraining

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=r4] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 405  
  
his ankle there. We have very few clear days,  
and a great many small plagues which keep us  
busy. Sometimes, I suppose, you hear a neigh-  
bor halloo (Brown, may be) and think it is a  
bear. Nevertheless, on the whole, we think it  
very grand and exhilarating, this ravine life.  
It is a capital advantago withal, living so high,  
the excellent drainage of that city of God. Rou-  
tine is but a shallow and insignificant sort of  
raving, such as the ruts are, the conduits of pud-  
les. But these ravines are the source of mighty  
streams, -precipitous, icy, savage, as they are,  
haunted by bears and loup-cerviers; there are  
born not only Sacos and Amazons, but prophets  
who will redeem the world. ‘The at last smooth  
and fertilizing water at which nations drink and  
navies supply themselves begins with melted  
glaciers, and burst thunder-spouts. Let us pray  
that, if we are not flowing through some Mis-  
sissippi valley which we fertilize, — and it is not  
likely we are, —we may know ourselves shut in  
between grim and mighty mountain walls amid  
the clouds, falling a thousand foot in a mile,  
through dwarfed fir and spruce, over the rocky  
insteps of slides, being exercised in our minds,  
and so developed.  
Conoonn, January 19,1850,  
  
‘Mr. Biaxe,—If I could have given a favor-  
  
able report as to the skating, I should have an-

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406 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (188,  
  
swered you earlier, About a week before you  
wrote there was good skating ; there is now none,  
‘As for the lecture, I shall be glad to come. I  
cannot now say when, but I will let you know, I  
think within a week or ton days at most, and will  
then leave you a week clear to make the arrange-  
ments in, Iwill bring something else than “ What  
shall it profit a Man?” My father is very sick,  
and has been for a long time, so that there is  
the more need of me at home. This oocurs to  
me, even when contemplating so short an excur-  
sion as to Worcester. \*  
  
I want very much to see or hear your ac-  
count of your adventures in the Ravine,! and I  
trust I shall do so when I come to Worcester.  
Cholmondeley has been here again, returning  
from Virginia (for he went no farther south) to  
Canada; and will go thence to Europe, he  
thinks, in the spring, and neverramble any more.  
January 29.) I am expecting daily that my  
father will die, therefore I cannot leave home at  
present. I will write you again within ten days.  
  
‘The death of John Thoreau (who was born  
October 8, 1787) occurred February 8d, and  
‘Thoreau gave his lecture on “ Autumnal Tints”  
at Worcester, February 22, 1859. Mrs. Tho-  
  
2 ‘Thin wan Tuckerman's Raving at the White Mountain,  
where Thoreaa met with his mishap in the preceding Jaly.

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2x41] T0 DANIEL RICKETSON. 407  
  
reau survived all her children except Sophia,  
and died in 1872, In a letter to Mr. Ricketson,  
‘Thoreau gave a just sketch of his father’s char-  
acter.  
  
‘TO DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Coxconn, 12h Febreary, 1850.  
  
Frtenp Rrcxerson, —I thank you for your  
Kind letter. I sent you the notice of my father’s  
death as much because you knew him as because  
you knew me. I can hardly realize that he is  
dead. He had been sick about two years, and  
at last declined rather rapidly, though steadily.  
‘Till within a week or ten days before he died he  
was hoping to see another spring, but he then  
discovered that this was a vain expectation, and,  
thinking that he was dying, he took his leave of  
us several times within a week before his depar-  
ture. Once or twice he expressed a slight impa-  
tience at the delay. He was quite conscious to  
the last, and his death was so easy that, though  
we had all been sitting around the bed for an  
hour or more expecting that event (as we had  
sat before), he was gone at last, almost before  
we were aware of it.  
  
I am glad to read what you say of his social  
nature. I think I may say that he was wholly  
unpretending; and there was this peculiarity in  
his aim, that though he had pecuniary difficul-

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408 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1880,  
  
ties to contend with the greater part of his life,  
he always studied how to make a good article,  
pencil or other (for he practiced various arts),  
and was never satisfied with what he had pro-  
duced. Nor was he ever disposed in the least to  
put off a poor one for the sake of pecuniary gain,  
—a0 if he labored for a higher end.  
  
‘Though he was not very old, and was not a  
native of Concord, I think that he was, on the  
whole, more identified with Concord street than  
any man now alive, having come here when he  
was about twelve years old, and set up for him-  
self as a merchant here, at the ago of twenty-one,  
fifty years ago. As I sat in a circle the other  
evening with my mother and sister, my mother’s  
two sisters, and my father’s two sisters, it oc-  
curred to me that my father, though seventy-one,  
belonged to the youngest four of the eight who  
recently composed our family.  
  
How swiftly at last, but unnoticed, a genera-  
tion passes away! ‘Three years ago I was called  
with my father to be a witness to the signing  
of our neighbor Mr. Frost’s will. Mr. Samuel  
Hoar, who was there writing it, also signed it.  
I was lately required to go to Cambridge to tes-  
tify to the genuineness of the will, being the only  
cone of the four who could be there, and now I  
am the only one alive.  
  
My mother and sister thank you heartily

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1.42] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 409  
  
for your sympathy. The latter, in particular,  
agrees with you in thinking that it is communion  
with still living and healthy nature alone which  
ccan restore to sane and cheerful views. I thank  
you for your invitation to New Bedford, but I  
feel somewhat confined here for the present.  
  
T did not know but we should sce you the day  
after Alger was here. It is not too late for a  
winter walk in Concord, It does me good to  
hear of spring birds, and singing ones too, — for  
spring seems far away from Concord yet. I am  
going to Worcester to read a parlor lecture on  
the 22d, and shall see Blake and Brown. What  
if you were to meet me there, or go with me  
from here? You would see them to good advan-  
tage. Cholmondeley has been here again, after  
going as far south as Virginia, and left for Can-  
ada about three weeks ago. He is a good soul,  
and Lam afraid I did not sufficiently recognize  
him.  
  
Please remember me to Mrs. Ricketson, and  
to the rest of your family.  
  
70 HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Concorn, September 26, 1850.  
  
‘Mr. Braxe,—Iam not sure that Tam in a  
  
fit mood to write to you, for I feel and think  
  
rather too much like a business man, having  
  
some very irksonie affairs to attend to these

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410 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS, (1,  
  
months and years on account of my family.  
‘This is the way I am serving King Admetus,  
confound him! If it were not for my relations,  
I would let the wolves prey on his flocks to their  
bellies’ content. Such fellows you have to deal  
with! herdsmen of some other king, or of the  
same, who tell no tale, but in the sense of count-  
ing their flocks, and then lie drunk under a  
hedge. How is your grist ground? Not by  
some murmuring stream, while you lie dreaming  
on the bank; but, it seems, you must take hold  
with your hands, and shove the wheel round.  
You can’t depend on streams, poor feeble things!  
You can't depend on worlds, left. to themselves ;  
but you've got to oil them and goad them along.  
In short, you've got to carry on two farms at  
‘once, — the farm on the earth and the farm in  
your mind. ‘Those Crimean and Italian battles  
were mere boys’ play, — they are the scrapes  
into which truants get. But what a battle a  
man must fight everywhere to maintain his  
standing army of thoughts, and march with them  
in orderly array through the always hostile coun-  
  
1} He was looking after the manufaetare of fine plambago  
for th clectrotypers, which was the family business after pen-  
‘ilmaking grew unprofitable. ‘Tho Thoreaus had a grinding  
‘ill in Acton, and a packing’ shop attached to their Concord  
house. “Parker's sociaty,” mentioned at the close of the let-  
tar, was the congregation of ‘Theodore Parker, then in Italy,  
‘where he died in May, 1800.

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31.2] 10 HARRISON BLAKE. att  
  
try! How many enemies there are to sane  
thinking! Every soldier has suecumbed to them  
before he enlists for those other battles. Men  
may sit in chambers, seemingly safe and sound,  
and yet despair, and turn out at last only hol-  
lowness and dust within, like a Dead Sea apple.  
‘A standing army of numerous, brave, and well-  
isciplined thoughts, and you at the head of  
them, marching straight to your goal, — how to  
bring this about is the problem, and Scott's Tac-  
tics will not help you to it. Think of a poor  
fellow begirt only with a sword-belt, and no such  
staff of athletic thoughts ! his brains rattling as  
he walks and talks! These are your pretorian  
guard. It is easy enough to maintain a family,  
or a state, but it is hard to maintain these chil-  
dren of your brain (or say, rather, these guests  
that trust to enjoy your hospitality), they make  
such great demands; and yet, he who does only  
the former, and loses the power to think origi-  
nally, or as only he ever can, fails miserably.  
Keep up the fires of thought, and all will go  
well,  
  
Zouaves?— pish! How you can overrun a  
country, climb any rampart, and carry any for-  
tress, with an army of alert thoughts! — thoughts  
that send their bullets home to heaven's door, —  
with which you can take the whole world, with-  
‘out paying for it, or robbing anybody. See, the

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412 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
conquering hero comes! You fail in your  
thoughts, or you prevail in your thoughts only.  
Provided you think well, the heavens falling, or  
the earth gaping, will be musie for you to march  
by. No foe can ever see you, or you him; you  
eannot sq much as think of him, Swords have  
no edges, bullets no penetration, for such a con  
test. In your mind must be a liquor which will  
dissolve the world whenever it is dropt in it.  
‘There is no universal solvent but this, and all  
things together cannot saturate it. It will hold  
the universe in solution, and yet be as translu-  
cent as ever. ‘The vast machine may indeed roll  
over our toes, and we not know it, but it would  
rebound and be staved to pieces like an empty  
barrel, if it should strike fair and square on the  
smallest and least angular of a man’s thoughts.  
  
‘You seem not to have taken Cape Cod the  
right way. I think that you should have perse-  
vered in walking on the beach and on the bank,  
even to the land’s end, however soft, and so, by  
long knocking at Ocean's gate, have gained ad-  
mittance at last,— better, if separately, and in  
a storm, not knowing where you would sleep by  
night, or eat by day. Then you should have  
given a day to the sand behind Provincetown,  
and ascended the hills there, and been blown on  
considerably. I hope that you like to remember  
the journey better than you did to make it.

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1.2] T0 HARRISON BLAKE. 413  
  
I have been confined at home all this year,  
but Lam not aware that I have grown any rus-  
tier than was to be expected. One while I ex-  
plored the bottom of the river pretty extensively.  
T have engaged to read a lecture to Parker's  
society on the 9th of October next.  
  
Tam off —a barberrying.  
  
TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Concond, October 81, 1850,  
Mr. Brake, —I spoke to my townsmen last  
evening on “ The Character of Captain, Brown,  
now in the clutches of the slaveholder.” I  
should like to speak to any company at Worces-  
ter who may wish to hear me; and will come if  
only my expenses are paid. I think we should  
express ourselves at once, while Brown is alive.  
‘The sooner the better. Perhaps Higginson may  
like to have a mosting. Wednesday evening  
would be a good time. The people here are  
deeply interested in the matter. Let me have  
an answer as soon as may be.  
P.8.—I may be engaged toward the end of  
the week.  
Hewry D. Taorgav.  
  
‘This address on John Brown was one of the  
first public utterances in favor of that hero; it  
was made up mainly from the entries in Tho-

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414° FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18%,  
  
reau’s journals, since I had introduced Brown to  
him, and he to Emerson, in March, 1857; and  
specially from those pages that Thoreau had  
written after the news of Brown's capture in  
‘Virginia had reached him. It was first given in  
the vestry of the old parish church in Concord  
(where, in 1774, the Provincial Congress of  
Massachusetts had met to prepare for armed  
resistance to British tyranny) ; was repeated at  
Woreester the same week, and before a great  
audience in Boston, the following Sunday, —  
after yhich it was published in the newspapers,  
and had a wide reading. Mr. Aleott in his  
diary mentions it under dato of Sunday, Octo-  
ber 80, thus: “Thoreau reads a paper on John  
Brown, his virtues, spirit, and deeds, this even-  
ing, and to the delight of his company, — the  
best that could be gathered at short notice, —  
and among them Emerson. (November 4.)  
‘Thoreau calls and reports about the reading of  
his lecture on Brown at Boston and Worcester.  
He has been the first to speak and celebrate the  
hhero’s courage and magnanimity ; it is these  
that he discerns and praises. The men have  
much in common, — the sturdy manliness,  
straightforwardness, and independence. (No-  
vember 5.) Ricketson from New Bedford ar-  
rives; he and Thoreau take supper with us.  
Thoreau talks frecly and enthusiastically about

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a1] 10 HARRISON BLAKE. 415  
  
Brown, — denouncing the Union, the President,  
the States, and Virginia particularly ; wishes  
to publish his late speech, and has seen Boston  
publishers, but failed to find any to print it for  
him.” It was soon after published, along with  
Emerson’s two speeches in favor of Brown, by  
a new Boston publishing house (Thayer & El-  
dridge), in a volume called, “ Echoes of Har  
per’s Ferry,” edited by the late James Redpath,  
Brown's frst biographer. In the following  
‘summer, Thoreau sent a second paper on Brown  
(written soon after his execution) to be read at  
‘@ commemoration of the martyr, beside his  
grave among the Adirondae Mountains. ‘This  
is mentioned in his letter to Sophia Thoreau,  
Tuly 8, 1860. He took an active part in arrang-  
ing for the funeral service in honor of Brown,  
at Concord, the day of his death, December 2,  
1859.  
  
   
  
To HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
  
Conconn, May 20, 1860.  
  
Mn. Buaxe,—I must endeavor to pay some  
‘of my debts to you. To begin where we left  
off, then.  
  
‘Tho presumption is that we are always the  
same; our opportunities, and Nature herself,  
fluctuating. Look at mankind. No great dif-  
ference between two, apparently; perhaps the

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416 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 1980,  
  
same height, and breadth, and weight; and yet,  
to the man who sits most east, this life is a  
weariness, routine, dust and ashes, and he  
drowns his imaginary cares (1) (a sort of fric-  
tion among his vital organs) in a bowl. But to  
the man who sits most west, his contemporary (!),  
it is a field for all noble endeavors, an elysium,  
the dwelling-place of heroes and demigods. ‘The  
former complains that he has a thousand affairs  
to attend to; but he does not realize that his  
affairs (though they may be a thousand) and he  
are one.  
  
‘Men and boys are learning all kinds of trades  
but how to make men of themselves. ‘They  
learn to make houses; but they are not so well  
housed, they are not so contented in their houses,  
as the woodchucks in their holes. What is  
the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable  
planet to put it on?—if you cannot tolerate  
the planet it is on? Grade the ground first. If  
aman believes and expects great things of him-  
self, it makes no odds where you put him, or  
what you show him (of course you cannot put  
him anywhere, nor show him anything), he will  
be surrounded by grandeur. He ‘is in the con.  
dition of a healthy and hungry man, who says  
to himself, — How sweet this crust is! If he  
despairs of himself, then Tophet is his dwell-  
ing-place, and he is in the condition of a sick

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=.) TO HARRISON BLAKE. 417  
  
man who is disgusted with the fruits of finest  
flavor.  
  
‘Whether he sleeps or wakes, — whether he  
runs or walks, — whether he uses a microscope  
or a telescope, or his naked eye, —a man never  
discovers anything, never overtakes anything,  
or leaves anything behind, but himself. “What-  
ever he says or does, he merely reports himself.  
IE he is in love, he loves ; if he is in heaven,  
he enjoys ; if ho is in hell, he suffers. It.is his  
condition that determines his locality.  
  
‘The principal, the only thing a man makes, is  
his condition of fate. ‘Though commonly he  
does not know it, nor put up a sign to this effect,  
“My own destiny made and mended here.”  
[Not yours.] He is a master-workman in the  
business. He works twenty-four hours a day at  
it, and gets it done. Whatever else he neglects  
‘or botches, no man was ever known to noglect  
this work. A great many pretend to make  
shoes chiefly, and would scout the idea that they  
make the hard times which they experience.  
  
Each reaching and aspiration is an instinet  
with which all nature consists and cobperates,  
and therefore it is not in vain. But alas! each  
relaxing and desperation is an instinet too. To  
be active, well, happy, implies rare courage. ‘To  
be ready to fight in a duel or a battle implies  
desperation, or that you hold your life cheap.

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418 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1880,  
  
If you take this life to be simply what old  
religious folks pretend (I mean the effete, gone  
to seed in a drought, mere human galls stung  
by the devil once), then all your joy and seren-  
ity is reduced to grinning and bearing it. The  
fact is, you have got to take the world on your  
shoulders like Atlas, and ‘put along” with it.  
You will do this for an idea’s sake, and your  
‘success will be in proportion to your devotion to  
ideas. It may make your back ache occasion-  
ally, but you will havo the satisfaction of hang-  
ing it or twirling it to suit yourself. Cowards  
suffer, heroes enjoy. After a long day's walk  
with it, pitch it into » hollow place, sit down  
and eat your luncheon. Unexpectedly, by some  
immortal thoughts, you will be compensated.  
‘The bank whereon you sit will be a fragrant and  
flowery one, and your world in the hollow a  
sleck and light gazelle.  
  
‘Where is the “unexplored land” but in our  
own untried enterprises? To an adventurous  
spirit any place — London, New York, Worces-  
ter, or his own yard— is “ unexplored land,”  
to seek which Fremont and Kane travel so far.  
To a sluggish and defeated spirit even the Great  
Basin and the Polaris are trivial places. If they  
can got there (and, indeed, they are there now),  
they will want to sleep, and give it up, just as  
they always do, ‘These are the regions of tho

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2.42] TO SOPHIA THOREAU. 419  
  
Known and of the Unknown. What is the use  
of going right over tho old track again? ‘There  
is an adder in the path which your own feet  
have worn. You must make tracks into the Un-  
known. ‘That is what you have your board and  
clothes for. Why do you ever mend your clothes,  
unless that, wearing them, you may mend your  
ways? Let us sing.  
  
   
  
0 SOPHIA THOREAU (AT CAMPTON, WN. H.).  
Coxconn, July 8, 1800  
  
Dear Sorura,—Mother reminds me that I  
must write to you, if only a few lines, though  
T have sprained my thumb, so that it is ques-  
tionable whether I can write legibly, if at all.  
T can't “bear on” much. What is worse, I  
believe that I have sprained my brain too— that  
is, it sympathizes with my thumb. But that is  
no excuse, I suppose, for writing a letter in such  
a case, is like sending a newspaper, only hint  
to let you know that “all is well,” — but my  
thumb,  
  
T hope that you begin to derive some benefit  
from that more mountainous air which you are  
breathing. Have you had a distinet view of the  
Franconia Notch Mountains (blue peaks in the  
northern horizon)? which I tola you you could  
get from the road in Campton, probably from  
some other points nearer. Such a view of the

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420 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
‘mountains is more memorable than any other,  
Have you been to Squam Lake or overlooked it?  
Ishould think that you could make an excursion  
to some mountain in that direction from which  
you could see the lake and mountains generally.  
Is there no friend of N. P, Rogers who can tell  
you where the ‘Tions” are?  
  
Of course I did not go to North Elba,’ but I  
sent some reminiscences of last fall. Ihear that  
John Brown, Jr., has now come to Boston for a  
few days. Mr. Sanborn’s case, it is said, will  
‘come on after some murder eases have been dis-  
posed of here,  
  
T have just been invited formally to be pres-  
ent at the annual pienie of Theodore Parker's  
society (that was), at Waverley, next Wednes-  
day, and to make some remarks. But that is  
wholly out of my line. I do not go to picnics,  
even in Concord, you know.  
  
Mother and Aunt Sophia rode to Acton in  
time yesterday. I suppose that you have heard  
that Mr. Hawthorne has come home. I went to  
meet him the other evening and found that he  
has not altered, except that he was looking quite  
  
1 Hl was invited to a gathering of John Brown's friends at  
  
reve inthe Adiondac woods. "Mr Sanborn’ case” wa  
  
tn indictment and civil suit against Slag Carlton fal. foran  
  
‘tempt to kidnap FB. Sanborn, who had refed to acoept  
  
the invitation of the Sonat at Washington to tty in the  
ohn Brow invetigaton.

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2.4] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 421  
  
brown after his voyage. He is as simple and  
childlike as ever.  
  
T believe that I have fairly scared the kittens  
away, at last, by my pretended fiereeness, which  
was. I will consider my thumb— and your  
eyes.  
  
Hewey.  
  
‘70 HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Coxcono, August 3, 1800,  
  
‘Mr. Buaxe,—TI some time ago asked Chan-  
ning if he would not spend a week with me on  
Monadnoc; but he did not answer decidedly.  
Lately he has talked of an excursion somewhere,  
but I said that now I must wait till my sister re-  
turned from Plymouth,N.H. She has returned,  
—and accordingly, on receiving your note this  
morning, I made known its contents to Chan-  
ning, in order to see how far I was engaged with  
him. The result is that he decides to go to  
‘Monadnoc to-morrow morning ;? so I must defer  
  
1 Thin is tho excursion described by Thorean ia aubeo-  
quent lotter, — Inning aix days, and tho fit that, Channing  
Ind mado which involved “camping out!” Tt-was also Tho-  
reau's lat visit to this favorite mountain; but Chansing con-  
tinned to go there aftr the death of his friend; and some of  
these visita azo recorded in his poor, “The Wanderer.” The  
last one waa in September, 1850, when I accompanied him,  
and we again spent Sve nights on the plateau where he had  
amped with Thoress. At that time, one of the“ two good  
spice houses, half a mile apart,” mentoned by hore,

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422 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
making an excursion with you and Brown to  
another season. Perhaps you will call as you  
pass the mountain, I send this by the earliest  
mail.  
  
P. S.—That was a very insufficient visit you  
made here the last time. My mother is better,  
though far from well ; and if you should chance  
along here any time after your journey, I trust  
that we shall all do better.  
  
‘The mention by Thorean of John Brown and  
my “case” recalls to me an incident of those  
excited days which followed the attack by Brown  
on slavery in Virginia. ‘The day after Brown’s  
death, but before the execution of his comrades,  
I received a message from the late Dr. David  
‘Thayer of Boston, implying, as I thought, that  
son of Brown was at his house, whither I  
hurried to meet him. Instead, I found young  
F. J. Merriam of Boston, who had escaped with  
Owen Brown from Harper's Ferry, and was  
  
‘was still standing, in ruins,— the place called by Channing  
“Hlenry's Camp,” and thus described : —  
  
   
  
‘Yon group of space tree, sidewie om the line  
‘Where the horton to the caward bound, —  
A pot sled by sagacoon at,  
‘Where allat once we viewed the Vermont hls,  
‘And the long outline of the moustaldge,  
$Brerrenwring, changetl every hou.  
  
Bee The Wanderer (Boston,  
  
   
  
Dy 6

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x1, 92] THOREAU AND FRANK MERRIAM, 423,  
  
now in Boston to raise another party against the  
slaveholders. He was unfit to lead or even join  
in such a desperate undertaking, and wo insisted  
he should retum to safety in Canada, —a large  
reward being offered for his seizure. He agreed  
to go back to Canada that night by the Fitch.  
‘burg Railroad ; but in his hotheaded way he took  
the wrong train, which ran no farther than Con-  
cord, —and found himself in the early evening  
at my house, where my sister received him, but  
insisted that I should not see him, lest I might  
bo questioned about my guost. While he bad  
supper and went to bed, I posted down to Mr.  
Emerson’s and engaged his horse and covered  
‘wagon, to be ready at sunrise, —he asking no  
questions. In the same way I engaged Mr.  
‘Thoreau to drive his friond’s horse to South  
Acton the next morning, and there put on board.  
the first Canadian train a Mr. Lockwood, whom  
he would find at my house, Thoreau readily  
consented, asked no questions, walked to the  
Emerson stable tho next morning, found the  
horse ready, drove him to my door, and took  
up Merriam, under the name of Lockwood,—  
neither knowing who the other was. Merriam  
was so flighty that, though he had agreed to go  
to Montreal, and knew that his life might de-  
pend on getting there early, he declared he must  
see Mr. Emerson, to lay before him his plan

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424 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 1980,  
  
for invading the South, and consult him about  
some moral questions that troubled his mind.  
His companion listenod gravely, —and hurried  
the horse towards Acton. Merriam grew more  
positive and suspicious, — “Perhaps you are  
Mr. Emerson; you look somewbat like him.”?  
“No, I am not,” said Thoreau, and drove steadily  
away from Concord.“ Well, then, I am going  
back,” said the youth, and flung himself out of  
the wagon. How Thorean got him in again, he  
never told me; but I suspected some judicious  
force, accompanying the grave persuasive speech  
natural to our friend. At any rate, he took his  
man to Acton, saw him safe on the train, and  
reported to me that “Mr. Lockwood had taken  
passage for Canada,” where he arrived that  
night. Nothing more passed between us until,  
more than two years after, he inquired one day,  
in his last illness, who my fugitive was. Mer-  
riam was then out of danger in that way, and  
had been for months a soldier in the Union  
army, where ho died. I therefore said that  
«Lockwood ” was the grandson of his mother’s  
old friend, Francis Jackson, and had escaped  
from Maryland. Tn return he gave me the odd  
incidents of their drive, and mentioned that he  
  
1 See Thoresn's Autumn, p. $31. Merriam mentioned Tho-  
eau's name to bim, but never gueaed who his companion

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wis] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 425  
  
had spoken of the affair to his mother only sineo  
his illness. So reticent and practically useful  
could he be; as Channing says, “He made no  
useless professions, never asked one of those  
questions which destroy all relation ; but he was  
on the spot at the time, he meant friendship,  
and meant nothing else, and stood by it with-  
out the slightest abatement.”  
  
To DANIRL RIOKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Coxcono, November 4, 1800.  
  
Frtexp Rickerson,—I thank you for the  
verses, They are quite too good to apply to me.  
However, I know what a poet’s license is, and  
will not get in the way.  
  
But what do you mean by that prose? Why  
will you waste so many regards on me, and not  
Jmow what to think of my silence? Infer from  
it what you might from the silence of a dense  
pine wood. It is its natural condition, except  
when the winds blow, and the jays seream, and  
the chickadeo winds up his clock. My silence is  
just as inhuman as that, and no more. You  
know that I never promised to correspond with  
you, and s0, when I do, I do more than I prom-  
ised.  
  
Such are my pursuits and habits, that T rarely  
go abroad; and it is quite a habit with me to  
decline invitations to do so, Not that I could

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426 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (186,  
  
not enjoy such visits, if I wore not otherwise  
occupied. I have enjoyed very much my vis-  
its to you, and my rides in your neighborhood,  
and am sorry that I cannot enjoy such things  
oftener; but life is short, and there are other  
things also to be done. I admit that you are  
‘more social than I am, and far more attentive  
to ‘the common courtesies of life ;”” but this is  
partly for the reason that you have fewer or less  
‘exacting private pursuits.  
  
Not to have written a note for a year is with  
me a very venial offense. I think that T do not  
correspond with any one so often as once in six  
‘months.  
  
T have a faint recollection of your invitation  
referred to; but I suppose that I had no new  
nor particular reason for declining, and so made  
no new statement, I have felt that you would  
be glad to see me almost whenever I got ready  
to come; but I only offer myself as rare vis-  
itor, and a still rarer correspondent,  
  
T am very busy, after my fashion, little as  
there is to show for it, and feel as if I could not  
spend many days nor dollars in traveling; for  
the shortest visit must have a fair margin to it,  
and the days thus affect tho weeks, you know.  
Nevertheless, we cannot forego these luxuries  
altogether. You must not regard me as a regu-  
lar dict, but at most only as acorns, which, too,

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43] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 427  
  
are not to be despised, —which, at least, we love  
to think are edible in a bracing walk. We  
have got along pretty well together in several  
directions, though we are such strangers in  
others.  
  
T hardly know what to say in answer to your  
letter. Some are accustomed to write many let-  
ters, others very few. Iam one of the last. At  
any rate, wo are pretty sure, if we write at all,  
to send those thoughts which we cherish, to that,  
one who, we believe, will most religiously attend  
to them.  
  
This life is not for complaint, but for satisfac-  
tion. Ido not feel addressed by this letter of  
yours, It suggests only misunderstanding. In-  
tercourse may be good; but of what use are  
complaints and apologies? Any complaint Z  
have to make is too serious to be uttered, for the  
evil cannot be mended.  
  
+ Tum over a new leaf.  
  
My outdoor harvest this fall has been one  
Canada lynx, a fiereeooking fellow, which, it  
seems, we have hereabouts; eleven barrels of  
apples from trees of my own planting; and a  
large crop of white-oak acorns, which I did not  
raise.  
  
Please remember me to your family. I have  
a very pleasant recollection of your fireside, and  
I trust that I shall revisit it;—also of your  
shanty and the surrounding regions.

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428 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1860,  
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
CCoxcono, November 4,180,  
  
‘Mn. Buaxe,—TI am glad to hear any partic-  
ulars of your excursion. As for myself, I looked  
‘out for you somewhat on that Monday, when,  
it appears, you passed Monadnoc; turned my  
glass upon several parties that were ascending  
the mountain half a mile on one side of us. In  
short, I came as near to sceing you as you to  
seeing me. I have no doubt that we should have  
had a good time if you had come, for I had, all  
ready, two good spruce houses, in which you  
could stand up, complete in all respects, half a  
mile apart, and you and B, could have lodged  
by yourselves in one, if not with us.  
  
‘We made an excellent beginning of our moun-  
tain life! You may remember that the Satur-  
day previous was a stormy day. Well, we went  
up in the rain, —wet through, —and found our.  
selves in a cloud there at mid-afternoon, in no  
situation to look about for the best place for a  
camp. So I proceeded at once, through the  
cloud, to that memorable stone, “chunk yard,”  
in which we made our humble camp once, and  
there, after putting our packs under a rock, hav-  
  
2 "This was Thorean’s last visit to Monadince, and the one  
  
mentioned in the nota of August 3, and in Channing's Wan-  
ever

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7.45] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 429  
  
ing a good hatchet, I proceeded to build a sub-  
stantial house, which Channing declared the  
handsomest he ever saw. (He never camped  
out before, and was, no doubt, prejudiced in ite  
favor.) ‘This was done about dark, and by that  
time we were nearly as wet as if wo had stood  
in a hogshead of water. We then built a fire  
before the door, directly on the site of our little  
camp of two years ago, and it took a long time  
to burn through its remains to tho earth be-  
neath. Standing before this, and turning round  
slowly, like meat that is roasting, we were as  
dry, if not drier, than ever, after a few hours,  
and so at last, we “ turned in.”  
  
‘This was a great deal better than going up  
there in fair weather, and having no adventure  
(aot knowing how to appreciate either fair  
‘weather or foul) but dull, commonplace sleep in  
a useless house, and before a comparatively use-  
less fire,—such as we get every night. Of  
course we thanked our stars, when we saw them,  
which was about midnight, that they had scem-  
ingly withdrawn for a season. We had tho  
mountain all to ourselves that afternoon and  
night. There was nobody going up that day to  
engrave his name on the summit, nor to gather  
blueberries. ‘The genius of the mountains saw us  
starting from Concord, and it said, There como  
two of our folks. Let us get ready for them,

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480 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 1180,  
  
Get up a serious storm, that will send a-packing  
these holiday guests. (They may have their say  
another time.) Let us receive them with true  
‘mountain hospitality, — kill the fatted cloud,  
Let them know the value of a spruce roof, and  
of a fire of dead spruce stumps. Every bush  
ripped tears of joy at our advent. Fire did its  
best, and received our thanks. What could fire  
hhave done in fair weather? Spruce roof got  
its share of our blessings. And then, such a  
view of the wet rocks, with the wet lichens on  
them, as we had the next morning, but did not  
get again!  
  
We and the mountain had a sound season, as  
the saying is. How glad we were to be wet, in  
order that we might be dried! How glad wo  
were of the storm which made our house seem  
like a new home to us! This day’s experience  
was indeed lucky, for we did not have a thunder-  
shower during all our stay. Perhaps our host  
reserved this attention in order to tempt us to  
come again.  
  
Our next house was more substantial still.  
One side was rock, good for durability; the  
floor the same ; and the roof which I made would  
have upheld a horse. I stood on it to do the  
shingling.  
  
Tnoticed, when Iwas at the White Mountains  
last, several nuisances which render traveling

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1.4] 10 HARRISON BLAKE. 431  
  
thereabouts unpleasant. ‘The chief of these was  
the mountain houses. I might have supposed  
that the main attraction of that region, even to  
citizens, lay in its wildness and unlikeness to  
the city, and yet they make it as much like the  
city as they can afford to. I heard that the  
Crawford House was lighted with gas, and had  
a large saloon, with its band of music, for dan-  
cing. But give me a spruce house made in the  
rain,  
  
‘Am old Concord farmer tells me that he as-  
‘cended Monadnoc once, and danced on the top.  
How did that happen? Why, he being up there,  
aparty of young men and women came up, bring-  
ing boards and a fiddler; and, having laid down  
the boards, they made a level floor, on which  
they danced to the music of the fiddle. I sup-  
pose the tune was “Excelsior.” This reminds  
me of the fellow who climbed to the top of a  
very high spire, stood upright on the ball, and  
hurrahed for—what? Why, for Harrison and  
‘Tyler. That’s the kind of sound which most  
ambitious people emit when they culminate.  
‘They are wont to be singularly frivolous in the  
thin atmosphere; they can’t contain themselves,  
though our comfort and their safety require it;  
it takes the pressure of many atmospheres to do  
this ; and hence they helplessly evaporate there.  
Tt would soom that as they ascend, they breathe

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482 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (18,  
  
shorter and shorter, and, at each expiration,  
‘somo of their wits leave them, till, when they  
reach the pinnacle, they are so lightheaded as  
to be fit only to show how the wind sits. I sus-  
pect that Emerson’s criticism called “Monad-  
noc” was inspired, not by remembering the in-  
habitants of New Hampshire as they are in the  
valleys, #0 much as by meeting some of them on  
the mountain top.  
  
‘After several nights’ experience, Channing  
came to the conclusion that he was ‘lying out-  
doors,” and inquired what was the largest beast  
that might nibble his legs there. I fear that he  
did not improve all the night, as he might have  
one, to sleep. had asked him to go and spend  
week there. We spent five nights, being gone  
six days, for C. suggested that six working days  
made a week, and T saw that he was ready to  
decamp. However, he found his account in it,  
‘as well as I.  
  
‘We were seen to go up in the rain, grim and  
silent, like two genii of the storm, by Fassett’s  
men or boys; but we were never identified after-  
ward, though wo were the subject of some con  
versation which we overheard. Five hundred  
persons at least came on to the mountain while  
wwe were there, but not one found our camp. We  
saw one party of three ladies and two gentlemen  
spread their blankets and spend the night on the

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14h] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 433  
  
top, and heard them converse; but they did not  
know that they had neighbors who were compar-  
atively old settlers. We spared them the chagrin  
which that knowledge would have caused them,  
and let them print their story in a newspaper  
accordingly.  
  
Yes, to meet men on an honest and simple  
footing, meet with rebuffs, suffer from sore feet,  
as you did, —ay, and from a sore heart, as per~  
haps you also did, —all that is excellent. What  
a pity that that young prince? could not enjoy a  
little of the legitimate experience of traveling —  
be dealt with simply and truly, though rudely.  
He might have been invited to some hospitable  
house in the country, had his bow! of bread and  
milk set before him, with a clean pinafore; been  
told that there were the punt and the fishing-rod,  
and he could amuse himself as he chose; might  
have swung a few birches, dug out a woodehuck,  
and had a regular good time, and finally been sent  
to bed with the boys, — and so never have been  
introduced to Mr. Everett at all. I have no  
doubt that this would have been a far more  
memorable and valuable experience than he got.  
  
‘The snow-clad summit of Mount Washington  
must have been a very interesting sight from  
‘Wachusett. How wholesome winter is, seen far  
  
1 The Princo of Wales, then visting America with the Duke  
of Newcastle,

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484 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (0661,  
  
or near; how good, above all mere sentimental,  
warm-blooded, shortlived, softhearted, moral  
goodness, commonly socalled. Give me the  
goodness which has forgotten its own deeds, —  
which God has seen to be good, and let be. None  
of your just made perfect, — pickled eels! All  
that will save them will be their picturesqueness,  
as with blasted trees. Whatever is, and is not  
ashamed to be, is good. I value no moral good-  
ness or greatness unless it is good or great, even  
as that snowy peak is. Pray, how could thirty  
feet of bowels improve it? Nature is goodness  
crystallized. You looked into the land of prom-  
ise. Whatever beauty we behold, the more it is  
distant, serene, and cold, the purer and more dur-  
able it is. It is better to warm ourselves with  
ice than with fire.  
  
‘Tell Brown that he sent me more than the  
price of the book, viz., a word from himself, for  
which I am greatly his debtor.  
  
70 DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Coxcono, March 22, 1861.  
  
Frrexp Rronetsox,— The bluebird was here  
the 26th of February, at least, which is one day  
earlier than you date; but I have not heard  
of larks nor pigeon-woodpeckers. To tell the  
trath, I am not on the alert for the signs of  
spring, not having had any winter yet. I took

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n.43] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 485  
  
a severe cold about the 8 of Decomber, which  
at length resulted in a kind of bronchitis, so  
that I have been confined to the house ever since,  
excepting a very few experimental trips as far  
as the post-office in some particularly fine noons.  
‘My health otherwise has not been affected in  
the least, nor my spirits. I have simply been  
imprisoned for so long, and it has not prevented  
my doing a good deal of reading and the like,  
  
‘Channing has looked after me very faithfully 5  
says he has made a study of my case, and knows  
me better than I know myself, ete., ete. Of  
course, if I knew how it began, I should know  
better how it would end. I trust that when  
warm weather comes I shall begin to pick up  
my crumbs. I thank you for your invitation to  
come to New Bedford, and will bear it in mind ;  
but at present my health will not permit my  
leaving home.  
  
‘The day I received your letter, Blake and  
Brown arrived here, having walked from Worees-  
ter in two days, though Alcott, wha happened  
in soon after, could not understand what pleas-  
ure they found in walking across the country  
in this season, when the ways were so unsettled.  
T had a solid talk with them for a day and a half  
—though my pipes were not in good order—  
and they went their way again.  
  
‘You may be interested to hear that Aloott is

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486 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (181,  
  
at present, perhaps, the most successful man in  
the town, He had his second annual exhibition  
of all the schools in the town, at the Town Hall  
last Saturday; at which all the masters and  
misses did themselves great credit, as I hear,  
and of course reflected some on their teachers  
and parents. They were making their little  
speeches from one till six o'clock P. M., to a  
large audience, which patiently listened to the  
end. In the mean while, the children made Mr.  
Alcott an unexpected present of a fine edition of  
“Pilgrim’s Progress” and “Herbert's Poems,”  
which, of course, overeame all parties. 1 inclose  
an Order of Exercises.?  
  
‘We had, last night, an old-fashioned north-  
east snow-storm, far worse than anything in the  
winter ; and the drifts are now very high above  
the fences. The inhabitants are pretty much  
confined to their houses, as I was already. All  
houses are one color, white, with the snow plas-  
  
   
  
2 In April, 1850, Mr. Aloott was chosen superintendent of  
the public schools of Concord, by a school commitice of which  
‘Mr. Ball, the ereator of the Conoord grape, and Mr. Sanborn,  
‘were members, and for some years he directed the studies of  
‘the younger pupils, to their great benefit and delight. At the  
yearly exhibitions” songs wore sung composed by Louisa  
‘Aleott and others, and the whole town assembled to sco and  
hhear. ‘The stress of civil war gradually checked this idyllic  
‘ovement, and Mr. Aleott returned to hia garden and library.  
Tt was two years aftor this that Miss Alcott bad hor severe  
‘experience as hompital narse at Washington

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wih] TO PARKER PILLSBURY. —48T  
  
tered over them, and you cannot tell whether  
they have blinds or not. Our pump has another  
pump, its ghost, as thick as itself, sticking to  
one side of it. The town has sent out teams of  
eight oxen each, to break out the roads ; and the  
train due from Boston at 8} 4. m. has not ar  
rived yet (4P.m.). All the passing has been  
a train from above at 12 m., which also was due  
at 8} 4. m. Where are the blucbirds now,  
think you? I suppose that you have not so  
much snow at New Bedford, if any.  
  
70 PARKER PILISBURY (AT CONCORD, N. H.).  
Concono, April 10, 1861.  
  
Fate Pruissury,—TI am sorry to say that  
Thave not a copy of g\* Walden” which I can  
spare; and know of none, unless possibly ‘Tick-  
nor & Fields may have one. I send, neverthe-  
less, a copy of “The Week,” the price of which  
is one dollar and twenty-five cents, which you  
ean pay at your convenience.  
  
As for your friend, my prospective reader, I  
hope he ignores Fort Sumter, and “Old Abe,”  
and all that; for that is just the most fatal, and,  
indeed, the only fatal weapon you can direct  
against evil, ever ; for, as long as you know of  
it, you are particeps criminis. What business  
have you, if you are “an angel of light,” to be  
pondering over the deeds of darkness, reading  
tho “New York Herald,” and the like?

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438 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (61,  
  
I do not so much regret the present condition  
of things in this country (provided I regret it  
at all), as Ido that I ever heard of it, I know  
one or two, who have this year, for the first time,  
read a President's Message; but they do not  
see that this implies a fall in themselves, rather  
than a rise in the President. Blessed were the  
days before you read a President's Message.  
Blessed are the young, for they do not read the  
President’s Message. Blessed are they who  
never read a neyspaper, for they shall see  
Nature, and, through her, God.  
  
But, alas! Zhave heard of Sumter and Pick-  
ens, and even of Buchanan (though I did not  
read his Message). I also read the “New York  
‘Tribune ;” but then, I qm reading Herodotus  
and Strabo, and Blodget’s “ Climatology,” and  
“Six Years in the Desert of North America,”  
as hard as I can, to counterbalance it.  
  
By the way, Aleott is at present our most  
popular and successful man, and has just pub-  
lished a volume in size, in the shape of the An-  
nual School Report, which I presume he has  
sent to you.  
  
‘Yours, for remembering all good things,  
  
Henry D. Tuoreav.  
  
Parker Pillsbury, to whom this letter went,  
was an old friend of the Thoreau family, with

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1.43] CHOLMONDELEY TO THOREAU, 489  
  
whom he became intimate in the antislavery  
agitation, wherein they took part, while he was a  
famous orator, celebrated by Emerson in one of  
his Essays. Mr. Pillsbury visited Thoreau in  
his last illness, when he could scarcely speak  
above a whisper, and, having made to him some  
remark concerning the future life, Thoreau re-  
plied, “My friend, one world at a time.” His  
petulant words in this letter concerning na  
tional affairs would hardly have been said a  
few days later, when, at the call of Abraham  
Lincoln, the people rose to protect their govern-  
ment, and every President's Message became of  
thrilling interest, even to Thoreau.  
  
Arrangements were now making for the inva-  
lid, about whose health his friends had been  
anxious for some years, to travel for a better cli-  
mate than the New England spring affords, and  
early in May Thoreau set out for the upper Mis-  
sissippi. He thus missed the last letter sent to  
him by his English friend Cholmondeley, which  
T answered, and then forwarded to him at Red-  
wing, iti Minnesota. It is of interest enough to  
be given here.  
  
1. CHOLMONDELEY 70 THOREAU (iN mneNEsoTA)-  
Sunewsnony [Bugland], Api 28,1801.  
  
My pean Tronzav,—TIt is now some time  
  
since I wrote to you or heard from you, but do

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440 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1881,  
  
not suppose that I have forgotten you, or shall  
ever cease to cherish in my mind those days at  
dear old Concord. The last I heard about you  
all was from Morton,} who was in England about  
a year ago; and I hope that he has got over  
difficulties and is now in his own country again.  
I think he has scon rather more of English  
country life than most Yankee tourists; and ap-  
peared to find it curious, though I fear he was  
dulled by our ways; for he was too full of cere-  
mony and compliments and bows, which is a  
mistake here; though very well in Spain. I am  
afraid he was rather on pins and needles; but  
he made a splendid speech at a volunteer sup-  
per, and indeed the very dest, some said, ever  
heard in this part of the country.  
  
‘We are here in a state of alarm and appre-  
hension, the world being so troubled in East  
and West and everywhere. Last year the har-  
‘vest was bad and scanty. This year our trade  
is beginning to feel the events in America. In  
reply to the northern tariff, of course we are  
going to smuggle as much as we can. ‘The sup-  
ply of cotton being such a necessity to us, we  
must work up India and South Africa a little  
better. There is war even in old New Zealand,  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
2 Hawin Morton of Plymouth, Mass. friend of John Brown  
‘and Gerrit Smith, who went to England in October, 1850, to  
‘avoid teatifying against his fronds,

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n.43] CHOLMONDELEY 70 THOREAU. 441  
  
but not in the same island where my people are!  
Besides, we are certainly on the eve of a conti  
nental blaze, so we are making merry and liv-  
ing while we can ; not being sure where we shall  
bo this time a year.  
  
Give my affectionate regards to your father,  
mother, and sister, and to Mr. Emerson and his  
family, and to Channing, Sanborn, Ricketson,  
Blake, and Morton and Alcott and Parker. A  
thought arises in my mind whether I may not  
be enumerating some dead men! Perhaps Par-  
ker is!  
  
‘Those rumors of wars make me wish that we  
had got done with this brutal stupidity of war  
altogether ; and I believe, Thoreau, that the hu-  
‘man race will at last get rid of it, though per-  
hhaps not in a creditable way; but such powers  
will be brought to bear that it will become mon-  
strous even to the French. Dundonald declared  
to the Inst that he possessed secrets which from  
their tremendous character would make war im-  
possible. So peace may be begotten from the  
machinations of evil.  
  
Have you heard of any good books lately? I  
think “Burnt Njal” good, and believe it to be  
genuine. “Hast thou not heard” (says Stein-  
rora to Thangbrand) “how Thor challenged  
Christ to single combat, and how he did not  
dare to fight with Thor?” When Gunnar

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442 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (181,  
  
brandishes his sword, three swords are seen in  
air. The account of Ospah and Brodir and Bri-  
an’s battle is the only historical account of that  
‘engagement, which the Irish talk so much of ;  
for I place little trust in O’Halloran’s authority,  
though the outline is the same in both.  
  
Darwin's “Origin of Species” may be fanci-  
ful, but it is a move in the right direction. Em-  
erson’s “Conduct of Life” has done me good ;  
but it will not go down in England for a gener-  
ation or so. But these are some of them already  
a year or two old. ‘The book of the season is  
‘Du Chaillu’s “Central Africa,” with accounts of  
the Gorilla, of which you are aware that you  
have had a skeleton at Boston for many years.  
‘There is also one in the British Museum ; but  
they have now several stuffed specimens at the  
Geographical Society’s rooms in Town. I sup-  
pose you will have seen Sir Emerson Tennent’s  
“Ceylon,” which is perhaps as complete a book  
‘as ever was published; and a better monument,  
toa governor's residence in a great province was  
never made.  
  
‘We have been lately astonished by a foreign  
Hamlet, » supposed impossibility ; but Mr. Fech-  
ter does real wonders. No doubt ho will visit  
America, and then you may seo the best actor  
in the world. He has carried out Goethe’s idea  
of Hamlet as given in the “ Wilhelm Meister,”

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an] TO HARRISON BLAKE. 443  
  
showing him forth as a fair-haired and fat man,  
I suppose you are not got fat yet?  
Yours ever truly,  
‘Taos. CHoxmonpELey  
  
‘TO HARRISON BLAKE (AT WORCESTER).  
Concon, May 3, 1861.  
  
Mr. Braxe,—I am still as much an invalid  
  
as when you and Brown were here, if not more  
  
of one, and at this rate there is danger that  
  
the cold weather may come again, before I got  
  
1 A word may be sid of the afta fo of thi magnanimous  
Baglishman, who did not long survive his Concord corwopond-  
‘ent Tn March, 1853, boing then in command of « battalion  
fof Shropahire Volunteer, which he had rained, he ioherited  
Condover Hall and the lange estate adjacent, and took the  
‘ame of Owen asa condition ofthe iabertanee, A yoar lator  
the married Miss Victoria Cots, daughter of John and Ledy  
Louisa Cotes (Co. Salop),a godchild of the Queen, and went  
to tay for his wedding-tour. In Florence ho was xaed with  
malignant fever, April 10,1864, and died dhere Apri 20,—  
tot quit two years after Threan's death, His brother Ra  
nal who lad met him in Florenos, carried back his remaina  
to England, and he ie busied in Condover churchyard. Writ  
ing (0 an Amerian friend, Mr. R.Chalmoudeley aid: “The  
‘whole county mourned for one who had made himvolf greatly  
Yeloved. During his les his thooghta went back very much  
to Ameria and her great sufferings. His lange heart fl for  
your country as ft wore his own.” Te seems dat e didnot  
go to New Zealand withthe \* Canterbury Pilgrim” as sug-  
ested in the Atlantic Monhly (December, 1908), but in the  
fit of Lard Lytaton’s ships (the Chatloto Jane), having  
joined in Lord scheme for colonizing te inland, wher be  
remained only six months, near Christahurch.

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444° FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1s,  
  
over my bronchitis, ‘The doctor accordingly  
tells me that I must “clear out” to the West  
Indies, or elsewhere, — he does not seem to care  
much where. But I decide against the West  
Indies, on account of their muggy heat in the  
summer, and the South of Europe, on account of  
the expense of time and money, and have at last  
concluded that it will be most expedient for me  
to try the air of Minnosota, say somewhere  
about St. Paul's. Iam only waiting to be well  
enough to start. Hope to get off within a week  
or ten days.  
  
The inland air may help me at once, or it may  
not. At any rate, Iam so much of an invalid,  
that I shall have to study my comfort in travel-  
ing to a remarkable degree, — stopping to rest,  
ete., ete. if need be. I think to get a through  
tickot to Chicago, with liberty to stop frequently  
on the way, making my first stop of consequence  
at Niagara Falls, several days or a week, at a  
private boarding-house; then a night or day at  
Detroit ; and as much at Chicago as my health  
‘may require. At Chicago I can decide at what  
point (Fulton, Dunleith, or another) to strike  
the Mississippi, and take a boat to St. Paul's.  
  
T trust to find a private boarding-house in  
‘one or various agreeable places in that region,  
and spend my time there, I expect, and shall  
‘be prepared, to be gone three months; and I

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a. 48] TO F. B. SANBORN. 445,  
  
would like to return by a different route, —  
perhaps Mackinaw and Montreal.  
  
T have thought of finding a companion, of  
course, yet not seriously, because I had no right  
to offer myself as a companion to anybody, hav-  
ing such a peculiarly private and all-absorbing  
but miserable business as my health, and not  
altogether Ais, to attend to, causing me to stop  
here and go there, ete., ete., unaccountably.  
  
Nevertheless, I have just now decided to let  
you know of my intention, thinking it barely  
possible that you might like to make a part or  
the whole of this journey at the same time, and  
that pethaps your own health may be such as to  
‘be benefited by it.  
  
Pray let\_me know if such a statement offers  
any temptations to you. I write in great haste  
for the mail, and must omit all the moral.  
  
0 ¥.  
  
   
  
SANBORN (AT CONCORD).  
Repwso, Minnesota, June 26, 1861.  
Mr. Sannorx,—I was very glad to find  
awaiting me, on my arrival here on Sunday after.  
noon, a letter from you. I have performed this  
journey in avery dead and alive manner, but  
nothing has come so near waking me up as the  
reeGipt of letters from Concord, I read yours,  
and one from my sister (and Horace Mann, his  
four), near the top of a remarkable isolated

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448 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (01,  
  
bluff here, called Barn Bluff, or the Grange, or  
Redwing Bluff, some four hundred and fifty feet  
high, and half a mile long,—a bit of the main  
bluff or bank standing alone. ‘The top, as you  
know, rises to the general level of the surround-  
ing country, the river having eaten out so much.  
Yet the valley just above and below this (we  
are at the head of Lake Pepin) must be three  
or four miles wide.  
  
Tam not even 60 well informed as to the pro-  
gress of the war as you suppose. I have seen  
but one Eastern paper (that, by the way, was  
the “ Tribune”) for five weeks. I have not  
taken much pains to get them ; but, necessarily,  
I have not seen any paper at all for more than  
aweek at a time. The people of Minnosota  
have seemed to me more cold, — to feel less im-  
plicated in this war than the people of Massa-  
chusetts. It is apparent that Massachusetts, for  
one State at least, is doing much more than her  
share in carrying it on. However, I have dealt,  
partly with those of Southern birth, and have  
seen but little way beneath the surface. I was  
glad to be told yesterday that there was a good  
deal of weeping here at Redwing the other day,  
when the volunteers stationed at Fort Snelling  
followed the regulars to the seat of the «var.  
‘They do not weep when their children go up the  
iver to occupy the deserted forts, though they  
may have to fight the Indians there.

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ar. 43] TO F. B. SANBORN. 447  
  
‘Ido not even know what the attitude of Eng-  
land is at present.  
  
The grand feature hereabouts is, of courte,  
the Mississippi River. Too much can hardly be  
said of its grandeur, and of the beauty of this  
portion of it (from Dunleith, and probably from  
Rock Island to this place). St. Paul is a dozen  
miles below the Falls of St. Anthony, or near  
the head of uninterrupted navigation on the  
main stream, about two thousand miles from its  
mouth, There is not a “rip” below that, and  
the river is almost as wide in the upper as the  
lower part of its course, Steamers go up to the  
Sauk Rapids, above the Falls, near a hundred  
miles farther, and then you are fairly in the pine-  
woods and lumbering country. Thus it flows  
from the pine to the palm.  
  
‘The lumber, a8 you know, is sawed chiefly at  
the Falls of St. Anthony (what is not rafted in  
the log to ports far below), having given rise to  
the towns of St. Anthony, Minneapolis, ete., ote.  
In coming up the river from Dunleith, you meet  
with great rafts of sawed lumber and of logs,  
twenty rods or more in length, by five or six  
wide, floating down, all from the pine region  
above the Falls. An old Maine lumberer, who  
has followed the same business here, tells me  
that the sources of the Mississippi were compar-  
atively free from rocks and rapids, making easy

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448 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1861,  
  
work for them; but he thought that the timber  
‘was more knotty here than in Maine.  
  
It has chanced that about half the men whom  
I have spoken with in Minnesota, whether trav-  
clere or settlers, were from Massachusetts.  
  
‘After spending some three weeks in and about  
St. Paul, St. Anthony, and Minneapolis, we made  
an excursion in a steamer, some three hundred  
‘or more miles up the Minnesota (St. Peter's)  
River, to Redwood, or the Lower Sioux Agency,  
in onder to see the plains, and the Sioux, who  
were to receive their annual payment there.  
‘This is eminently the river of Minnesota (for  
she shares the Mississippi with Wisconsin), and  
it is of incalculable value to her. Tt flows  
‘through a very fertile country, destined to be  
famous for its wheat; but it is a remarkably  
winding stream, so that Redwood is only half as  
far from its mouth by land as by water. There  
was not a straight reach a mile in length as far  
‘as we went,— generally you could not see a  
quarter of a mile of water, and the boat was  
steadily turning this way or that. At the greater  
bends, as the Traverse des Sioux, some of the  
passengers were landed, and walked across to be  
taken in on the other side. Two or three times  
you could have thrown a stone across the nock  
of the isthmus, while it was from one to three  
miles around it, It was a very novel kind of

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ar 48) TO F. B. SANBORN. 449  
  
navigation to me. The boat was perhaps the  
langost that had been up so high, and the water  
was rather low (it had been about fifteen feet  
higher). In making a short tum, we repeatedly  
and designedly ran square into the steep and  
soft bank, taking in a cartload of earth, — this  
being more effectual than the rudder to fetch us  
about again; or the deeper water was s0 narrow  
and close to the shore, that we were obliged to  
run into and break down at least fifty trees  
which overhung the water, when we did not cut  
them off, repeatedly losing a part of our out-  
works, though the most exposed had been taken  
in. I could pluck almost any plant on the bank  
from the boat. We very frequently got aground,  
and then drew ourselves along with a windlass  
and a cable fastened to a tree, or we swung  
round in the current, and completely blocked up  
and blockaded the river, one end of the boat  
resting on each shore. And yet we would haul  
ourselves round again with the windlass and ea-  
ble in an hour or two, though the boat was about  
one hundred and sixty fect long, and drew some  
three feet of water, or, often, water and sand.  
‘It was one consolation to know that in such a  
‘case we were all the while damming the river,  
and so raising it. We once ran fairly on to a  
‘eoncealed rock, with a shock that aroused all the  
passengers, and rested there, and the mate went

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450 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1661,  
  
below with a lamp, expecting to find a hole, but  
he did not. Snags and sawyers were so common  
that I forgot to mention them. ‘The sound of  
the boat rumbling over one was the ordinary  
music. However, as long as the boiler did not  
burst, we lmew that no serious aecident was  
likely to happen. Yet this was a singularly  
navigable river, more so than the Mississippi  
above the Falls, and it is owing to its very crook-  
edness. Ditch it straight, and it would not only  
be very swift, but.soon run ont. It was from  
ten to fifteen rods wide near the mouth, and  
from eight to ten or twelve at Redwood. ‘Though  
the current was swift, I did not see a “rip” on  
it, and only three or four rocks. For three  
‘months in the year I am told that it can be nav-  
igated by small steamers about twice as far as  
‘we went, or to ite souree in Big Stone Lake;  
and a former Indian agent told me that at high  
water it was thought that such a steamer might  
‘pass into the Red River.  
  
In short, this river proved so very Jong and  
navigable, that I was reminded of the last letter  
‘or two in the voyage of the Baron la Hontan  
written near the end of the seventeenth con-  
tury, I think), in which he states, that, after  
reaching the Mississippi (by the Illinois or Wis-  
‘consin), the limit of previous exploration west-  
ward, he voyaged up it with his Indians, and at

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an. 43,] 70 F. B. SANBORN. 451  
  
length tumed up a great river coming in from  
the west, which he called “La Riviere Longue;”  
and he relates various improbable things about  
the country and its inhabitants, so that this let-  
ter has been regarded as pure fiction, or, more  
properly speaking, a lie. But I am somewhat  
inclined now to reconsider the matter.  
  
The Governor of Minnesota (Ramsay), the  
superintendent of Indian affairs in this quarter,  
and the newlyappointed Indian agent were on  
board; also a German band from St. Paul, a  
small cannon for salutes, and the money for the  
Indians (ay, and the gamblers, it was said, who  
were to bring it back in another boat). There  
‘wore about one hundred passengers, chiefly from  
St. Paul, and more or Jess recently from the  
northeastern States; also half a dozen young  
educated Englishmen. Chancing to speak with  
‘one who sat next to me, when the voyage was  
nearly half over, I found that he was the son  
of the Rev. Samuel May,’ and a classmate of  
yours, and had been looking for us at St. An-  
thony.  
  
‘The last of the little settlements on the river  
was New Ulm, about one hundred miles this side  
of Redwood. It consists wholly of Germans.  
We left them one hundred barrels of salt, which  
will be worth something more, when the water  
is lowest, than at present.  
  
1 Rey, Joneph May, a cousin of Louisa Alcott

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452 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1661,  
  
Redwood is a mere locality, — scarcely an In-  
dian village, — where there is a store, and some  
houses have been built for them. We were now  
fairly on the great plains, and looking south;  
and, after walking that way three miles, could  
see no tree in that horizon. The buffalo was  
said to be feeding within twenty-five or thirty  
miles.  
  
A regular council was held with the Indians,  
who had come in on their ponies, and speeches  
were made on both sides through an interpreter,  
quite in the described mode, —the Indians, as  
usual, having the advantage in point of truth  
and earnestness, and therefore of eloquence.  
‘The most prominent chief was named Little  
Crow. ‘They were quite dissatisfied with the  
white man’s treatment of them, and probably  
have reason to be so. This council was to be  
continued for two or three days, —the payment  
tobe made the second day; and another pay-  
ment to other bands a little higher up, on the  
Yellow Medicine (a tributary of the Minnesota),  
a fow days thereafter.  
  
In the afternoon, the half-naked Indians per-  
formed a dance, at the request of the Governor,  
for our amusement and their own benefit; and  
then we took leave of them, and of the officials  
who bad come to treat with them.  
  
Excuse these pencil marks, but my inkstand

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ar. 43) 0 F. B. SANBORN. 458  
  
   
  
is unserewable, and I can only direct my letter  
at the bar. I could tell you more, and perhaps  
more interesting things, if I had time. I am  
considerably better than when I left home, but  
still far from well.  
  
Our faces are already set toward home. Will  
you please let my sister know that we shall prob-  
‘ably start for Milwaukee and Mackinaw in a  
day or two (or as soon as we hear from home)  
via Prairie du Chien, and not La Crosse.  
  
I am glad to hear that you have written to  
Cholmondeley;! as it relieves me of some respon-  
sibility.  
  
‘The tour described in this long letter was the  
first and last that Thoreau ever made west of the  
‘Mohawk Valley, though his friend Channing had  
early visited the great prairies, and lived in log  
cabins of Tlinois, or sailed on the chain of great  
lakes, by which Thoreau made a part of this  
journey. It was proposed that Channing should  
accompany him this time, as he had in the tour  
through Lower Canada, and along Cape Cod, as  
well as in the journeys through the Berkshire  
and Catskill mountains, and down the Hudson ;  
but some misunderstanding or temporary incon-  
venience prevented. ‘The actual comrade was  
  
11 had answored T. Cholmondeley’s lat letter, explaining  
‘that Thoreau was ill and absent

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454 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. 1861,  
  
young Horace Mann, eldest son of the school-re-  
former and statesman of that name, —a silent,  
‘earnest, devoted naturalist, who died early. ‘The  
place where his party met the Indians—only a  
few months before the Minnesota massacre of  
1862 —was in the county of Redwood, in the  
southwest of the State, where now is a thriving  
village of 1,500 people, and no buffaloes within  
five hundred miles. Redwing, whence the letter  
was written, is below St. Paul, on the Mississippi,  
and was even then a considerable town, —now a  
city of 7,000 people. ‘The civil war had lately  
‘begun, and the whole North was in the first flush  
of its uprising in defense of the Union, —for  
which Thoreau, in spite of his earlier defiance of  
government (for its alliance with slavery) was  
as zealous as any soldier. He returned in July,  
little benefited by the journey, of which he did  
not take his usual sufficiency of notes, and to  
which there is little allusion in his books. Nor  
does it seem that he visited on the way his corre-  
spondent since January, 1856,—C. H. Green,  
of Rochester, Michigan, who had never seen  
him in Concord. The opinion of Thoreau him-  
self concerning this journey will be found in his  
next letter to Daniel Ricketson.

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er. 44.) TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 455  
  
‘TO DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Concono, Angust 16, 1881.  
  
Farenp Ricxersox,— When your last letter  
‘was written I was away in the far Northwest, in  
search of health. My cold turned to bronchitis,  
which made me a close prisoner almost up to the  
moment of my starting on that journey, early in  
May. As I had an incessant cough, my doctor  
told me that T must “clear out,”—to the West  
Indies, or elsewhere, — so I selected Minnesota.  
I retumed a few weeks ago, after a good deal  
of stoady traveling, considerably, yet not: essen-  
tially, better; my cough still continuing. If I  
don’t mend very quickly, I shall be obliged to go  
to another climate again very soon.  
  
‘My ordinary pursuits, both indoors and out,  
have been for the most part omitted, or seri-  
ously interrupted, — walking, boating, scribbling,  
ete. Indeed, I have been sick so long that I  
have almost forgotten what it is to be well; and  
yet I feel that it is in all respects only my en-  
velope. Channing and Emerson are as well as  
usual; but Aleott, I am sorry to say, has for  
some time been more or less confined by a lame-  
ness, perhaps of a neuralgic character, oocasioned  
by carrying too great a weight on his back while  
gardening.  
  
On returning home, I found various letters

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456 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1s,  
  
awaiting me; among others, one from Cholmonde-  
ley, and one from yourself.  
  
Of course I am sufficiently surprised to hear  
of your conversion ;1 yet I scarcely know what  
to say about it, unless that, judging by your  
account, it appears to me a change which con-  
cerns yourself peculiarly, and will not make you  
‘more valuable to mankind. However, perhaps I  
must see you before I can judge.  
  
Remembering your numerous invitations, I  
write this short note now, chiefly to say that, if  
you are to be at home, and it will be quite agree:  
able to you, I will pay you a visit next week, and  
take such rides or sauntering walks with you as  
an invalid may.  
  
Tho visit was made, and we owe to it the pres-  
ervation of the latest portraiture of Thoreau,  
who, at his friend’s urgency, sat to a photogra-  
pher in New Bedford; and thus we have the full-  
bearded likeness of August, 1861; from which,  
also, and from personal recollection, Mr. Walter  
Ricketson made the fine profile medallion en-  
graved for this volume.  
  
2 A retum to religious Quakerism, of which his friend had  
‘written enthusiastically.

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4] 10 DANIEL RICKETSON. 457  
  
TO DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW BEDFORD).  
Conconn, October 14, 1861.  
  
Frrenp Rickerson,—I think that, on the  
whole, my health is better than when you were  
here; but my faith in the doctors has not in-  
  
ereased. I thank you all for your invitation to  
  
‘come to New Bedford, but I suspect that it must  
still be warmer here than there; that, indeed,  
New Bedford is warmer than Concord only in  
the winter, and so I abide by Concord.  
  
September was pleasanter and much better for  
me than August, and October has thus far been  
quite tolerable. Instead of riding on horse-  
back, I ride in a wagon about every other day.  
‘My neighbor, Mr. E. R. Hoar, has two horses,  
and he, being away for the most part this fall,  
has generously offered me the use of one of them  
and, as I notice, the dog throws himself in, and  
does scouting duty.  
  
Tam glad to hear that you no longer chew, but  
eschew, sugar-plums. One of the worst effects  
of sickness is, that it may get one into the habit  
of taking a little something — his bitters, or  
sweets, as if for his bodily good — from time to  
time, when he does not need it. However, there  
is no danger of this if you do not dose even when  
you are sick.  
  
I went with a Mr. Rodman, a young man of

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458 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1801,  
  
your town, here the other day, or week, looking  
at farms for sale, and rumor says that he is in-  
clined to buy a particular one. Channing says  
that he received his book, but has not got any of  
yours.  
  
It is easy to talk, but hard to write.  
  
From the worst of all correspondents,  
  
Henry D. THoreav.  
  
No later letter than this was written by Tho-  
rean’s own hand; for he was occupied all the  
winter of 1861-62, when he could write, in pre-  
paring his manuscripts for the press. Nothing  
appeared before his death, but in June, 1862,  
‘Mr. Fields, then editing the “ Atlantic,” printed  
“Walking,” —the first of three essays which  
came out in that magazine the same year. No-  
thing of Thoreau’s had been accepted for the  
“ Atlantic” since 1858, when he withdrew the  
rest of “Chesuncook,” then coming out in its  
pages, because the editor (Mr. Lowell) had made  
alterations in the manuscript. In April, just  
before his death, the “Atlantic” printed a short  
and characteristic sketch of Thoreau by Bronson  
Alcott, and in August, Emerson's funeral ora-  
tion, given in the parish church of Concord,  
During the last six months of his illness, his sis-  
ter and his friends wrote letters for him, as will  
be seen by the two that follow.

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44] 70 DANIEL RICKETSON. 459  
  
SOPHIA THOREAU TO DANIEL RICKETSON (AT NEW  
BEDFORD).  
  
Coxconn, December 19, 1861.  
  
Mr. Rickzrson: .  
  
Dear Sir,—Thank you for your friendly in-  
terest in my dear brother. I wish that I could  
report more favorably in regard to his health.  
Soon after your visit to Concord, Henry com-  
meneed riding, and almost every day he intro-  
uced me to some of his familiar haunts, far away  
in the thick woods, or by the ponds ; all very  
new and delightful to me, The air and exercise  
which he enjoyed during the fine autumn days  
were a benefit to him; he seemed stronger, had a  
‘good appetite, and was able to attend somewhat  
to his writing; but since the cold weather has  
‘come, his cough has increased, and he is able to  
go out but seldom. Just now he is suffering  
from an attack of pleurisy, which confines him  
wholly to the house. His spirits do not fail him ;  
he continues in his usual serene mood, which is  
very pleasant for his friends as well as himself.  
Tam hoping for a short winter and early spring,  
that the invalid may again be out of doors.  
  
I am sorry to hear of your indisposition,  
and trust that you will be well again soon. It  
would give me pleasure to see some of your  
newspaper articles, since you possess a hopeful

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460 © FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (19,  
  
spirit. My pationce is nearly exhausted. The  
times look very dark. I think the next soldier  
who is shot for sleeping on his post should be  
Gen. McClellan. Why does he not do some-  
‘thing in the way of fighting? I despair of ever  
living under the reign of Sumner or Phillips.  
  
BRONGON ALCOFT TO DANIEL RICKETON (AT NEW  
BEDFORD).  
Coxconn, January 10,1802  
  
Dear Farenp, — You have not been informed  
of Henry's condition this winter, and will be  
sorry to hear that he grows feebler day by day,  
and is evidently failing and fading from our  
sight. He gets some sleep, has a pretty good  
appetite, reads at intervals, takes notes of his  
readings, and likes to see his friends, conversing,  
however, with difficulty, as his voice partakes of  
his general debility. We had thought this old-  
est inhabitant of our Planet would have chosen to  
stay and see it fairly dismissed into the Chaos (out  
of which he has brought such precious jewels, —  
gifts to friends, to mankind generally, diadems  
for fame to coming followers, forgetful of his  
own claims to the honors) before he chose simply  
to withdraw from the spaces and times he has  
adorned with the truth of his genius. But the  
masterly work is nearly done for us here. And  
our woods and fields are sorrowing, though not in

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4] TO DANIEL RICKETSON. 461  
  
sombre, but in robes of white, so becoming to the  
piety and probity they have known so long, and  
soon are to miss. There has been none such  
sinee Pliny, and it will be long before there  
comes his like; the most sagacions and wonder-  
ful Worthy of his time, and a marvel to coming  
ones.  
  
I write at the suggestion of his sister, who  
thought his friends would like to be informed of  
his condition to the latest date.  
  
Ever yours and respectfully,  
  
‘A. Bronson Atcorr.  
  
The last letter of Henry Thoreau, written by  
the hand of his sister, was sent to Myron Benton,  
a young literary man then living in Dutchess  
County, New York, who had written a grateful  
letter to the author of \* Walden” (January 6,  
1862), though quite unacquainted with him.  
Mr. Benton said that the news of Thoreau’s ill  
ness had affected him as if it were that “of  
a personal friend whom I had known a long  
time,” and added: “The seeret of the influence  
by which your writings charm me is altogether  
as intangible, though real, as the attraction of  
Nature herself. I read and reread your books  
with ever fresh delight. Nor is it pleasure alone ;  
there is a singular spiritual healthiness with  
which they seem imbued,-—the expression of a

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462 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (1882,  
  
soul essentially sound, so free from any morbid  
tendency.” After mentioning that his own home  
was in a pleasant valley, once the hunting-ground  
of the Indians, Mr. Benton said  
  
«I was in hope to read something more from  
your pen in Mr. Conway's ‘Dial,’! but only  
recognized that fine pair of Walden twinlets.  
Of your two books, I perhaps prefer the ‘ Week,’  
—but after all, ‘Walden’ is but little less a  
favorite. In the former, I like especially those  
little snatches of poetry interspersed throughout.  
I would like to ask what progress you have made  
in a work some way connected with natural his-  
tory, —I think it was on Botany,—which Mr.  
Emerson told me something about in a short in-  
terview I had with him two years ago at Pough-  
‘keopsic. . . . If you should feel perfectly able  
at any time to drop me a few lines, I would like  
much to know what your state of health is, and  
if there is, as T cannot but hope, a prospect of  
your speedy recovery.”  
  
‘Two months and more passed before Thoreau  
replied ; but his habit of performing every duty,  
  
   
  
¥ This was a short-lived monthly, edited at Cincinnati (1801~  
€2) by Moncure D. Conway, since distinguished as an author,  
‘who had resided for atime in Concord, after leaving his nat  
Virginia, He wrote asking Thoreau and all his Conco  
frionda to contribute to this new Dial, and several of them  
aid wo.

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=x.4] TO MYRON B. BENTON. 463  
  
whether of business or courtesy, would not ex-  
euse him from an answer, which was this: —  
  
70 MYRON B. BENTON (AT LEEDSVILLE, N. ¥.)  
  
Concono, March 21, 1862.  
  
Dear Sie, —I thank you for your very kind  
letter, which, ever since I received it, I have in-  
tended to answer before I died, however briefly.  
Tam encouraged to know, that, so far as you are  
‘concerned, I have not written my books in vain.  
Iwas particularly gratified, some years ago, when  
one of my friends and neighbors said, I wish  
you would write another book,—write it for  
me.” He is actually more familiar with what I  
have written than I'am myself.  
  
‘The verses you refer to in Conway’s “ Dial,”  
wore written by F. B. Sanborn of this town. I  
never wrote for that journal.  
  
I am pleased when you say that in “The  
Week” you like especially “ those little snatches  
of poetry interspersed through the book,” for  
these, I suppose, are the least attractive to most  
readers. I have not boon engaged in any par-  
ticular work on Botany, or the like, though, if  
I were to live, I should have much to report on  
Natural History generally.  
  
You ask particularly after my health, I sup-  
‘pose that I have not many months to live; but,  
of course, I know nothing about it. I may add

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464 FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS. (182.  
  
that Iam enjoying existence as much as ever,  
and regret nothing.  
Yours truly,  
Hever D. THoreav,  
by Soria E. THorzav.  
  
He died May 6, 1862; his mother died March  
12, 1872, and his sister Sophia, October, 1876.  
With the death of his aunt, Maria Thoreau,  
nearly twenty years after her beloved nephew,  
the last person of the name in America (or per-  
‘haps in England) passed away.

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One hundred and fifty copies printed.  
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Henry D. Thoreau, age 44.  
  
From an ambrotype by Dunshee, of New Bedford, Mass.,  
taken in August, 1861. ‘Thoreau died the following spring.

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SOME UNPUBLISHED  
  
LETTERS OF  
Dedde ote wth  
HENRY D. AND SOPHIA EB!  
  
THOREAU  
  
A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY  
OF A STILL-BORN BOOK  
  
   
  
“Hg noble ives nd noblet dos who makes and keeps  
aly ocamade ews  
‘The Kastdah of HAs! AbdG HL-Yeus  
  
EDITED WITH A PREFATORY NOTE  
By  
  
SAMUEL ARTHUR JONES  
  
ili,  
  
PRINTED ON THE MARION PRESS  
‘Tauaica, QuexxssonoveH, Naw-Youe  
1899

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\_ Burial-plot of the Thoreau family 80  
  
From negatives by  
Aurrep W. HosMer,  
Concord, Mass.

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PREFATORY NOTE.  
  
EARNING that Thoreau had  
  
once a Western correspondent,  
and knowing that these of his letters  
had not been published, it occurred  
to the slightly irascible and some-  
what eccentric ex-professor that it  
were worth while to make search  
therefor: possibly that correspondence  
might be recovered. ‘Thoreau’s cor-  
respondent was found without diffi-  
culty,—an aged and venerable man,  
—and to the great surprise of the  
ex-professor the holographs were  
transferred to his keeping, and are  
used by the present editor in prepar-  
ing the text of this book.  
  
vii

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Thoreav’s letters are in themselves  
but a trifle, yet they give character-  
istic glimpses of him; those of his  
sister reveal a phase of his character  
that is not so widely known as it de-  
serves, and in justice to a dead man  
should be.  
  
The story of these simple letters is  
briefly as follows: George Ripley's  
review of Walden; or, Life in the  
Woods, led a distant reader to write  
to Ticknor and Company for a copy,  
the chief incitement being the liberal  
citations from the book itself. Upon  
receiving the volume it was almost  
literally devoured; a somewhat pe-  
culiar spiritual experience had pre-  
pared the way for it with that remote  
reader; he then found it sweet in  
the mouth, and after forty years it  
has not proven bitter in the belly.  
  
viii

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Of course the book had “found” its  
reader, as Coleridge would say of  
such a divine conjunction, and like  
the famishing charity boy, that par-  
ticular reader wanted “some more.”  
That earnest man, reading Walden,  
and one of the few of that day able to  
read it ‘between the lines,'—reading  
and pondering under the burr-oaks in  
the silence of the forest solitude,—  
  
‘felt like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his  
ken.”  
  
From the title-page of Walden  
he learned that Thoreau was also the  
author of another book, A Week on  
the Concord and Merrimack Rivers.  
Failing to obtain a copy of this  
from the publishers of Walden or  
  
any other source then known to him,  
ix

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the secker managed to get Thoreau’s  
address and made application directly  
to him; and there the correspondence  
begins.  
  
Thoreau and his Western corre-  
spondent never met, though at one  
point of the hopeless journey to Min-  
nesota in search of health one hour’s  
ride would have brought them to-  
gether; but the doomed pilgrim knew  
that he must speedily return to put  
his house in order, for he was not  
deceived in regard to his bodily con-  
dition. “I think,” he wrote to Mr.  
Ricketson, “that, on the whole, my  
health is better than when you were  
here; but my faith in the doctors has  
not increased.”  
  
The correspondence with Sophia  
E. Thoreau arose from a letter of  
condolence, on the death of her  
  
brother, written more than a month  
x

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after that event. A subsequent: visit  
to Concord brought the distant friend  
and the Thoreau survivors face to  
face: it was the res anguste domi  
alone that had prevented such a  
meeting with Thoreau himself. The  
visitor from afar was tenderly re-  
ceived by both the mourning mother  
and sister and Thoreau’s friends Al-  
cott and Channing. Before returning,  
the pilgrim was requested by both  
Mrs. Thoreau and Sophia to select  
from the library of his departed friend  
some books for keepsakes. Thus it  
came that both the ex-professor and  
the present editor saw and touched  
the very copy of Lempritre’s Clas-  
sical Dictionary that had been Tho-  
reau’s when he was an undergraduate  
in Harvard College,—the first fly-  
leaf bearing the autograph: “D. H.  
Thoreau.” This is written in ink,  
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while on the succeeding leaf is the  
pencilled inscription, “Mr. ... from  
8. E. Thoreau.” The book selected  
as a memento for the visitor’s wife is  
an American edition of The Specta-  
tor, two volumes in one, Philadel-  
phia, 1832. On the title-page is an  
autograph, in a fine clerkly hand:  
«J. Thoreau.” It is the signature of  
Thoreau’s father, a man, according to  
one biographer, “who led a plodding,  
unambitious and respectable life in  
Concord village.” It is not men-  
tioned whether he ‘kept a gig’; but  
commend us always to the ‘plodder’  
who, from his scanty means, provides  
his family book-shelf with a substan-  
tially bound and well printed copy of  
the Spectator. One can readily be-  
lieve that such a man was respected,  
gigloss though he be; but few would  
have the hardihood to declare that a

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father who furnishes the Spectator  
for his children’s reading is ‘unambi-  
tious.’ Perhaps the highest ambition  
lies in a wise forecast that is not for  
one’s self;  
  
“But Brutus says he was (unam-  
bitious;  
And Brutus is an honorable man.”  
  
The sterling native worth of Tho-  
reau’s Western correspondent was  
quickly discerned by not only Tho-  
reau’s mother and sister: Thoreau’s  
friends recognized and honored it.  
The transparent-souled Alcott was  
moved to the highest issues of friend-  
ship, as sundry inscribed presentation  
copies of the writings of that belated  
Platonist amply testify; and William  
Ellery Channing, the “man of genius,  
and of the moods that sometimes make  
  
3 xiii

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genius an unhappy boon,” was thawed  
into human warmth, as specially in-  
scribed copies of his books— perhaps  
the most elusive “first (and only that)  
editions” that ever mocked the book-  
hunter’s. desire—amply show, on  
those precious shelves, where the ex-  
professor and the present editor saw  
them for the first and only time. One  
who has been allowed access to those  
richly laden shelves may be allowed,  
without violating the sanctity of hos-  
pitality, to bear witness to the sim-  
plicity, sincerity, and serenity invest-  
ing the eventide of a true life with  
that ineffable splendor which has in  
it the soul’s strongest assurance of a  
dayspring beyond the mists of Life's  
mirage.  
  
The Froude letter and that which  
authenticates it are not considered  
irrelevant. The English historian’s  
  
xiv

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letter to the Concord “loafer” is in-  
troduced to show that although his  
first book was ‘despised and rejected’  
of men, Thoreau had the assurances  
that are always vouchsafed to the sol-  
itary thinker, and these from sources  
s0 diverse as Oxford University, just-  
ly proud of the achievements of its  
scholars, and the primeval oak forest  
of a remote young State,—a raw set-  
tlement, as it had been called only  
fifty years before.\* It is not whence  
the apprehension, the agreement, the  
assent; it is who agrees, assents, and  
by the cordial handgrasp conveys  
  
\*At Ypsilanti I picked up an Ann Arbor  
newspaper. It was badly printed, but its con-  
tents were good; and it could happen nowhere  
out of America that so raw a settlement as  
that at Ann Arbor, where there is difficulty in  
procuring decent accommodations, should have  
a newspaper.”  
  
Harriet Martineau, Society in America,  
  
xv

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to the solitary scholar, whose medi-  
tations have disturbed Mammon’s  
market-place, the calm, unfaltering  
courage that is ever a marvel to the  
multitude, which quietly ‘bears the  
fardels’ of unthinking servitude.  
The difference between the fibre  
of a Froude and a Thoreau will be  
quickly distinguished by those who  
have read the exculpatory proface  
especially written for the second edi-  
tion of Froude’s Nemesis of Faith.  
Froude faced the angry storm of in-  
censed detraction with the courage of  
a well-equipped scholar and the dig-  
nity of a true gentleman; neverthe-  
less he had made an ‘explanation’:  
not the whole world could have  
moved Thoreau’s lips to anything  
other than a smile of infinite commis-  
eration; he would not have foregone  
a single furlong of his accustomed  
  
xvi

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walk’; he might indeed have whis-  
pered to his own heart,  
  
“Time cannot bend the line which  
Trath hath writ.”  
  
The present editor has assured  
himself that Froude’s presentation  
copy of his self-sacrificing Nemesis  
of Faith is to this day in Emerson’s  
library at the old home, but he has  
not been able to learn that Froude  
also sent a copy to Thoreau; so it  
is a safe inference that Thoreau read  
Emerson’s. A phrase in Froude’s  
letter to Thoreau shows conclusively  
that Thoreau had learned of Froude  
from Emerson and that Thoreau had  
read Froude’s ill-starred Nemesis  
—the “wild protest against all au-  
thority, Divine and human,” as that  
gentlest of Quakeresses, Caroline Fox,  
  
xvii

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terms it. Froude writes this phrase  
within inverted commas: “not on ac-  
count of his [Emerson's] word, but  
because I myself have read and  
know you.” This can refer only to  
a complimentary copy of A Week  
on the Concord and Merrimack Riv-  
ers that had been previously sent to  
Froude either by Thoreau or their  
mutual friend Emerson. Thoreau  
himself has recorded that of his  
still-born book some ‘seventy-five  
copies were given away.’  
  
Froude’s Nemesis of Faith could  
transmit no seismic tremors to the  
man who would have nothing be-  
tween him and Heaven—not even a  
rafter. The blue dome with its in-  
serutable mystery: nothing must ob-  
struct the soul’s view of that! The  
chapter in Thoreau’s Week en-  
titled “Sunday” could readily carry  
  
xvii

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to Froude the assurance that possibly  
he, too, had  
  
«Builded better than he knew,”  
  
that very possibly the angry Angli-  
can hierarchy had merely mistaken  
a Church colic for a universal cata-  
clysm.  
  
These two recalcitrants never  
touched hands, albeit the ‘steam  
bridges’ were both commodious and  
convenient. Their perigeum occurred  
during Froude’s much later visit to  
Emerson, and it was in Sleepy Hol-  
low burying-ground; but that peri-  
helion was sadly incomplete: six foot  
of graveyard mould and death, the  
mystery of mysteries, intervened.  
For both of them now, no more of  
that mystery. Oh, the boon of ‘cross  
ing the bar’!  
  
xix

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A-word in regard to the unusual  
manner in which the Letters are pre-  
sented to the reader. One with  
whom, of all men living, the present  
editor is best acquainted (an effete  
ex-professor, gouty, grouty, and gray-  
headed) made these Letters the sub-  
ject of a lecture delivered in aid of a  
‘Women’s Gymnasium (“More pow-  
er to their elbows!” said the ex-pro-  
fessor) located—it is not necessary  
to specify where. The text as written  
for that occasion has been followed: a  
convenience which all editors will  
fully appreciate. At the risk of  
marring the symmetry of the printed  
page the labor-saving editor will  
take the liberty of superposing such  
patches of his own plain homespun  
upon the ex-professor’s tapestry as  
occasion seems to demand (though ,  
he may be tempted of the devil to  
  
x  
  
ys

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take undue advantage of so rare an  
opportunity). Being himself “as mild  
a mannered man as ever cut a throat,”  
he owes it to himself to gently but  
plainly deprecate the ex-professor’s  
lapses into the sarcastic. Both the  
editor and Herr Teufelsdréckh be-  
lieve that sarcasm is the Devil’s  
patois. As that is perilous stuff, he ll  
have none of it; the ex-professor  
must stand for his own petard: a  
proposition which he will be the last  
man to reject.  
  
‘The typewritten text of the ox-  
professor's lecture is disfigured with  
pen-and-ink interlineations, and this  
is something so unusual that one who  
knows him so well as doth the editor  
could not resist the very natural curi-  
osity which led to the asking for an  
explanation. This, as it fell from the  
ex-professor’s lips, is too characteristic  
  
4 xxi

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of him to be withheld; so it shall be  
shared with the reader—though this  
complaisance involves the editor in  
not a little personal peril.  
  
Be it known then, first of all, that  
the ex-professor himself takes Tho-  
reau very seriously; does not by any  
possible interpretation consider him  
a “glittering generality,” but rather  
a “blazing ubiquity” wherever and  
whenever the blunt, plain truth is  
needful—which time and place he  
also believes is always and every-  
where. Perhaps an excerpt from the  
ex-professor’s lecture on “Thoreau”  
will best serve to show his attitude.  
(This lecture, it may be as well to  
add, was written for and delivered  
in a nameless territory where ‘suc-  
cess’ is a matter of the bank-book  
rather than of that old-fashioned He-  
brew Book.)  
  
4

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“T am chiefly desirous of enforcing  
one consideration regarding this man  
Thoreau, namely: that the brief epi-  
sode in his life by which he is com-  
monly known—the shanty life at  
Walden Pond—was not the vagary  
of an enthusiast. Reared in a family  
to every member of which ‘life was  
something more than a parade of pre-  
tensions, a conflict of ambition or an  
incessant scramble for the common  
objects of desire,’ Thoreau never lost  
sight of the high ideal which inspired  
that humble household.  
  
“While yet an undergraduate he  
believed that the mere beauty of this  
world transcended far all the con-  
venience to which luxury would de-  
base it. He then thought ‘the order  
of things should be somewhat re-  
versed; the seventh should be man’s  
day of toil, wherein to earn his living  
  
xxiii

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by the sweat of his brow, and the  
other six his Sabbath of the affections  
and the soul,—in which to range this  
widespread garden, and drink in the  
soft influences and sublime revelations  
of Nature.’  
  
“With darkened eyes Milton  
dreamed of Paradise Lost; with an  
unfaltering trust in the beneficence of  
God Thoreau went forth in the broad  
daylight to find it, Who shall say of  
him that he failed of his quest; who  
shall declare to the struggling millions  
of Earth’s toilers that Paradise is, in-  
deed, irretrievably lost!  
  
“Once before there came to the  
race a man wearing a garment of  
camel’s hair, eating locusts and wild  
honey, and bearing a Message: per-  
haps this, too, is the veiled purpose  
of him who abode in that much-de-  
rided shanty at Walden Pond.  
  
aaiv

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“Do we not hear the sounds as of  
satanic revelry coming from high  
places in the land; is not every  
breeze burdened with the muttered  
curses of ill-requited labor toiling for  
the task-masters until the sweat of  
the brow is that of a Gethsemane  
which is only the Devil's?  
  
“The message-bringer to the nine-  
teenth century said: Simplify your  
lives! It is indeed a simple message,  
but it is fraught with terrible mean-  
ing for us all. If the foundations of  
this republic are to remain unshaken  
in the stress of the struggle that is  
even now looming darkly before us,  
it is the application, by all, of Tho-  
reau’s teachings that will avert or  
mitigate the disaster; if the end is  
to be only ravined ruin, then will his  
memory live in Literature as our  
everlasting reproach.”  
  
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Verily our ex-professor doth take  
Thoreau seriously; but there are  
other matters that he takes as seri-  
ously, namely, the misconceptions of  
Thoreau by all and sundry inepti-  
tudes; and on such occasions the ex-  
professor. certainly forgets the ameni-  
ties—but righteous wrath hath also  
its own peculiar Amen! Having said  
this much, it is due the reader that  
he should be allowed to get a glimpse  
of the ex-professor ina ‘spate.’ Here  
is an instance from the same lecture:  
  
“Now let us return to the shanty  
at, Walden Pond wherein Thoreau  
dwelt alone for some two and a half  
years, supporting himself solely by  
his own labor and living 80 ‘close to  
the bone.’ Lowell has written that  
Thoreau went there in the self-asser-  
tive mood of a hermit whose seclusion  
is a declaration of his non-dependence  
  
xxvi

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upon civilization. ‘His shanty life  
was a mere impossibility, so far as  
his own conception of it goes, as an  
entire independency of mankind. The  
tub of Diogenes has a sounder bot-  
tom. Thoreau’s experiment actually  
presupposed all that complicated civil-  
ization which it theoretically abjured.  
He squatted upon another man’s land;  
he borrows an axe; his boards, his  
nails, his bricks, his mortar, his books,  
his lamp, his fish-hooks, his plough,  
his hoe, all turn state's evidence  
against him as an accomplice in the  
sin of that artificial civilization which  
rendered it possible that such a per  
son as Henry D. Thoreau should ex-  
ist at all’ I question whether in all  
the history of criticism a blinder mis-  
conception can be found.”  
  
[Just here the ex-professor was  
xxvii

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evidently heated. He took the cus-  
tomary sip of water with which the  
professional lecturer prepares his  
learned larynx for its next innings.  
Having returned the handkerchief to  
the left hand coat-tail pocket, the  
ex-professor resumed.]  
  
“Tn the two royal-octavo volumes  
edited by Professor Norton, Letters  
of James Russell Lowell, there is a  
photogravure showing the poet sit-  
ting on the ground, by the bole of an  
ancient elm. His hat is off, his hair  
is parted in the middle (and this was  
fifty years ago!), his head is thrown  
forward so as to put his face in the  
most favorable position for pictorial  
effect; his whole attitude is of studied  
ease, and the hand nearest the spec-  
tator is—kid-gloved! Oh, the signi-  
ficance of that picture! Posing under  
  
xxviii

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an elm in whose branches the robins  
had built their nests long before the  
Norsemen’s prow had grated upon  
the sands of the New England coast;  
the small birds singing around the  
petted poet, the fragrance of summer  
filling the air, the scented breeze toy-  
ing with his curled locks, and he car-  
tying into that sanctuary—the kid  
glove of ‘Society’! Is this the man  
to comprehend the aim and purpose  
of Thoreau,—this leather and pru-  
nella combination of ‘civilization’ and  
‘culture’!  
  
“Yes; I am aware that I am  
speaking of a dead man, of a man  
whose pig weighed more than he  
thought it would, if one may judge  
from the tone of his own early let-  
ters; of one whose living tongue  
tasted the seducing sweetness of  
earthly fame; but there is another  
  
5 wxix

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dead man, one who was called away  
‘in the midst of his broken task,  
which none else can finish,’ and him  
the kid-gloved favorite of fame and  
fashion has flouted. There is a time  
for all things; a time for the sweet  
charity of silence, a time also for as-  
serting the grandeur of simple and  
sincere manhood: brown-handed man-  
hood that never saluted Nature with  
a kid glove. De mortuis nil nisi  
bonum? Yes; I'll stand by that  
sentiment; but it can also be read,  
De mortuis nil nisi verum: it is well  
also to stand by that!  
  
“Tt was Thoreau’s purpose at Wal-  
den Pond to find out just how much  
of Lowell's confessedly ‘complicated  
civilization’ was absolutely necessary  
in order that Man’s sojourn in Nature  
might be as sane and serene as be-  
came an immortal soul. Did he not  
  
max  
  
roo.

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plainly write, ‘I went to the woods  
because I wished to live deliberately,  
to front only the essential facts of life  
[kid gloves not being found in that  
inventory], and see if I could not  
learn what it had to teach, and not,  
when I came to die, discover that I  
had not lived. I did not wish to live  
what was not life, living is so dear;  
nor did I wish to practice resigna-  
tion, unless it was quite necessary. I  
wanted to live deep and suck all the  
marrow out of life, to live so sturdily  
and Spartan-like as to put to rout all  
that was not life, to cut a broad  
swath and shave close, to drive life  
into a corner, and reduce it to its  
lowest terms, and, if it proved to be  
mean, why then to get the whole and  
genuine meanness of it, and publish  
its meanness to the world; or if it  
were sublime, to know it by experi-  
xxxi

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ence, and be able to give a true ac-  
count of it in my next excursion.’  
  
“In my next excursion—that jour-  
ney made with closed eyes and folded  
hands; hands not kid-gloved; bare  
hands to lay hold on the realities be-  
yond this Vanity Fair that we in our  
ignorance call ‘Life.’  
  
“Of a truth, Lowell, a clergyman’s  
son, could not read the simple chart  
by which the son of the Concord  
pencil-maker shaped his course amidst  
the sunken rocks of Conventionality.”  
  
But the ex-professor’s foibles are  
making us forget the pen-and-ink in-  
terlineations that are yet awaiting  
their explanations.  
  
“I did not imagine,” said the ex-  
professor on the morning after his  
lecture on the Letters, “that any but  
  
sai

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sensible people would sit an hour to  
hear an old fellow talk about Tho-  
reau; but, sir, on going to the ap-  
pointed place, I found myself, and  
most unexpectedly, facing a parlour  
full of frills and fine linen. An ex-  
ceedingly well-dressed young man sat  
down at the piano, and he was im-  
mediately joined by another even  
more extraordinarily arrayed. One  
played and the other warbled some-  
thing in a tongue unknown to the  
builders of Babel, I’ll warrant. I  
have never in all my life felt so  
much out of place since the only  
woman to whom I ever proposed  
laughed outright in my face. But  
there was no escape; I was fairly in  
for it, and I did some curious think-  
ing whilst that nice young man was  
warbling. The music ceased, and there  
‘was a small storm of kid-gloved hand-  
xxxiii

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clapping. That disconcerted me still  
more; for there was my audience  
applauding some artistic noise which  
I felt in my very bones they did not  
understand. I had to make peaco  
with myself before I could begin  
with my exposition of the Thoreau  
letters; so I just told them right out  
what I had been thinking of whilst  
they were listening to that incompre-  
hensible singing. I told them I had  
been thinking of the rude homeliness  
of that shanty at Walden Pond, and  
that my peculiar environment just  
then nearly paralyzed me, and only  
that I had the courage of my convic-  
tions, I could not read the Thoreau  
letters then and there. Just then a  
distinguished-looking gentleman, with  
the greatest expanse of shirt-front I  
had ever seen during all my earthly  
career, adjusted an English monocle  
xxiv

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to his right eye and politely stared at  
me. Worse than all, it had not en-  
tered my mind that I should have  
bought a pair of kid gloves for the  
occasion.  
  
“It is astonishing how much ‘pun-  
ishment” well-bred people will take  
fully as smilingly as do all the  
‘faney’; but I held them down, sir,  
for a full hour of torment; and cer-  
tainly some things got into the talk  
that were not in the text. The next  
day a friend, whose wife was present,  
told me that when she was putting  
on her cloak, behind a screen in the  
robing room, she heard one ultra-  
fashionable lady say to another of the  
same species: “Well, I never was  
bored so in all my life!” Then I  
knew that I had scored a success.—  
Suppose I had talked down to the  
level of her comprehension!”  
  
xexv

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The ex-professor thereupon filled  
his pipe; the present editor found  
himself filled with reflections of  
which there is no need to make  
farther mention.  
  
xaxvi

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SOME UNPUBLISHED LET-  
TERS OF HENRY D. AND  
SOPHIA E. THOREAU.  
  
L  
THE FROUDE EPISODE.  
  
OW strangely human lives are  
  
interlinked: the chain of in-  
fluences beginning and ending how  
little we know where and when.  
At the first reading of Emerson’s  
Each and Al, who is not startled  
by the lines—  
Nor knowest thou what argument  
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed hath  
  
lent.  
  
Is not that enguiry a ‘flash-light? for  
the soul?  
3

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Into these mysterious relations and  
influences Time and Space enter not.  
Far remote is the little monastery at  
Zwolle, and five centuries have passed  
since the meckest of pietists put aside  
his pen, but if there is in this world  
to-day a spiritual influence of potent  
puissance it is Thomas of Kempen’s  
Imitatio Christi. The serene monk  
has vanished, and only Omniscience  
knoweth what argument his secluded  
life hath lent to the variant creeds of  
millions, who are now his ‘neighbors’  
in that Civitas Dei the son of Monica  
has made known to us,  
  
Say you, All that was so long  
ago! Well, would it lose anything  
of its mysteriousness if it were  
of this downright today? That  
which we call “to-day” also hath  
its mysteries, and not the least  
of them is this interlinking of our  
  
4

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lives through and by these occult  
influences. ©  
  
Here we are gathered to-night,  
some five hundred and twenty years  
after the birth of Thomas 4 Kempis,  
avowing his influence upon our lives.  
He that was Thomas & Kempis had  
lain in his grave twenty-one years  
before the prow of the Pinta was  
pointed towards the New World, yet  
here are we upon a beautiful pe-  
ninsula—‘“Peninsulam amenam”—  
therein, and actually indebted to a  
lady now in Italy, and whom it is  
little likely that any one of us hath  
ever met,—indebted, I say, to this  
remote stranger for the privilege of  
reading a letter written fifty years  
ago, never yet published, and having  
an interesting bearing upon the mat-  
ter that you have come together to  
hear about.  
  
5

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“145 Via Rasella, Rome,  
Dec’r 17, 1897.  
  
“Really, there is not much to tell  
about the Froude letter. Miss Sophia  
Thoreau sent for me, a few weeks  
before her death, to give me some  
last instructions and to ask my assis-  
tance in distributing personal things;  
and at the same time she gave me  
several letters for myself, among  
them this, knowing that I would  
value them as autographs.  
  
“My impression is that she feared  
people would think it too flattering,  
and for that or some other reason she  
did not at that time care to have it  
published.  
  
“She gave me other letters and  
manuscripts, requesting me to place  
them with my own hands in one of  
the trunks deposited in the Concord  
  
6

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Town Library, which were to be  
passed on to Mr. Blake (I think that  
was his name); I mean Thoreau’s  
literary executor. Had she wished  
this letter to be published she would  
undoubtedly have placed it with the  
manuscripts which I was to put in  
one of the boxes from which Mr.  
Blake was to select material for pub-  
lication.  
  
“I once showed it to Mr. Emer-  
son, who thought Mr. Blake should  
see it at once; but as it was given  
to me and not to him, and as I felt  
certain Miss Thoreau did not wish it  
published at that time, I did not act  
upon this advice.  
  
“I have often wondered why she  
did not put it with the papers which  
were to be placed in the box of man-  
uscripts. Her action was no doubt  
intentional, as we read the letter over  
  
7

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together about three weeks before  
her death: at the same time, I think  
  
there can be no harm in publishing  
it now.”  
  
So far as pertains to our purpose  
tonight I might go on at once to  
the Froude letter, but in so doing I  
should shirk a duty to the dead, for  
the discharging of which I am sure  
you will allow me a few moments.  
  
If you should open a certain Life  
of Thoreau you could read therein,  
“Mrs. Thoreau, with her sister Lou-  
isa, and her sisters-in-law, Sarah,  
Maria, and Jane Thoreau, took their  
share in the village bickerings”; and  
also that Mrs. Thoreau indulged in  
“sharp and sudden flashes of gossip  
and malice”: this and much else that  
is derogatory. Now Mrs, Thoreau  
died in 1873, and yet, in 1897, and  
  
8

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so casually, the Indy whose letter I  
am reading thus testifies to the high  
quality of the women of the Thoreau  
family:  
  
“The women of the Thoreau fam-  
ily seem to me quite as remarkable  
as the men; and people who knew  
John Thoreau considered him even  
cleverer and more promising than  
Henry and greatly lamented his un-  
timely death. Certainly both Helen,  
whom I never knew, and Sophia,  
whom I knew well, were exception-  
ally clever women. Sophia was ex-  
tremely witty, a brilliant conversa-  
tionalist, and her love of nature made  
her the most delightful of companions  
for a ramble through the woods and  
meadows.  
  
«Aunt Maria’ was, at the time I  
knew her, a sweet, gentle old lady  
  
6 9

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who occasionally wrote me charm-  
ing letters. Mrs. Thoreau, Henry’s  
mother, was full of kind feeling for  
everybody, and had a generous, help-  
fal spirit. She was most kind to all  
the children of her acquaintance,  
often devising entertainments for  
them; and I still have a vivid re-  
collection of the boxes of home-made  
sweets she used to send to me when  
T was away at school.”  
  
‘Are you quite ready to believe  
that “gossip and malice” could find  
an abiding place in such a heart as  
this?  
  
Now have we reached the letter.  
written when Froude had burned his  
ships and was submitted to the slings  
and arrows of the “black dragoons”  
on whom John Sterling had also  
turned his back.  
  
10

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Manchester, September 8, 1849.  
Dear Mr. Thoreau:  
  
I have long intended to write to  
you, to thank you for that noble ex-  
pression of yourself you were good  
enough to send me. I know not why  
T have not done so; except from a  
foolish sense that I should not write  
until I had thought of something to  
say that it would be worth your  
while to read.  
  
What can I say to you except ex-  
press the honour and the love I feel  
for you. An honour and a love  
which Emerson taught me long ago  
to feel, but which I feel now ‘not on  
account of his word, but because I  
myself have read and know you.  
  
When I think of what you are—  
of what you have done as\ well as  
what you have written, I have the  
  
ll

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right to tell you that there is no  
man living upon this earth at pres-  
ent, whose friendship or whose notice  
T value more than yours.  
  
What are these words! yet I wish-  
ed to say something —and I must use  
words, though they serve but seldom  
in these days for much but lies.  
  
In your book and in one other  
from your side of the Atlantic,  
“Margaret,” I see hope for the com-  
ing world; all else which I have  
found true in any of our thinkers  
(or even yours) is their flat denial of  
what is false in the modern popular  
jargon—but for their positive af:  
firming side, they do but fling us  
back upon our own human nature  
to hold on by that with our own  
strength. A few men here and there  
do this as the later Romans did—  
but mankind cannot, and I have gone  
  
12

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near to despair. I am growing not  
to despair, and I thank you for a  
helping hand.  
  
Well, I must see you some time  
or other. It is not such a great mat-  
ter with these steam bridges. I wish  
to shake hands with you and look a  
brave man in the face. In the mean-  
time I will but congratulate you on  
the age in which your work is cast:  
the world has never seen one more  
pregnant,  
  
God bless you!  
  
Your friend (if you will let him  
call you 30),  
  
J. A. Froude.  
  
There is so much between the  
  
lines here that one must go back to  
  
the middle of the present contury for  
  
aclue. In 1849 Froude, then a Fel-  
  
low of Exeter College, Oxford, pub-  
13

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lished a book—The Nemesis of Faith  
—which, immediately following in  
the wake of the “Oxford Movement,”  
gave a disagreeable shock to Angli-  
can Churchmen, lay and cleric. The  
scholarly Fellow of Exeter College  
had been coquetting with Catholicism.  
He had managed to lose the faith of  
his fathers, but had utterly failed to  
find any surrogate; before him surged  
a weltering waste, pitiless storm, and  
blinding darkness, and no place where-  
on to plant his way-worn feet.  
  
The obnoxious book was burned  
in the quadrangle by the Senior Fel-  
low of Oriel College; “the old, fa-  
miliar faces” either looked askance at  
the audacious doubter or were wholly  
averted; the Quarterlies were flooded  
with condemnatory reviews, in which  
even lay journalism participated —  
and this in America as well as Great  
  
u

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Britain,—and the author's every hope  
of place and preferment in the Estab-  
lished Church perished beyond all  
expectation of resurrection: for him  
there was no “benefit of the clergy.”  
Tt was a pitiful immolation, because  
a self-immolation. As Carlyle grimly  
told Froude—he should have “burned  
his own smoke.”  
  
The Nemesis of Faith is not a  
wholesome book to read, because it  
is not the doubt that is born of men-  
tal and therefore spiritual health.  
One need only read Froude’s previ-  
ous publication, The Shadows of the  
Clouds, to discover the morbid mind.  
The Nemesis of Faith is wholly de-  
structive—and in such high matters  
it is so fatally easy to destroy —it has  
not the shadow of an endeavor to  
provide a shelter for the soul: that is  
left naked, houseless, and homeless to  
  
15

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the ‘pitiless peltings of the storm of  
doubt and unbelief. It was a moral  
suicide in a moment of desperate  
aberration,—a soul's tragedy.  
Emerson knew some time before  
that something of this nature was im-  
minent. He wrote in his journal for  
April, 1848: “I had an old invita-  
tion from Mr. Clough, a Fellow of  
Oriel, and last week I had a new one  
from Dr. Daubeny, the botanical pro-  
fessor. I went on Thursday. I was  
housed close upon Oriel, though not  
within it, but I lived altogether upon  
college hospitalities, dining at Exeter  
College with Palgrave, Froude, and  
other Fellows, and breakfasting next  
morning at Oriel with Clough, Dr.  
Daubeny, ete. They all showed me  
the kindest attentions, . . . . but,  
much more, they showed me them-  
selves; who are so many of them  
16

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very earnest, faithful, affectionate,  
some of them highly gifted men;  
some of them, too, prepared to make  
great sacrifices for conscience's sake.  
Froude is a noble youth to whom my’  
heart warms; I shall soon see him  
again. Truly I became fond of these  
monks of Oxford.”  
  
Evidently there was one man in  
America to whom the devastating  
Nemesis of Faith did not come as a  
surprise.  
  
Of course Thoreau learned of  
Froude from Emerson’s lips, and  
read Emerson’s copy of that “incen-  
diary” book. That Thoreau should  
send Froude a copy of his own first  
book—then falling still-born from  
Munroe’s press—was only natural,  
considering the downrightness of that  
chapter in the work fancifully termed  
“Sunday.” Froude’s letter to Thoreau  
  
e Ww

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is the acknowledgment of the gift,  
and what an acknowledgment: “I  
have a right to tell you that there  
is no man living upon this earth at  
present, whose friendship or whose  
notice I value more than yours.”  
  
These men had so much in com-  
mon. Thoreau also had forsaken the  
faith of his fathers; but a serener  
‘pagan’ never shattered the shrines  
of the Saints. He could say, as an-  
other of our latter-day renunciants  
has said, “I need no assurances, I  
am a man who is preoccupied of his  
own soul.”  
  
Thoreau was too solidly self-centred  
to need assurances; yet he had be-  
come an author, and, being flesh and  
blood, his heart went out to his book  
as doth a mother’s to her first-born.  
But howsoever interpenetrated by a  
  
conviction, howsoever possessed by  
18

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it, howsoever driven by it, even to  
the forsaking of all that makes life  
dear, howsoever swerveless and in-  
domitable in service thereto, never-  
theless the solitary Thinker becomes  
as an armed host so soon as his con-  
vietion is shared by another. “I have  
gone near to despair. I am growing  
not to despair, and I thank you for a  
helping hand.” Such is the assurance  
that this long-hidden letter carried to  
Thoreau. His still-born book had  
found one fellow-man who believed  
it. One can readily imagine Thoreau  
reading that old letter in the leafy  
solitude of Walden woods, and the  
thought of his heart is written upon  
his sunburnt face: “My book may  
be a sealed volume to the multitude,  
‘eaviare to the general,’ but here is  
one to whom it is intelligible, speak-  
ing audibly to the soul of him. It is  
19

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enough if the book were written for  
him alone: is not every true book  
written for only him who can under-  
stand its message?”  
  
Froude had written, “I congratulate  
you on the age in which your work  
is cast.” Never did any compliment  
go farther astray. Thoreau had been  
obliged to publish at his own risk,  
and he had gone deeply into debt for  
the edition of one thousand volumes.  
Little heed did the ‘age’ take of his  
cena  
  
Four years after the date of  
Froude’s assuring letter, Thoreau  
wrote in his journal: “For a year  
or two past my publisher, falsely so  
called, has been writing from time to  
time to ask what disposition should  
be made of the copies of A Week on  
the Concord and Merrimack Rivers  
  
still on hand, and at last suggesting  
20

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that he had use for the room they oc-  
cupied in his cellar. So I had them  
all sent to me here, and they have  
arrived to-day by express, filling the  
man’s wagon, 706 copies out of an  
edition of 1000, which I bought of  
Munroe four years ago, and have  
been ever sine paying for and have  
not quite paid for yet. The wares  
are sent to me at last, and I have an  
opportunity to examine my purchase.  
They are something more substantial  
than fame, as my back knows, which  
has borne them up two flights of  
stairs to a place similar to that to  
which they trace their origin. Of the  
remaining 290 and odd, 75 were  
given away, the rest sold. I now  
have a library of nearly 900 volumes,  
over 700 of which I wrote myself,  
Is it not well that the author should  
  
behold the fruits of his labor? My  
21

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works are piled up on one side of my  
chamber as high as my head, my  
opera omnia. This is authorship,  
these are the works of my brain.  
There was just one piece of good  
luck in the venture. The unbound  
copies were tied up by the printer  
four years ago in stout paper wrap-  
pers, and inscribed: —  
  
H. D. Thoreau,  
Coneord River,  
50 cops.  
  
so Munroe had only to cross out  
“River” and write “Mass.,” and de-  
liver them to the expressman at  
once. I can now see what I write  
for, the result of my labors. Never-  
theless in spite of this result, sitting  
beside the inert mass of my works, I  
take up my pen tonight to record  
2

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Home of the Thoreau Family, Concord, Mass.  
It was in his bedroom in the attic of this house that Thoreau piled the 706 unsold  
copies of his first book. He died in the front room on the ground floor  
to the right of the main entrance.

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done Google

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what thought or experience I may  
have had, with as much satisfaction  
as ever. Indeed I believe that the  
result is more inspiring and better for  
me than if a thousand had bought  
my wares. It affects my privacy  
less and leaves me freer.”  
  
From all that I can learn of Tho-  
reau, I find no reason to doubt the  
sincerity of this imperturbability. I  
believed it to be sincere before I  
knew of the Froude letter; I am as-  
sured of it now that I have read it.  
Such are the secret sustainments of  
the Thinker, and such sustainments  
should be and ever will be vouch-  
safed; for is not he who brings a  
message to men an Ambassador from  
the Most High, and do not even the  
ravens feed such Ministers Plenipo-  
  
tentiary?  
  
23

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The assurance of the Fellow of  
Exeter College was grateful to the  
graduate of Harvard; but Belief is  
not the accident of a diploma or the  
prerogative of the aristocracy of Let-  
ters. Thoreau was to have another  
assurance, dearer no doubt to him be-  
cause its source was so much nearer  
the soil.

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IL  
THE BROTHER AND SISTER.  
  
N one of the quietest of American  
villages there dwelt an earnest  
reader of the Weekly Tribune in  
the days when Horace Greeley was  
at his best. In one issue thereof  
he found George Ripley's review of  
Thoreau’s second book, Walden, or,  
Life in the Woods. ‘The reviewer  
had made many lengthy citations  
from this most awakening work, and  
the reading of these set aflame the  
heart of the distant reader. He  
wrote to the publishers for and ob-  
tained a copy. From the title-page  
of Walden he learned that Thoreau  
was also the author of another book,  
the still-bom Week on the Concord  
a 25

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and Merrimack Rivers. This parti-  
cular work the Michigan man soon  
found that he could not get from the  
publishers of Walden, nor could they  
inform him where it might be had, so  
utterly had Munroe’s publication dis-  
appeared from the market. But the  
tang of Walden had “touched the  
spot” and the hungry man was ra-  
venous for a taste of the Week. He  
had to write to Thoreau himself ask-  
ing where that book could be bought;  
and thus began the correspondence,  
which I shall read with whatever of  
explanation I may be able to give.  
Please bear in mind the situation:  
piled up in that garret-chamber, ‘as  
high as my head,’ are the seven hun-  
dred rejected books—cast into the  
“age” and by it most unmistakably  
cast out. Four years had they lain  
  
in Munroe’s cellar,—more than once  
26  
  
Base

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had he tried to get rid of them, and  
at last had ‘suggested’ that while  
there appeared to be no earthly use  
for them, he, James Munroe, ‘had use  
for the room they occupied in his cel-  
lar.’ For two years and two months  
had they found friendly shelter in the  
garret of John Thoreau. Behold! an  
enthusiastic letter from a distant stran-  
ger; one man who will not rest until  
he has read the ignored Week. Ob-  
serve, if you please, the quiet calm of  
Thoreau’s reply.  
  
Concord, Jan. 18th, 1856.  
Dear Sir:  
  
Tam glad to hear that my “ Wal-  
den” has interested you—that per-  
chance it holds some truth still as  
far off as Michigan. I thank you  
“for your note,  
  
The “ Week” had so poor a pub-  
  
27

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lisher that it is quite uncertain whe-  
ther you will find it in any shop. T  
am not sure but authors must turn  
Booksellers themselves. The price is  
$1.25. If you care enough for it to  
send me that sum by mail (stamps  
will do for change), I will forward  
you a copy by the same conveyance.  
As for the “more” that is to come,  
I cannot speak definitely at present,  
but I trust that the mine—be it silver  
or lead—is not yet exhausted. At  
any rate, I shall be encouraged by  
the fact that you are interested in its  
  
yield. Yours respectfully,  
Henry D. Thoreau.  
  
[So poor a publisher,” indeed. It  
  
was this same James Munroe that  
  
published Emerson’s Nature; and it  
  
took him twelve years to sell an edi-  
  
tion of five hundred copies. Verily,  
28

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“authors must turn booksellers them-  
selves.” “The price is $1.25.” A  
copy of the first edition of Thoreau’s  
Week for one dollar and twenty-five  
cents! Go to, thou author-bookseller,  
thou art not up to the trade values of  
books! Every one of the very vol-  
umes that James Munroe had no  
‘room’ for, now finds warm welcome  
to the selectest of private libraries at  
—eighteen dollars a copy! If the  
reader wishes to recognize those cop-  
ies which were bought from ‘Thoreau  
himself he will turn to page 396. On  
the bottom margin he will find six  
lines written in pencil and by Tho-  
reau himself: the addition being so  
much of the original text as was  
overlooked by the compositor— Ep. ]  
  
It is hardly fair that I should go  
any farther until I have told you  
29

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some little about Thoreau’s Michi-  
gan correspondent. He was born in  
1817, the same year as Thoreau, and  
was once a student at Oberlin, Ohio.  
“They wanted to make a ‘preacher’  
of me,” said he—quickly adding in  
the manner of one who has just  
missed a peril, “Gracious! I had a  
narrow escape.” In fact, my aged  
friend has all the qualifications for  
‘Thoreau’s ‘Sunday School.’ Pity it  
is, but his ’doxy is not Orthodoxy be-  
cause it is n’t your ’doxy. His is the  
doubt that is born of the supremest  
humility. Few indeed are they that  
understand it; but it matters not.  
Whosoever has read Walden will  
readily understand what that book  
had in it for the “wandering sheep”  
that had escaped from the Oberlin  
fold; they will as readily imagine  
with what haste he forwarded the  
30

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one dollar and a quarter for a copy  
of the Week.  
  
Concord, Feb. 10, °56.  
Dear Sir:  
  
I forwarded to you by mail on  
the 81st of January a copy of my  
“Week,” post paid, which I’ trust  
that you have received. I thank you  
heartily for the expression of your  
interest in “Walden” and hope that  
you will not be disappointed by the  
“Week.” You ask how the former  
has been received. It has found an  
audience of excellent character, and  
quite numerous, some 2000 copies  
having been dispersed. I should con-  
sider it a greater success to interest  
one wise and earnest soul, than a  
million unwise and frivolous.  
  
You may rely on it that you have  
the best of me in my books, and that  
  
3L

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T am not worth seeing personally,  
the stuttering, blundering clod-hopper  
that Iam. Hven poetry, you know,  
is in one sense an infinite brag and  
exaggeration. Not that I do not  
stand on all that I have written—  
but what am I to the truth I feebly  
utter!  
  
T like the name of your county—  
may it grow men as sturdy as its  
trees. Methinks I hear your flute  
echo amid the oaks, Is not yours,  
too, a good place to study theology?  
Thope that you will erelong recover  
your turtle-dove, and that it may  
bring you glad tidings out of that  
heaven in which it disappeared.  
  
Yours sincerely,  
Henry D. Thoreau.  
  
(I am not sure but authors must  
turn booksellers themselves.” Indeed!  
8  
  
‘> ~\*

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«I should consider it: a greater success  
to interest one wise and earnest soul  
than a million unwise and frivolous!”  
No wonder that James Munroe had  
not cellar-room for the books of such  
a “stuttering, “blundering clod-hop-  
per.”—Ep.]  
  
After reading the Week the Michi-  
gan man wished to share the good tid-  
ings of great joy with others. There  
was a distant relation, an upright  
member of an orthodox sect; he must  
have a copy of the Week: it may  
show him how fast asleep he is! The  
book was mailed to the somnolent  
saint from Thoreau direct; but it had  
been as well to have sent a copy of  
Eliot's Indian Bible.  
  
My aged friend chuckles when he  
tells you that this very copy of the  
Week was subsequently borrowed by  
  
e 33

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a Presbyterian preacher and—never  
returned!  
  
On the same occasion a copy of  
both Walden and the Week were  
ordered for a brother in California.  
‘These arrived safely; and they were  
read and pondered under the shade  
of the great Sequoias, in the silence  
of the forest primeval. Both author  
and reader are long since where no  
shadows cloud the page. In the lu-  
‘men siccum of Eternity the Thinker  
has learned “what argument his life  
to his brother's creed had lent.”  
  
Concord, May 31st, ’56.  
  
Dear Sir:  
T forwarded by mail a copy of my  
“ Week,” post paid to.... , accord-  
  
ing to your order, about ten days ago,  
or on the receit [sic] of your note.  
Iwill obtain and forward a copy  
8t

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of “Walden” and also of the “Week”  
to California, to your order, post  
paid, for $2.60. The postage will be  
between 60 and 70 cents.  
  
I thank you heartily for your kind  
intentions respecting me. The West  
has many attractions for me, parti-  
cularly the lake country and the In-  
dians, yet I do foresee what my en-  
gagements may be in the fall. I  
have once or twice came near going  
West a-lecturing, and perhaps some  
winter may bring me into your neigh-  
borhood: in which case I should  
probably see you. Yet lecturing has  
commonly proved so foreign and irk-  
some to me, that I think I could only  
use it to acquire the means with  
which to make an independent tour  
another time.  
  
As for my pen, I can say that it  
is not altogether idle, though I have  
  
35

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finished nothing new in the book  
  
‘form. I am drawing a rather long  
  
bow, though it may be a feeble one,  
  
but I pray that the archer may re-  
  
ceive new strength before the arrow  
  
is shot.  
  
With many thanks, yours truly,  
  
Henry D. Thoreau.  
  
When forwarding the money for  
the last books ordered, a likeness of  
Thoreau was solicited, and having  
learned in some way that Thoreau  
was “poor,” a five-dollar bill was  
enclosed in payment for the books  
and the desired picture, and it was  
requested that Thoreau should keep  
the balance “for his trouble.” The  
reply to this kindly device is charac-  
teristic.

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Henry D. Thoreau, age 39.  
  
From a daguerreotype by B. D. Maxham, of  
‘Woreester, Mass., taken in 1856.

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Concord, Saturday, June 21st, 56.  
Dear Sir:  
  
On the 12 ult. I forwarded the  
two books to California, observing  
your directions in every particular,  
and I trust that Uncle Sam will dis-  
charge his duty faithfully. While in  
Worcester this week I obtained the  
accompanying daguerreotype—which  
my friends think is pretty good—  
though better looking than I.  
  
Books and postage . . $2.64  
Daguerreotype. . . 50  
Postage... . 16  
  
3.30  
500  
  
330 You will accordingly  
  
find 170 enclosed with my shadow.  
Yrs  
  
Henry D. Thoreau.  
  
37

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4  
  
Thoreau had a poor throat for  
charity soup, no matter how taste-  
fully it had been flavored. . Books  
and postage, $2.64; Daguerreotype:  
and its postage, .66; Total, $3.30.  
Balance due you $1.70, and you will  
accordingly find $1.70 enclosed with  
my shadow.” This holograph pre-  
sents the poorest chirography of them  
all, the signature differing markedly  
from all the others. Yes, there was  
a shadow on his face when he wrote,  
for this is the only letter signed,  
curtly enough, “Yrs.” instead of the  
accustomed “Yours truly” or “sin-  
cerely.”  
  
A little matter, do you say? Pre-  
cisely; but did it never occur to you  
that the significances of life are in  
just its “little matters”? It is what  
we do and how, when not the great  
world is the spectator, but when the  
  
38

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self is alone with the selfhood; then  
the undertone of character is heard,  
the ‘still small voice’ speaking audi-  
bly to the soul above all the roaring  
din of the mighty Babylon of which  
so many of us are in such cowardly  
dread.  
  
That now aged man with whom  
Thoreau was then corresponding is  
indeed a most remarkable man. But  
I question if he is at all adapted for  
the latitude and longitude of .....  
[The editor takes the liberty of sup-  
pressing the name.] No; we are like  
the Baltimore oysters labelled “extra  
selects.” We should only mortify  
in a can of common oysters; so we  
have an uncommon can of our own.  
The name, it is true, isn’t ‘blown in  
the bottle’; but it is stamped on our  
“tin.” I do not believe we would  
allow such an one as Thoreau’s corre-  
  
39

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spondent in our select can; nor do I  
believe Thoreau would have written  
a line to an “extra select.” How-  
ever, this sterling man, who owes  
little to the school and less to the  
college, had vouchsafed unto him the  
divine gift of insight. He is one of  
that rare few who are endowed with  
prescient foresight; most of us have  
only a purblind hindsight. We see  
the landscapes of life only after they  
have been passed, we discern the  
great ones of life only after they are  
dead—wee. are the “extra selects”!  
  
[The editor is utterly unable to ac-  
count for this rude and wholly un-  
warrantable outburst. Not a city of  
its size contains more people that are  
‘nice to know’; not any the largest  
city outdoes it in culture and clegant  
refinement. ‘The ex-professor was  
  
40

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recently asked if he did not mean  
that we are the “extra elects.” His  
reply is not adapted for polite ears.  
Though it may cost him the friend-  
ship of the ex-professor, the editor  
trusts that he, at least, has done his  
duty to Society.)  
  
Thoreau’s meaning in this universe  
is no more a secret to this untutored  
man dwelling in remote Michigan  
than it was to the learned Fellow of  
Exeter College or to that graduate of  
Harvard who pitched his tent in Con-  
cord and taught America to think.  
Can you imagine what it implies to  
have “discovered” Thoreau in those  
early days; or do you imagine that  
Nature’s “extra selects” are marked  
with a stencil-plate? ‘Try and im-  
agine what a consuming fervor is  
enkindled when a true Book is speak-  
  
i 4

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ing to the soul of man—his heart  
with hero-worship all aflame. If you  
have been capable of doing this, then  
you can conceive what fervid letters  
were sent, in those earlier days, from  
one earnest man in the distant West  
to that imperturbable and self-pos-  
sessed man in “old Concord,” and  
that conception will invest the next  
of Thoreau’s letters with something  
  
deeper than the mere surface-reading  
shows.  
  
Concord, July 8th, '57.  
Dear Sir:  
  
You are right in supposing that I  
have not been Westward. I am very  
little of a traveller. I am gratified  
to hear of the interest you take in  
my books; it is additional encourage-  
ment to write more of them. Though  
  
2

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my pen is not idle, I have not pub-  
lished anything for a couple of years  
at least. I like a private life, and  
cannot bear to have the public in my  
mind.  
  
You will excuse me for not re-  
sponding more heartily to your notes,  
since I realize what an interval there  
always is between the actual and im-  
agined author and feel that it would  
not be just for me to appropriate the  
sympathy and good will of my un-  
seen readers.  
  
Nevertheless, I should like to meet  
you, and if I ever come into your  
neighborhood shall endeavor to do so.  
Can't you tell the world of your  
life also? Then I shall know you,  
at least as well as you me.  
  
Yours truly,  
Henry D. Thoreau.  
  
43

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They never met in the flesh; but  
there is an old man in the West pa-  
tiently waiting for a meeting where  
heart answers unto heart as face unto  
face in the refiner’s silver.  
  
An unbroken silence of more than  
two years followed this last letter. In  
the interval America was preparing  
to make history; chapters that should  
be written with her best blood and  
the first page with that of a hero—  
a man in whom was incarnated the  
high purpose of the Lord God Om-  
nipotent.  
  
There, in Virginia, Captain John  
Brown lay captive, “wounded and in  
prison.” Even an Abolition paper  
called him a ‘madman’ for that  
which he had tried to do. The  
doughfaces of the North sweat clam-  
mily; the “friends of the Union”  
  
trembled for the safety of that fabric;  
“4 5

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universal consternation petrified the  
people. In that supreme moment  
a single voice was lifted up in the  
vestry-room of the little church in  
Concord wherein the first American  
Congress had held solemn delibera-  
tions. It was a voice that spake un-  
der protest in which joined alike  
Whig, Democrat, and Abolitionist.  
“That speech should not be uttered;  
it is tmwise, injudicious; it will do  
more harm than good,” ete., ete. “I  
did not send to you for advice, but to  
announce that I am to speak”—and  
speak he did. It was Sunday even-  
ing, the thirtieth of October. The  
very next evening that intrepid voice  
was heard again, in Tremont Temple,  
and yet again in Worcester on the  
Wednesday following. It was the  
voice of one man; one man in fifty  
millions having the courage of his  
45

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convictions; one man God-appointed  
to show a nation its way as the dark-  
ness was gathering around it and  
not a politician had the courage to  
strike a match to light the flickering  
tallow-dip of Policy.  
  
‘The Western man read accounts of  
this one fearless voice, and wrote to  
Thoreau asking for the words he  
alone had dared to speak.  
  
Concord, Nov. 24th, ’59.  
Dear Sir:  
  
The lectures which you refer to  
were reported in the newspapers, after  
a fashion. The last one in some half  
dozen of them, and if I possessed  
one, or all, I would send them to  
you, bad as they are. The best, or  
at least longest one of the Boston  
Lecture was in the Boston “Atlas  
and Bee” of Nov. 2nd—may be  
  
46

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half the whole [speech]. There were  
others in the “ Traveller,” the “ Jour-  
nal,” &e., of the same date.  
  
Iam glad to know that you are  
interested to see my things, and I  
wish I had them in printed form to  
send to you. I exerted myself con-  
siderably to get the last discourse  
printed and sold for the benefit of  
Brown’s family—but the publishers  
are afraid of pamphlets, and it is  
now too late,  
  
I return the stamps which I have  
not used.  
  
T shall be glad to see you if I ever  
come your way.  
  
Yours truly,  
Henry D. Thoreau.  
  
This holograph is very striking in  
  
its mute significance. The words  
  
seemed to leap from Thoreau’s pen.  
47

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In fifteen different instances two  
words are written without taking the  
pen from the paper, in eight others  
three are thus continuously written,  
and in one line there are four impe-  
tnously chained together. There is  
nothing of this in the other five  
holographs. But, curiously, the sig-  
nature to this last is the largest, bold-  
est, clearest, and by far the best of  
them all. It reminds one of John  
Hancock’s sign-manual on the De-  
claration of Independence, Surely,  
Massachusetts writes a fine hand on  
occasion !  
  
There remained for Thoreau only  
two years and a half of his Lehryahre:  
then he was “translated.” Trans-  
lated? Do they not say that of a  
Bishop when he is exalted? Even  
40; but is not Thoreau also a “bishop  
of souls”? There is now no obscur-  
  
48

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ing rafter between him and the Un-  
speakable One who clothed him in  
clay that he might do his appointed  
work in the Universe—this little  
world his seed-field. Yes, it is the  
right word; it is his sorrowing sis-  
ter’s word. He was “translated” one  
beautiful Spring morning. It was on  
the sixth of May, 1862.  
  
‘And now that sister is the Concord  
correspondent of him who long had  
waited and hoped for Thorean to  
“come this way.”  
  
Concord, June 24th, 1862.  
Dear Sir:  
  
It gives me pleasure to acknow-  
ledge your note of the 18th instant,  
and I desire to thank you for the  
very friendly sympathy which you  
have manifested for us in this season  
of sorrow and afftiction.  
  
9 49

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My mother and myself are the  
only surviving members of a fam-  
ily once numbering siz. My ‘elder  
brother, for whom you enquire, died  
twenty years ago, nect a precious  
sister was called, and three years  
since my dear Father left us.  
  
My brother Henry's illness com-  
menced a year ago last December.  
During seventeen months never a  
murmur escaped him. I wish that  
I could describe the wonderful sim-  
plicity and child-like trust with  
which he accepted every experience,  
As he said, “he never met with a  
disappointment in his life, because he  
always arranged so as to avoid it.”  
“He learned when he was a very  
little boy that he must die, and of  
course he was not disappointed when  
his time came.” Indeed we cannot  
  
50

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‘feel that he has died, but rather (has)  
been translated.  
  
On one occasion he remarked to  
‘me that he considered perfect disease  
as agreeable as perfect health, since  
the mind always conformed to the  
condition of the body.  
  
I never knew any one who set so  
great a value on Time as did my  
brother; he continued to busy him-  
self all through his sickness, and dur-  
ing the last few months of his life he  
edited ‘many papers for the press,  
and he did not cease to call for his  
manuscripts till the last day of his  
life.\*  
  
While we suffer an irreparable  
loss in the departure of my most  
  
\* “No man ever lived who paid more ardent  
and unselfish attention to his business.”  
John Weise,  
  
BL

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gifted brother, still we are comforted  
and cheered by the memory of his  
pure and virtuous soul; and it is a  
great consolation to know that he  
possessed a spirit so attuned to the  
beauties and harmonies of Nature  
that the color of the sky, the fra-  
grance of the flowers and the music  
of the birds ministered unceasingly  
to his pleasure. He was the hap-  
piest of mortals. This world a par-  
adise. “Where there is knowledge,  
where there is virtue, where there is  
beauty, where there is progress, there  
ts now his home.”  
  
You ask the name of my brother's  
traveling companion. Mr...., a  
near neighbor and intimate friend,  
most frequently accompanied him  
in his walks, In the lines on page  
twenty-second of “The Week” you  
  
52  
  
ow

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Henry D. Thoreau, age 37.  
  
From a crayon portrait drawn in 1854 by Samuel W. Rowse.  
‘The original is in the Concord Free Library.

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will find a reference to this same  
Sriend. Mr. ... wrote the lines  
sung at my brother's funeral. So  
sincere is his friendship for Henry,  
that, I doubt not, any token of esteem  
you may bestow for his sake, upon  
him, will be acceptable.  
  
Within a few weeks we have had  
some photographs taken from a  
crayon portrait of my brother. The  
crayon drawing was made two years  
before Henry sent you his Dauguer-  
reotype. Will you accept the inclosed  
picture? His friends all consider  
it an excellent likeness. My mother  
unites with me in very kind regards  
to yourself. It would afford us plea~  
sure to see you at any time, Concord  
is the home of many worthies, Em-  
erson, Alcott, Hawthorne, Channing,  
&e., all valued friends of my brother.  
  
58

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I trust that you may be attracted to  
this neighborhood.  
Yours very truly,  
S. B. Thoreau.  
P.S. received, by to-day’s mail,  
@ very appreciative notice of my  
brother from the pen of Storrow  
Higginson, formerly a pupil in Mr.  
Sanborn's school. I think the article  
would interest you. It is contained  
in the May number of the “ Harvard  
Magazine.” In the “ Atlantic Month-  
ly” for August you may look for a  
memorial by Mr. Emerson.  
  
“He considered perfect diseaso as  
agreeable as perfect health, since the  
mind always conformed to the condi-  
tion of the body.” Where is there a  
more memorable observation? One  
month before, Sophia had written to  
Mr. Ricketson: “You ask me for  
54  
  
mee

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some particulars regarding Henry’s  
illness. I feel like saying that Henry  
was never affected, never reached by  
it. I never saw such a manifestation  
of the power of spirit over matter.  
Very often I have heard him tell his  
visitors that he enjoyed existence as  
much as ever. He remarked to me  
that there was as much comfort in  
perfect disease as in perfect health,  
the mind always conforming to the  
condition of the body.”  
  
There is the difference of a single  
word in these two statements: “com-  
fort” in one letter, “agreeable” in  
the other. If the sentiment had been  
“cooked” for dramatic effect, there  
would not have been the shadow of  
a variation.  
  
Of all writers, Thoreau is he whom  
we must read believingly. Indeed,  
he had long before left evidence of  
  
35

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the unimpeachable truthfulness of this  
remarkable death-bed declaration.  
  
“I am confined to the house by  
bronchitis, and so seek to content  
myself with that quiet and serene  
life there is in a warm corner by the  
fireside, and see the sky through the  
chimney-top. Sickness should not be  
allowed to extend farther than the  
body. We need only retreat far-  
ther within us, to preserve uninter-  
rupted the continuity of serene hours  
to the end of our lives. As soon as  
I find my chest is not of tempered  
steel and my heart of adamant, I bid  
goodby to them and look out for a  
new nature. I will be liable to no acci-  
dents.”— Journal, Feb’y 14th, 1841.  
  
Twenty-two years later, brought  
to the supreme test, he proved the  
56

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genuineness of his philosophy. He  
takes his place beside Socrates, Epic-  
tetus, Marcus Aurelius:  
  
“A soul supreme, in each hard  
instance tried.”  
  
The crayon portrait—now in the  
Concord Free Library—was drawn  
by Samuel Worcester Rowse, and  
may safely be accepted as ‘an excel-  
lent likeness’ of Thoreau without a  
beard. Writing from England to  
Professor Norton, the poet Clough  
bears this testimony to the fidelity of  
Rowse’s crayons: “Child brought me  
your present of Emerson’s picture,  
which is really, I think, the best por-  
trait of any living and known-to-me  
man that I have ever seen. It is a  
great pleasure to possess it.” One  
year later, he had not changed his  
  
b 57

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mind:—When is Rowse coming  
over? Will you give him a letter to  
me? I continue to think his picture  
of Emerson the best portrait I know  
of anyone I know.”  
  
Sophia Thoreau’s letter was writ-  
ten seven weeks after her brother's  
death,—the fresh wound still bleed-  
ing. Poor, stricken, lonely sister!  
Bereaved of such a brother, mourn-  
ing for the ‘irreparable loss,’ yet  
prouder of her brother dead than of  
the countless carcases strutting in the  
sunlight and kept from stinking on-  
ly by the cheap salt of civilization.  
Poor Sophia! she was quoting from  
her recollections of that beautiful  
spring day when Emerson spoke the  
eulogy over her brother's coffin. But,  
pardonably enough, she had mis-  
quoted. Emerson had said: “His soul  
  
was made for the noblest society; he  
58

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had in a short time exhausted the  
capabilities of this world; wherever  
there is knowledge, wherever there  
is virtue, wherever there is beauty,  
he will find a home.” He also said:  
«The scale on which his studies pro-  
ceeded was so large as to require  
longevity, and we were the less pre-  
pared for his sudden disappearance.  
The country knows not yet, or in the  
least part, how great a son it has lost.  
Tt seems an injury that he should  
leave in the midst of his broken task,  
which none else can finish,—a kind  
of indignity to so noble a soul that it  
should depart out of Nature before  
yet he has been shown to his peers  
for what he is. But he, at least, is  
content.”  
  
O my friends, having the clear  
testimony of his sister’s letter and  
also Emerson’s confirmation of Tho-  
  
59

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reau’s deep ‘content,’ can we not say  
with that sister, “of course he was  
not disappointed when his time  
came.” But, can such a life be in  
any sense a failure, in any sense be  
incomplete; is an early home-call an  
‘injury’; is it indeed an ‘indignity’  
to be summoned from this pitiful  
Vanity Fair by the Master of the  
Vineyard?  
  
Concord, Oct. 20, 1862.  
Dear Friend:  
  
Absence from home together with  
illness must be my apology for not  
before acknowledging your last kind  
letter,  
  
Certainly it will give me much  
pleasure to present the walking-cane  
which you propose to send to Mr.  
. , who feels keenly the depar-  
  
60  
  
ee

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ture of my precious brother, and who  
will value any token of friendship  
shown to his memory.  
  
Lam very glad that you have seen  
Higginson’s article, It was an out-  
burst of affection from his young  
heart which gratified me much.  
  
Iwas fortunate lately in receiving  
from Mr. Emerson a specimen of  
the “ Edelweisse,” Gnaphalium leonto-  
podium, which was sent to him by a  
friend who brought the plant from  
Tyrol. How I wish dear Henry  
could have seen it.  
  
I can never tell you how much I  
enjoyed copying and reading aloud  
my brother's manuscripts last winter  
when he was preparing them for the  
press. The paragraph which you  
quote from the essay on “ Walking”  
impressed and charmed me particu-  
larly, I remember; and I am glad  
  
61

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to hear you express your satisfaction  
in regard to the whole article.  
  
I doubt not that ere this you have  
enjoyed the paper on “Autumnal  
Tints.” I am sure that my dear  
Brother went to his grave as grace-  
‘fully as the leaves in autumn. [The  
Poor sister means, as undisturbedly as  
the leaf flashes into all the gleaming  
glory of the rainbow and silently  
obeys the Divine behest that ordains  
its death when Autumn winds grow  
chill] Oh! that you could have  
Known him personally: he was  
wonderfully gifted in conversation.  
[Aye; and now there is only silence  
and the patient waiting for the gra-  
cious manumission of Death!)  
  
Thank you for the hints relating  
to yourself and family. What you  
say about enjoying the days as if  
they were made expressly for your-  
  
62

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self denotes a spirit of rare content-  
ment, which I am happy to know  
you possess,  
  
My mother joins with me in kind  
regards to yourself and family.  
  
Trusting to see you at some future  
time, I remain,  
  
Very truly yours,  
‘S. EB. Thoreau.  
  
There has been no abatement in  
that ‘spirit of rare contentment.’  
That quiet home in the West is  
radiant therewith, as I can testify.  
Cheerful and serene, the old-time  
friend of Thoreau and “Mother” are  
meekly waiting, —  
  
“Their faces shining with the light  
Of duties beautifully done.”

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Concord, March 4th, 1863.  
Dear Friend:  
  
Tam happy to inform you of the  
safe arrival of the cane. The pack-  
age reached me last evening.  
  
It was with mingled feelings of  
pleasure and pain that T looked on  
this gift—a rare instance of friend-  
ship, most worthily bestowed.  
  
I handed the cane at once to Mr.  
  
- , who expressed great satis-  
faction.  
  
The article is very chaste and  
beautiful. I should like to know the  
name of the wood.  
  
Allow me to thank you for this  
token; it would have been fully ap-  
preciated by my departed brother.  
  
Mis x se will communicate with  
you, [Which he certainly did and  
after the manner of his species.)  
  
“a

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It may interest you to know that  
our afftictions have been heightened  
by an accident which happened to  
my dear mother, early in the season:  
—she fell down a long staircase,  
breaking her right arm and other-  
wise seriously injuring herself. Now,  
however, she is slowly recovering,  
and joins with me in very kind re-  
membrances to yourself and family.  
  
Yours truly,  
S. B. Thoreau.  
  
“Allow me to thank you.” The  
italics are in the original. “Mr. ...  
will communicate with you”—though  
in what manner this deponent saith  
not. This is the meaning of the itali-  
cised “me.” Well, here is the ‘com-  
munication’ from the recipient of a  
most unique cane, originally designed  
i 65

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for Thoreau himself, but arriving  
from distant California too late.  
  
Concord, March 4, 1863.  
Dear Sir:  
  
The cane arrived at this place last  
evening and was delivered to me, in  
perfect order.  
  
Ba Yok.  
  
I have in my keeping the very  
express-receipt that was issued to  
the donor of the cane, and it contains  
just as much pathos as the recipient’s  
“communication”—and not an iota  
less! This cold-storage ‘communica  
tion’ of Mr. X. Y. Z. is sui generis—  
and yet we are told that only the  
amphibia have oval blood-corpuscles.  
  
The cane was of manzanita wood,  
the handle was made from a buffalo  
horn, and the silver mountings were  
  
66

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engraved with appropriate quotations  
from Thorean’s writings. It was a  
pious thank-offering from the two  
brothers—one in the far West and  
the other in California; but Death  
was swifter than friendship, and the  
belated tribute was given to the dead  
man’s dearest friend. X. Y. Z.’s note-  
let contains just sixteen words, not  
one of which will spell “Thanks”;  
but there are two and one-half pages  
of “Complementary mottoes,” nine-  
teen in all: as if this grateful friend  
of Thoreau had said, “Two can play  
at that game!” Verily, we are “fear-  
fully and wonderfully made.”  
  
I hold in my hand Sophia Tho-  
reau’s last letter to the Western man.  
Her mother had died, the broken  
home had become to the solitary  
mourner as a grave; its every room  
was haunted by the “old familiar  
  
67

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faces,” but the dear lips are silent—  
and that is the silence that kills.  
  
Concord, May 24th, 1873.  
Dear Mr... 24:  
  
After several drool alana 15:  
turned yesterday to Concord, to find  
the volume of poems you had so  
kindly forwarded, and without stop-  
ping to cut the leaves I hasten to  
thank you most heartily for this  
friendly remembrance,  
  
Just now I am about to leave  
Concord, and shall make my home  
in Bangor, Maine. Mr. F. B. San-  
born’s family will occupy my house.  
  
Perhaps you are aware that my  
precious mother departed a year since.  
  
You will be interested to know  
that Mr. Channing has written a  
memoir of my brother, which will  
soon appear.  
  
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Mr. X. Y. Z. is as whimsical as  
ever—not calling at my house or  
recognizing me on the street for the  
past six years.  
  
We are looking for Mr. Emer-  
son’s return [from Europe] and the  
town will give him a cordial recep-  
tion. I hope you may see our village  
again: its charms increase from  
year to year.  
  
I promise myself much pleasure in  
the poems when a little leisure is af-  
forded me.  
  
Please excuse this hasty note and  
believe me,  
  
Yours truly,  
S. E. Thoreau,  
  
Twelve days after the burial of her  
brother Henry, Sophia Thoreau wrote  
to Mr. Daniel Ricketson: “Profound  
  
joy mingles with my grief. I feel as  
69

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if something beautiful had happened  
—not death.”  
  
‘And something beautiful had in-  
deed happened—another of the  
countless miracles that surround us  
here: a soul leveling this lift that it  
may go on to a higher; a soul that  
also had for its last countersign the  
« Hquanimitas” of the dying Roman  
Emperor; a soul that found ‘per-  
fect disease as agreeable as perfect  
health’; a soul to which this world  
was a paradise—a “Paradise Re-  
gained” by the clear sanity of su-  
preme submission to the Maker; a  
soul that at the home-call left the  
only paradise it had ever seen and  
the purest delights that mere man  
can ever know,—left all as serenely  
and grandly as the setting sun sinks  
through the purple glory whose last  
refalgence gives the promise of  
another day.  
  
70

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Sophia Thoreau bade farewell to  
the “charming village” wherein she  
had known the unspeakable delight  
of companionship with such a brother  
and also the unutterable pang of part-  
ing which that ‘something beautiful’  
we call ‘death’ entails. Think of her  
loneliness, of her last visit to that  
quiet hilltop in Sleepy Hollow: fa-  
ther, mother, sister, and brothers  
there; she the last lone lingerer  
here.  
  
She was in Bangor two short  
years, and then “something beauti-  
fal” happened again: a family re-  
union where the amaranth forever  
blooms, where there is no night,  
where never a tear is known save  
those of that Divine compassion  
which is “touched with the feeling  
of our infirmities.”  
  
a

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Sophia E. Thoreau.  
  
From a daguerreotype found among her effects  
after her death. Heretofore unpublished.

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done Google

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APPENDIX.  
Two Visits to Concord, Mass.  
  
Prom an ot Diag.) Coirene Eatene  
  
Sept. 1st, 1863. Arrived at Concord about  
5 p. m. Stopped at the Middlesex House.  
Soon after, went across the way to @ book-  
store and bought a copy of the “Boston Com-  
monwealth.” On the first page found Tho-  
reau’s poem “The Departure,”  
In this roadstead I have ridden,  
  
‘This is the first publication of it, I accepted  
it as.8 sort of introduction meant for me.  
  
‘This [place] appears like a quite orderly,  
staid New England town and somewhat re-  
minds me of Oberlin, Ohio, twenty years ago.  
  
Somehow, I feel a singular contentedness  
and as if my good genius had, for the time,  
got the upper hand of all obstacles and alone  
presided. In the morning, if my health will  
permit, intend viewing some scenes and places  
‘more dear to me than I can well tel  
  
a 73

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Kept. 2nd. Atter breakfast went into the  
“old” and also the “new” burying ground;  
then to the new cemetery—‘‘Sleepy Hollow.”  
‘The ground is rolling and finely shaded with  
pines and oaks. Did not find what I was in  
pursuit of, Enquired of a man at work there  
where the Thoreaus’ burying place was. He  
said, “At the new grounds.” I also asked if I  
pronounced the name Thoreaw right. Went to  
the place specified and found one grave with  
headstone marked, “John Thoreau, Jr,” and  
another near by newer and unmarked.  
  
‘Then left for the Walden woods by the old  
Lincoln road. Found the pond, beanfield and  
site of Thoreaw’s house. ‘The beanfield is now  
growing trees, pine, bireh, ete., in rows, quin-  
cunx order—a fine sight!  
  
P.M. To the old Battleground back of  
tho old Manse. Found two other men there,  
visitors like myself. One of them read off the  
inscriptions on the monument in a clear, loud  
tone of voice, bordering somewhat on the  
‘pompous.  
  
‘After supper at the hotel, called upon the  
Thoreaus, mother and sister. Found them  
rather expecting me. Was made quite wel-  
come and urgently requested to get my things  
from the hotel and stop with them—did so.  
  
They are decidedly bright-appearing women  
  
4

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—the mother, I should say, about sixty-five,  
the daughter [Sophia] forty. ‘The conversa-  
tion drifted readily to [the subject of] the son  
and brother. Mr. X. called and planned a  
walk for both of us to-morrow. Found him  
sociable and attentive. During the evening  
more talk about Thoreau's last illness. His  
mother said: “Why, this room [their parlor]  
did not seem like @ sick-room. My son wanted  
flowers and pictures and books all around  
here; and he was always so cheerful and  
wished others to be so while about him. And  
during the nights he wanted the lamp set on  
the floor and some chairs put around it so that  
in his sleepless hours he could amuse himself  
with watching the shadows.”  
  
Sept. 4. Fitfal sleeping last night: too full  
of thinking. This A. M. called upon Aleott  
with Miss Thoreau. Had a fine interview  
with him. Ho talked about Carlyle, Tho-  
reau, books, his own experience, ete. I did  
not see his daughter Louise. She had just  
come back from the Army Hospital at Wash-  
ington; had lost part of her hair and so was  
unpresentable.  
  
‘This P. M., XY. Z. and I took our walk.  
‘Went off to the S. W. of the village (on ‘the  
old Marlborough Road I think) and finally  
struck Concord river in a curve where X. said  
  
6  
  
» XYZ « Kole bet Otis at

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he and Thorean used to go in bathing. X.  
wanted me to repeat that performance with  
him; I let him go in, while I took notes. ‘The  
opposite and sunward bank is lined with  
thick growth of evergreens which cast their  
dark shadow into the water below. ‘The faint  
rripple on its surface gave the view the appear-  
ance of an inverted forest seen through a huge  
sheet of frosted glass. From here we went up  
on to the Concord Cliffs. X. showed me the  
Hollowell Place, Baker Farm, and the house  
where John Field the Irishman once lived.  
‘Thence to Walden Pond through a growth of  
young timber, where X. showed me a patch, a  
rod or 60 square, of “American Yew? (Tarus  
Canadensis] which, he said, Thoreau was very  
partial to, not showing it to everybody.  
  
‘From the Pond and house-plot (the building  
itself has been moved away some three miles  
North) through the deserted beanfield, to the  
Lincoln Road where, following North, through  
hollow, X. pointed out to me, a few rods away,  
“Brister’s Spring,” whither I went, lay down  
and took a good, cold drink to the memory of  
the writer who has given it its consequence.  
  
‘Sept. 4th. At home with the Thoreau fam-  
ily. P.M. Went with Miss Thoreau up, N. W.,  
on to the hill (“Nashawtuck”t). A fine view!  
Ponkawtasset off to the N. E. a mile or s0.  
  
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The Assabet, at the north of us, winding its  
way to the Concord River below. The old  
North Bridge, the Monument near by and the  
village spread out in its beauty.  
  
Sept. 5th. A.M. Took a ride with the two  
‘Misses Thoreau, maiden sunts of Thoreau, and  
Sophia. Called on Mr. [Edmund] Hosmer—  
not at home. ‘Then on Mr. Platt; a pleasant  
time with him. Afterwards drove to Mr.  
Bulls home. He is the originator of the Con-  
cord grape that I had already sent for. Found  
‘Mr. B. a splendid talker and an enthusiastic  
garden man. P, M. Went alone to Walden  
Pond. Took a swim in it. Called at the patch  
of American Yow and at the Cliffs. Evening  
with the Thoreaus at their home.  
  
Sept. 6th. Before breakfast, visited the  
“new” burying ground. Found Thoreau’s  
grave. After breakfast, took quite a walk,  
N.E of the town and mostly in the woods.  
(I have doubtless crossed and recrossed the  
dear, absent man’s path so many times in this  
morning's trip!) Found, on my return, that  
Mr. Hosmer had been at the Thoreaus’ to re-  
turn my call of yesterday. Went soon after  
dinner to see him and stayed there until X.  
came, by agreement, to visit the “Estabrook  
Country” (they call it) to take a look at the  
Thoreau hut. It had been moved there some  
  
u

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years before. Took memento, a broken  
shingle, as a fitting emblem. Here is the field  
of boulders, some from eight to ten fect high,  
and such clumps of barberry bushes! Evening  
at Mrs. Horace Mann’s with Miss Thoreau.  
Met there Miss Elizabeth Peabody, Mrs.  
Mann's sister, and her eldest son (Mrs. Horace  
‘Mann’s], who accompanied Thoreau on his  
trip West secking health. Found the young  
man greatly interested in Botany. Miss Pea-  
body spoke very feelingly and freely of Mar-  
garet Fuller of blessed memory.  
  
‘Sept. 7th. Arose rather early this morning  
and took a walk westward some mile and a  
half to a mill on the Assabet. On returning,  
found a branch from a young maple already  
turned of a fire-red, a part of which I broke off  
and took back with me and threw up into the  
branches of an evergreen that faced one side  
of the Thoreau house. After breakfast, it  
caught Mrs. Thoreau’s eye and she began  
wondering what it meant. When I showed  
her, she exclaimed: “There! that was just  
like my son, Henry.” I could n’t help but feel  
alittle flattered.  
  
Afternoon. Took a ride up the Assabet  
with Mr. 8. That was a very pleasant inter-  
view: Mr. 8. seemed so easily to make it such  
—he talked so kindly and well of Thoreau.  
  
B

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After this, called upon Mr. Aleott, in com-  
pany with X., also upon Mr. Emerson. A  
pleasant fifteen or twenty minutes! interview.  
‘Mr. Emerson enquired if I knew much about  
the Michigan University; spoke in high terms  
of President Tappan; asked if the young men  
of the West were not, some of them at least,  
secking for more light and truth.  
  
After dinner, when I bade the Thoreaus  
good bye, Mrs. Thoreau’s sister, having come  
down from her room, stood at the foot of the  
stairs weeping. It was a tender leave-taking.  
  
Second Visit to Concord.  
  
Eleven years later.  
  
August 27th, 1874. At the Middlesex House  
‘once more, arriving a little after noon. Dined  
‘and then started for Walden Pond. On my  
way out, on the Lincoln Road, I stopped at  
Brister’s Spring, and as it had become a  
sacred fountain, I lay down and deliberately  
drank seven swallows of its cool, clear water  
to the memory of its absent poet. And now  
upon the site of that house in which Henry  
  
9

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Thoreau lived nearly thirty years ago, I sit  
writing up this diary of to-day.  
  
It is a beautiful place! ‘The book “Walden,”  
telling of his life here, first notified me of  
its euthor and his writings: that formed an  
epoch in my life.  
  
‘The cabin is gone, long since moved away,  
but, Thank God! they cannot move this foun-  
dation nor the pleasant memories.  
  
Passed along the pond side toward the 8. W.  
to find the Concord Cliffs. Found a man in  
charge of the pienie grounds on the railrond  
side of the pond, of whom I enquired the way.  
He had never heard of such a place, but I got  
there all the same, ‘The vale, lake, river ran-  
ning through it, looked much as they did  
eleven years ago. The [Irishman’s] house on  
the Baker Farm has disappeared. Went around  
‘West and North to the village, and then to  
Sleepy Hollow cemetery. I found all the Tho-  
rreau graves (the remains having been removed  
thither since my visit, eleven years ago) up  
‘back on a little, shaded hill, and having neat,  
plain brown headstones. A little farther on I  
found a short, thick slab of marble, at the head  
of a grave and on it was marked “Hawthorne.”  
A silent farewell to the graves of the Thoreaus  
and then I went to the hotel.  
  
After supper went to visit once more the old  
  
80

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Burial-plot of the Thoreau Family.  
  
The grave of Henry's brother John is behind the large stone,  
between Sophia and Helen.

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Battle-ground and the Monument. On my re-  
tum, took a look at the new monument (erect-  
ed to the memory of the fallen friends in the  
late war) standing on the publie square, When  
here before in ’63, it was war time and soldiers  
were being mustered into service, and they  
‘were encamped on the same open square. Now  
only some of their names are on record there.  
Such is life!  
  
Aug. 29th, Arose at 5 o'clock and took an  
early walk on North side of R. R. This is a  
grand old town! How quiet and restful the  
people seem! After breakfast went to call  
upon X. His housekeeper went up stairs and  
notified him, and he came down with quite a  
visible scowl on his countenance, but when I  
told him who I was, he soon called me to  
mind, brightened up, was quite cordial and  
‘made me welcome to his room below, for read-  
ing, writing, and so forth. I accepted this  
offer with pleasure, in the meantime making  
an arrangement for a walk together in the  
afternoon.  
  
2 o'clock, P.M. Started out with Mr. X. for  
a trip of over one and a half or two miles  
8. E, on what they call the Old Virginia  
Road, to see the house where Thoreau was  
born. I found my companion a little captious  
and uneasy—I did not keep to the foot-path  
  
k aL

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beside the road! In our conversing, I forgot  
to do it, which seemed to annoy him. (His  
whims showed themselves otherwise during  
that, walk.)  
  
‘We found the house; X. was good-natured  
and communicative; he pointed out to me the  
corner room wherein Channing's “Poct-Na-  
turalist” first saw daylight. We returned by  
the way of Mr. Aleott’s took tea with the fam-  
ily and stayed there until nearly nine o'clock.  
The older daughter, Louise, was away from  
home, but I met her sister May. She is quite  
an artist; bright, active, a good talker, some-  
what forward, and she reminded me of some  
shrewd, sprightly young man that had tra-  
velled. She is quite busy, painting and selling  
her work—her father said—to raise money  
for taking a third trip to Europe. For afew  
‘moments I thought of patronising her a little;  
80, pricing a piece of her painting on a black  
panel about the size of a chair slat, I found it  
to be $25.00. I “threw up the sponge.”  
  
Mr. A. read to me from the manuscript of  
a forthcoming book. I liked it much, but X.  
became visibly restive (A. noticed it) and f-  
nally left the room to go and talk with the wo-  
men. Afterwards, X. evidently felt that he had  
misdone, 50 on leaving he protested that he  
‘was interested in hearing A's writings read by  
  
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him, and he made an appointment thereupon  
to go with me there tomorrow afternoon for  
that very purpose. Returned to the hotel at  
9.30 P.M. (The idea of repeating that call at  
Alcott’s to gratify a whim!)  
  
Aug. 30th. Up at six o'clock for a walk past  
the old Monument and up Ponkawtasset hill,  
on the side of which William Ellery Channing  
once lived and got the credit for going farther  
to visit Thorean in his hut in midwinter than  
any other living man—“that was not a poet!”  
Tt was pleasant to stand there and see the  
placid Concord running through the meadows,  
where thirty-five years ago, near this time of  
the year, Henry Thoreau and his brother  
rowed down this stream upon that trip on the  
account whereof were strung the beads thet  
glitter and gleam in Thoreaw’s first book.  
  
In the afternoon, called upon X. to go to  
‘Mr. Aloott’s to hear him read. A. did “read”;  
and X, and I sat and [X.] very civilly listened  
to him,  
  
During the reading Mrs. Aleott came in,  
and I had the pleasure of making farther ac-  
quaintance with her. She seemed a kind,  
sweet, motherly woman. After the reading  
broke up, a pleasant general chat ensued.  
We tol at or ait rata os unT=T™=r Prost!  
  
83

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‘Tea was announced, and contrary to my in-  
tention, I ate there again. After that Aleott  
gave me some of his books.  
  
‘Mr. 8. had learned that I was in town. So  
he found X. and myself and invited us to his  
house this evening. I found that he was liv.  
ing in the Thoreau home of eleven years ago.  
In the meantime Mrs. Thoreau has died, and  
her daughter, Sophia, gone to live with rela-  
tives in Maine. He gave me some interesting  
information about William B, Wright, author  
of “The Brook and other Poems,” Shelley's  
later publishers, Walt Whitman, John Bur-  
roughs, Wilson Flagg, ete. After which cake  
and ale were served, and X. and I left.  
  
Aug. 1st. Arose this morning about Four  
o'clock and started for a last visit to Walden  
Pond. I shall probably not see it again. Here  
I sit with my back against a little pine sap-  
ling, now growing on the site where once  
stood the hut. A few feet in front of me is a  
small but gradually increasing pile of stones  
to which every friend of Thoreau is expected  
to add his unit. I brought one up from the  
pond as my contribution and pencilled on it  
the word “Bethel” I also set out near by a  
plant of “Life-everlasting” that I had found  
while on the way here.  
  
‘As I sit here facing the pond, I observe on  
  
84

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my left, about fourteen or fifteen rods distant,  
‘a grove of those tall “arrowy” pines, such as  
‘Thoreau used for his house-building twenty-  
nine years ago. There is apparently not a  
breath of air stirring. Birds are singing about  
‘me and even the hum of an occasional mos-  
quito is still heard. Ileft the pond, passing  
‘out by the beanfield. The grove of trees that  
Thorean planted thereon in payment for his  
‘oceupancy, looked quite sorry from the effects  
of a fire that had run through there some time  
previously.  
  
‘A very genial last visit to X. He gave me a  
number of books, just as he had done at my  
first visit. As I bade him good bye, saying  
this would be my last visit to Coneord—that  
I should not see it again, he answered: “Oh,  
yes, you will”

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Our Inst glimpse of Thoreau’s Western cor-  
respondent shall be fragment from one of  
his letters to Thoreaw’s sister, Sophia.  
  
“I often meet your brother in my dreams  
and with this peculiarity about these meet-  
ings: while, as you know, our night-visions  
are often abnormal, grotesque, and disap-  
pointing, in this case I uniformly find my  
high ideal of him while [I am] awake, fully  
sustained. Occasionally he has become as it  
were transfigured to me, beyond my power to  
describe. So I have for some time been in the  
habit of associating him with the North pole-  
star, as through every hour of the twenty-four  
it keeps its one position in the heavens.”  
  
It is much to have inspired such a friend-  
ship, and it passeth riches to have been eapa-  
ble of such an inspiration. It fitly marks an  
epoch in @ man’s life,

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Hp Deny D. Thorear  
  
   
  
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IN TEN VOLUMES,  
VOLUME X  
  
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MISCELLANIES  
  
By  
  
HENRY DAVID THOREAU  
  
WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
RALPH WALDO EMERSON  
  
AND A GENERAL INDEX  
TO THE WRITINGS  
  
   
  
BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE  
  
‘Tue biographical sketch which introduces  
this volume was in its original form an address  
by Mr. Emerson at the funeral of Mr. Thoreau,  
He expanded it for use in The Atlantic  
Monthly, August, 1862, and it has until now  
done service in the volume Zzxcursions, the first  
collection of Thoreau’s papers which was pub-  
lished after his death.  
  
The contents of Encursions in the present  
series represented the fugitive papers by Tho-  
eau upon subjects with which he is most iden-  
tified, aspocts of nature, especially seen in lon-  
ger or shorter journeys. The papers here  
grouped under the title Miscellanies are the  
product of the somewhat less known Thoreau,  
the student of human life, of literature and  
religion, though the reader may easily have dis-  
covered both sides of his nature in A Week,  
which blends observation and reflection, and is,  
a transcript from a diary which records the  
march of the “daughters of Time,” as  
  
To each thoy offer gifts after his will  
  
Bread, kingdoms, stars ad sky that hold them all.”

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viii INTRODUCTORY NOTE  
  
‘The several papers are arranged substantially  
in the order of their first appearance. One  
only, heretofore printed among Thoreau’s writ-  
ings, is omitted, for Prayers as Mr. Edward  
W. Emerson shows,! was written by Mr. R.  
W. Emerson, and published by him in The  
Dial. The verses included in it were alone by  
‘Thoreau.  
  
‘The earliest production of Thoreau which has  
found its way into print appears to be an essay,  
dated July, 1840, and headed The Service ;  
Qualities of the Recruit. Mr. Sanborn, who  
read extracts from this essay before the Con-  
cord Summer School of Philosophy in 1882,  
states that it probably was the one offered to  
The Dial which Miss Margaret Fuller rejected,  
accompanying her rejection with criticism, as  
narrated by Mr. Sanborn in his Thoreau.  
‘These extracts are reprinted here from Concord  
Lectures in Philosophy, published by Moses  
King, Cambridge, Mass.  
  
Paradise (to be) Regained was in the form  
of a reviow of a book by J. A. Etzler, and was  
published in The Democratic Review, New  
York, for November, 1843. Tt was written  
during Thoreau’s short residence in Staten  
Island.  
  
Heratd of Freedom was printed in The Dial,  
  
1 Emerson in Concord, p. 133.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE ix  
  
April, 1844, as a commendatory notice of the  
anti-slavery paper of that name conducted by  
the fearless Nathaniel P, Rogers.  
  
Wendell Phillips before the Concord Ly-  
coun was a letter addressed to Mr. Garrison,  
the editor of Zhe Liberator, and published in  
that journal, March 28, 1845.  
  
Thomas Carlyle and his Works was printed  
first in Graham's Magazine, March and April,  
1847. It was written during Thoreau’s stay at  
Walden. The history of his adventure in get-  
ting the article published is amusingly told in  
the letters written by his faithful friend Horace  
Greeley, who acted as his intermediary. The  
letters will be found in Mr. Sanborn’s Thoreau,  
pp. 219-224.  
  
Civil Disobedience, under the title Resistance  
to Civil Government, was printed in 1849 in  
the first number of isthetic Papers, edited by  
Miss Elizabeth Peabody,  
  
Slavery in Massachusetts was an address,  
delivered at the Anti-slavery Convention at  
Framingham, Massachusetts, July 4, 1854, and  
was printed in The Liberator for July 21 of  
the same year.  
  
A Pleit for Captain John Brown was read  
before the citizens of Concord, Massachusetts,  
October 30, 1859. It was taken from his diary  
written during the eventful period of Brown’s

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x INTRODUCTORY NOTE  
  
“Zeqedition. When Captain Brown lay in  
prison, Thoreau did not wait for a public meet-  
ing, but went about among his neighbors, sum-  
moning them to come together to hear what he  
had to say. The Last Days of Jokn Brown  
was read by the author at North Elba, July 4,  
1860, and was printed in Zhe Liberator on the  
2Tth of the same month. After the Death of  
John Brown contains the remarks made at Con-  
cord by Thoreau on the day of the execution.  
It is reprinted from a volume, Eehoes from  
Harper's Ferry.  
  
Life without Principle is a posthumous paper  
first published in Zhe Atlantic Monthly, Octo-  
ber, 1863.  
  
‘The Dial published besides various original  
papers by Thorean compilations made by him  
from anciont writings, translations, and poems.  
The compilations representing his taste and  
judgment only are not here preserved, but his  
translation of The Prometheus Bound and of  
some of tho verses of Pindar, published origi-  
nally in 1843 and 1844, are given. His trans-  
Jations from Anacreon are included in A Week  
con the Concord and Merrimack Rivers. In  
that volume also and in Walden are imbedded  
‘many of Thoreau’s poems, and it has not been  
found expedient to reproduce them in a collec-  
tion here, but to gather the few, already printed

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE xi  
  
in The Dial and in Mr. Sanborn’s Thoreau,  
which are not found in other volumes in this  
series.  
  
‘Tho General Index covers the contents of the  
ten volumes, and has been prepared for this edi-  
tion.  
  
‘The portrait of Thoreau prefixed to this vol-  
ume is from an ambrotype taken in 1861 at New  
Bedford. Mr. Ricketson, for whom the picture  
was made, writes: “His health was then failing,  
—he had a racking cough, —but his face, ex-  
cept a shade of sadness in the eyes, did not  
show it.” He quotes from a letter of Miss  
Sophia Thoreau these words: “I discover a  
slight shade about the eyes, expressive of weari-  
ness; but a stranger might not observe it. I  
am very glad to possess a picture of so late a  
Gate, The crayon, drawn eight years ago next  
summer [i. ¢,, in 1854], we considered good; it  
‘betrays the poet. Mr. Channing, Mx. Emer-  
son, Mr. Alcott, and many other friends who  
have looked at the ambrotype, express much  
satisfaction.”

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
BY R, W. EMERSON  
  
Henry Davip Tuoreav was the last male  
descendant of a French ancestor who came to  
this country from the Isle of Guernsey. His  
character exhibited occasional traits drawn from  
this blood in singular combination with a very  
strong Saxon genius,  
  
He was born in Concord, Massachusetts, on  
tho 12th of July, 1817. He was graduated at  
Harvard College in 1887, but without any liter-  
ary distinction, An iconoclast in literature, he  
seldom thanked colleges for their service to him,  
holding them in small esteem, whilst yet his  
debt to them was important. After leaving the  
University, he joined his brother in teaching a  
private school, which he soon renounced. His  
father was a manufacturer of lead-peneils, and  
Henry applied himself for a time to this craft,  
Delioving he could make a better pencil than was  
then in use. After completing his experiments,  
he exhibited his work to chemists and artists in  
Boston, and having obtained their certificates  
to its excellence and to its equality with the

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2 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
best London manufacture, he returned home  
contented. His friends congratulated him that  
he had now opened his way to fortune, But he  
replied, that he should never make another pen-  
cil. “Why should I? 1 would not do again  
what I have done once.” He resumed his end-  
Jess walks and miscellaneous studies, making  
every day some new acquaintance with Nature,  
though as yet never speaking of zodlogy or bot-  
any, since, though very studious of natural  
facts, he was ineurious of technical and textual  
science.  
  
At this time, a strong, healthy youth, fresh  
from college, whilst all his companions were  
choosing their profession, or eager to begin  
some Inerative employment, it was inevitable  
that his thoughts should be exereised on the  
same question, and it required rare decision to  
refuse all the accustomed paths, and keep his  
solitary freedom at the cost of disappointing the  
natural expectations of his family and friends:  
all the more difficult that he had a perfect  
probity, was exact in securing his own indepen-  
dence, and in holding every man to the like  
duty. But Thoreau never faltered. He was a  
born protestant. He declined to give up his  
large ambition of knowledge and action for any  
narrow craft or profession, aiming at 2 much  
more comprehensive calling, the art of living

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 3  
  
well. If he slighted and defied the opinions of  
others, it was only that he was more intent to  
reconcile his practice with his own belief.  
Never idle or self-indulgent, he preferred, when  
he wanted money, earning it by some piece of  
manual labor agreeable to him, as building a  
boat or a fence, planting, grafting, surveying,  
or other short work, to any long engagements.  
‘With his hardy habits and few wants, his skill  
in wood-craft, and his powerful arithmetic, he  
was very competent to live in any part of the  
world. Tt would cost him less time to supply his  
wants than another. He was therefore secure  
of his leisure.  
  
A natural skill for mensuration, growing out  
of his mathematical knowledge, and his habit  
of ascertaining the measures and distances of  
objects which interested him, the size of trees,  
the depth and extent of ponds and rivers, the  
height of mountains, and the airline distance  
of his favorite summits, — this, and his intimate  
Knowledge of the territory about Concord, made  
him drift into the profession of land-surveyor.  
It had the advantage for him that it led him  
continually into new and secluded grounds, and  
helped his studies of Nature. His accuracy  
and skill in this work were readily appreciated,  
and he found all the employment he wanted.  
  
He could easily solve the problems of the

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4 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
surveyor, but he was daily beset with graver  
questions, which he manfully confronted. He  
interrogated every custom, and wished to settle  
all his practice on an ideal foundation, He was  
a protestant % Uoutrance, and few lives con-  
tain so many renuneiations. He was bred to  
no profession; he never married; he lived  
alone; he never went to church; he never voted;  
he refused to pay a tax to the State; he ate no  
flesh, he drank no wine, he never knew the use  
of tobacco; and, though a naturalist, he used  
neither trap nor gun. He chose, wisely, no  
doubt, for himself, to be the bachelor of thought  
and Nature. He had no talent for wealth, and  
knew how to be poor without the least hint of  
squalor or inelegance, Perhaps he fell into his  
way of living without forecasting it much, but  
approved it with later wisdom. “I am often  
reminded,” he wrote in his journal, “that, if I  
had bestowed on me the wealth of Croesus, my  
aims must be still the same, and my means  
essentially the same.” He had no temptations  
to fight against, —no appetites, no passions,  
no taste for elegant trifles. A fine house,  
dress, the manners and talk of highly cultivated  
people were all thrown away on him. THe much  
preferred a good Indian, and considered these  
refinements as impediments to conversation,  
wishing to meet his companion on the simplest

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 5  
  
terms. He declined invitations to dinner-par-  
ties, because there each was in every one’s way,  
and he could not meet the individuals to any  
purpose. “They make their pride,” he said,  
“in making their dinner cost much; I make my  
pride in making my dinner cost little.” “When  
asked at table what dish he preferred, he an-  
swered, “The nearest.” He did not like the  
taste of wine, and never had a viee in his life.  
He said, “I have a faint recollection of plea-  
sure derived from smoking dried lily-stems, be-  
fore I was a man. I had commonly a supply  
of these. I have never smoked anything more  
noxious.”  
  
He chose to be rich by making his wants few,  
and supplying them himself. In his travels,  
he used the railroad only to get over so much  
country as was unimportant to the present pur-  
pose, walking hundreds of miles, avoiding tav-  
ems, buying a lodging in farmers’ and fisher-  
men’s houses, as cheaper, and more agreeable  
to him, and because there he could better find  
‘the men and the information he wanted.  
  
‘There was somewhat military in his nature  
not to be subdued, always manly and able, but  
rarely tender, as if he did not feel himself  
except in opposition. He wanted a fallacy to  
expose, a blunder to pillory, Imay say required  
a little sense of victory, a roll of the drum, to

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6 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
call his powers into full exercise. Tt cost him  
nothing to say No; indeed, he found it much  
easier than to say Yes. It seemed as if his first  
instinet on hearing a proposition was to contro-  
vert it, so impatient was he of the limitations  
of our daily thought. This habit, of course, is  
a little chilling to the social affections; and  
though the companion would in the end acquit  
him of any malice or untruth, yet it mars con-  
versation, Hence, no equal, companion stood  
in affectionate relations with one so pure and  
guileless. “I love Henry,” said one of his  
friends, “but I cannot like him; and as for  
taking his arm, T should as soon think of taking  
the arm of an elm-tree.””  
  
Yet, hermit and stoie as he was, he was  
seally fond of sympathy, and threw himself  
heartily and childlike into the company of  
young people whom he loved, and whom he de-  
lighted to entertain, as he only could, with the  
varied and endless aneedotes of his experiences  
by field and river. And he was always ready  
to lead a huckleberry party or a search for  
chestnuts or grapes. Talking, one day, of a  
public discourse, Henry remarked, that what-  
over stieeeeded with the audience was bad. I  
said, “Who would not like to write something  
which all ean read, like ‘Robinson Crusoe”?  
and who does not see with regret that his page

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 7  
  
is not solid with a right materialistic treatment,  
delights everybody?” Hemy objected,  
of course,  
reached only a few persons. But, at supper, a  
young girl, understanding that he was to leetu  
at the Lyceum, sharply asked him, “whether  
his lecture would be a nice, interesting story,  
  
   
  
   
  
ad vannted the better lectures whi  
  
   
  
   
  
such as she wished to hear, or whether it was  
‘one of those old philosophical things that she  
aid not eare about.” Hemy turned to her, and  
bethonght himself, and, I saw, was trying to  
believe that he had matter that might fit her  
and her brother, who were to sit\_up and go to  
the lecture, if it was a good one for them,  
  
Tle was a speaker and actor of the trath, —  
orn such, —and was ever running into di  
matic situations from this cause. In any eir=  
cumstance, it interested all bystanders to know  
what part Henry would take, and what he  
would say; and he did not disappoint expecta-  
tion, but used an original judgment on each  
emergency. In 1845 he built himself a small  
framed hoase on the shores of Walden Pond,  
and diyeds there two years alone, a life of labor  
and YE This action was quite native and  
§. No one who knew him would tax  
  
feetation. He was move unlike his  
in his thought than in his action,  
he had exhausted the advantages of

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8 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
that solitude, he abandoned it, Tn 1847, not:  
approving some uses to which the publi  
ed to pay his  
  
   
  
   
  
penditure was applied, he wef  
town tax, and was put in jail. A friend paid  
the tax for him, and he was released. ‘The Tike  
annoyance was threatened the next year. But,  
Is paid the tax, notwithstanding his  
protest, I beliove he evased to resist. No oppo-  
sition or ridicule had any weight with him. THe  
coldly and fully stated his opinion without  
affecting to believe the opinion of  
the company. It w: » if  
every one present held the opposite opinion.  
Qn ‘one occasion he went to tho University  
Library to procure some books. ‘The librarian  
refused to Tend them. Mr. Thoreau repaired  
to the President, who stated to him the ru  
and usages, which permitted the Ioan of books  
to resident graduates, to clergymen who were  
alumni, and to some others resident within a  
cirele of ten miles’ radius from the College.  
Mr. Thoreau explained to the resident that  
the railvond had destroyed the old suite of dis-  
tances, —that the library was useless, yes, and  
President and College useless, on the terms of  
his rules, — that the one benefit he owed to the  
College was its library, — that, at this moment,  
not only his want of books was imperstive, but  
she wanted a large number of books. and adsured  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
as his fri  
  
   
  
   
   
   
  
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of no conseqqu

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 9  
  
him that he, Thoreau, and not the librarian,  
was the proper custodian of these. In short,  
tho President found the petitioner so formida-  
ble, and the rules getting to look so ridiculous,  
that he ended by giving him a privilege which  
in his hands proved unlimited thereafter.  
  
No truer American existed than Thoreau,  
His preference of his country and condition  
was genuine, and his aversation from English  
and European manners and tastes almost reached  
contempt. He listened impatiently to news or  
bon mots gleaned from London circles; and  
though he tried to be civil, these anecdotes  
fatigued him. ‘The men were all imitating  
each other, and on a small mould. Why can  
they not live as far apart. as possible, and each  
be aman by himself? What he sought was the  
most energetic nature; and he wished to go to  
Oregon, not to London. “In every part of  
Great Britain,” he wrote in his diary, “are dis-  
covered traces of the Romans, their funereal  
urns, their camps, their roads, their dwellings.  
But New England, at least, is not based on any  
Roman ruins. We have not to lay the founda-  
tions of our houses on the ashes of a former  
  
   
  
Bat, idealist as he was, standing for abolition  
of slavery, abolition of tariffs, almost for abo-  
ition of government, it is needless to say he

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10 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
found himself not only unrepresented in actual  
polities, but almost equally opposed to every  
class of reformers. Yet he paid the tribute of  
his uniform respect to the Anti-Slavery Party.  
One man, whose personal acquaintance he had  
formed, he honored with exceptional regard.  
Before the first friendly word had been spoken  
for Captain John Brown, after the arrest, he  
sent notices to most houses in Concord, that he  
would speak in a publio hall on the condition  
and character of John Brown, on Sunday even-  
ing, and invited all people to come. The Re-  
publican Committee, the Abolitionist Commit-  
tee, sont him word that it was premature and  
not advisable, He replied, “I did not send  
to you for advice, but to annonce that I am  
to speak.” ‘The hall was filled at an early hour  
by people of all parties, and his earnest eulogy  
‘of the hero was heard by all respectfully, by  
many with a sympathy that surprised them-  
selves.  
  
‘It was said of Plotinus that he was ashamed  
of his body, and ’t is very likely he had good  
reason for it, —that his body was a bad ser-  
vant, and he had not skill in dealing with the  
material world, as happens often to men of  
abstract intellect. But Mr. ‘Thoreau was  
equipped with a most adapted and serviceable  
body. He was of short stature, firmly built,

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH uw  
  
of light complexion, with strong, serious blue  
eyes, and a grave aspect, —his face covered in  
the late years with a becoming beard. His  
sonses were acute, his frame well-knit and  
hardy, his hands strong and skillful in the use  
of tools. And there was a wonderful fitness of  
body and mind. He could pace sixteen rods  
‘more accurately than another man could mea-  
sure them with rod and chain. He could find  
his path in the woods at night, he said, better  
by his feet than his eyes. He could estimate  
‘the measure of a tree very well by his eyes; he  
could estimate the weight of a calf or a pig, like  
a dealer. From a box containing a bushel or  
more of loose pencils, he could take up with his  
hands fast enough just a dozen pencils at every  
grasp. He was a good swimmer, runner,  
skater, boatman, and would probably outwalk  
‘most countrymen in a day’s joumey. And the  
relation of body to mind was still finer than we  
have indicated. He said he wanted every  
stride his legs made. ‘The length of his wali  
uniformly made the length of his writing. If  
shut up in the house, he did not write at all.  
  
He had a strong common sense, like that  
which Rose Flammock, the weaver's daughter,  
in Seott’s romance, commends in her father, as  
resembling # yardstick which, whilst it measures  
dowlas and diaper, can equally well measure

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12 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
tapestry and cloth of gold. He had always  
new resouree. When I was planting forest-  
trees, and had procured half a pock of acorns,  
he said that only a sinall portion of them would  
‘be sound, and proceeded to examine them, and  
select the sound ones. But finding this took  
time, he said, “I think, if you put them all into  
water, the good ones will sink;” which experi-  
ment we tried with success. He could plan a  
garden, or a house, or a barn; would have been  
competent to lead a “Pacific Exploring Expedi-  
tion;” could give judicious counsel in the grav-  
est private or public affairs.  
  
He lived for the day, not cumbered and mor-  
tified by his memory. If he brought you yes-  
terday a new proposition, he would bring you  
to-day another not less revolutionary. A very  
industrious man, and setting, like all highly  
organized men, a high value on his time, he  
seemed the only man of leisure in town, always  
ready for any excursion that promised well, or  
for conversation prolonged into late hours.  
His trenchant sense was never stopped by his  
rules of daily prudence, but, was always up to  
the new occasion. He liked and used the sim-  
plest food, yet, when some one urged a vegeta-  
ble diet, Thoreau thought all diets a very small  
matter, saying that “the man who shoots the  
buffalo lives better than the man who boards

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
at the Graham House.” He said, “You can  
sleep near the railroad, and never be disturbed:  
Nature knows very well what sounds are worth  
attending to, and has made up her mind not to  
hear the railroad-whistle. But things respect  
the devout mind, and a mental ecstasy was  
never interrupted.” He noted what repeatedly  
befell him, that, after receiving from a distance  
a rare plant, he would presently find the same  
in his own haunts. And those pieces of luck  
which happen only to good players happened to  
him, One day, walking with a stranger, who  
inquired where Indian arrow-heads could be  
found, he replied, “Everywhere,” and, stoop-  
ing forward, picked one on the instant from the  
ground. At Mount Washington, in Tucker-  
man’s Ravine, Thoreau had a bad, fall, and  
sprained his foot. As he was in the act of get-  
ting up from his fall, he saw for the first time  
the leaves of the Arnica mollis.  
  
His robust common sense, armed with stout  
hands, keen perceptions, and strong will, can-  
not yet account for the superiority which shone  
in his simple and hidden life. T must add the  
cardinal fact, that there was an excellent wis-  
dom in him, proper to a rare class of men,  
which showed him the material world as a means ~  
and symbol. ‘This discovery, which sometimes  
‘Yields to poets a certain casual and interrupted

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
light, serving for the ornament of their writing,  
‘was in him an unsleeping insight; and whatever  
faults or obstructions of temperament might,  
cloud it, he was not disobedient to the hea-  
venly vision, In his youth, he said, one day,  
“The other world is all my art: my pencils will  
draw no other; my jack-knife will cut nothing  
else; I do not use it as a means.” This was  
the muse and genius that ruled his opinions,  
conversation, studies, work, and course of life.  
‘This made him a searching judge of men. At  
first glance he measured his companion, and,  
though insensible to some fine traits of culture,  
could very well report his weight and calibre.  
And this made the impression of genius which  
his conversation often gave.  
  
He understood the matter in hand at a  
glance, and saw the limitations and poverty of  
those he talked with, so that nothing seemed  
concealed from such terrible eyes. I have  
repeatedly mown young men of sensibility con-  
verted in a moment to the belief that this was  
the man they were in search of, the man of  
men, who could tell them all they should do,  
His own dealing with them was never affee-  
tionate, but superior, didactic, —scorning their  
petty ways,—very slowly conceding, or not  
conceding at all, the promise of his society at  
their houses, or even at his own, “Would he

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 16  
  
not walk with them?” “He did not know.  
There was nothing so important to him as his  
walk; he had no walks to throw away on com-  
pany.” Visits were offered him from respect  
ful parties, but he declined them. Admiring  
friends offered to carry him at their own cost to  
the Yellow-Stone River, —to the West Indies,  
—to South America, But though nothing  
could be more grave or considered than his  
refusals, they remind one in quite new relations  
of that fop Brummel’s reply to the gentleman  
who offered him his carriage in a shower, “But  
where will you ride, then?” — and what accus-  
ing silences, and what searching and irresistible  
speeches, battering down all defenses, his com-  
panions can remember!  
  
Mr. Thoreau dedicated his genius with such  
entire love to the fields, hills, and waters of his  
native town, that he made them known and in-  
teresting to all reading Americans, and to peo-  
ple over the sea. The river on whose banks he  
was born and died he knew from its springs to  
its confluence with the Merrimack. He had  
made summer and winter observations on it  
for many years, and at every hour of the day  
and the night. The result of the recent sur-  
vey of the Water Commissioners appointed by  
the State of Massachusetts he had reached, by  
his private experiments, several years earlier.

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16 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
Every fact which occurs in the bed, on the  
banks, or in the air over it; the fishes, and  
their spawning and nests, their mamners, their  
food; the shad-flies which fill the air on a cer.  
tain evening onee a year, and which are snapped  
at by the fishes so ravenously that many of  
these die of repletion; the conical heaps of  
small stones on the river-shallows, one of which  
heaps will sometimes overfill a cart, —these  
‘heaps the huge nests of small fishes; the birds  
which frequent the stream, heron, duck, shel-  
drake, loon, osprey; the snake, musk-rat, ot-  
ter, woodchuck, and fox, on the banks; the tur-  
tle, frog, hyla, and ericket, which make the  
banks vocal, —were all known to him, and, as  
it were, townsmen and fellow-creatures; so that  
he felt an absurdity or violence in any narrative  
of one of these by itself apart, and still more of  
its dimensions on an inch-rule, or in the exhibi-  
tion of its skeleton, or the specimen of a squir-  
rel or a bind in brandy. He liked to speak of  
the manners of the river, as itself a lawful  
creature, yet with exactness, and always to an  
observed fact. As he knew the river, so the  
ponds in this region,  
  
‘One of the weapons he used, more important  
than microscope or alcohol-receiver to other in-  
vestigators, was a whim which grew on him by  
indulgence, yet appeared in gravest statement,

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH Ww  
  
namely, of extolling his own town and neigh-  
bothood as the most favored centre for natural  
observation. He remarked that the Flora of  
‘Massachusetts embraced almost all the impor-  
tant plants of America, —most of the oaks,  
most of the willows, the best pines, the ash,  
the maple, the beech, the nuts. He retuned.  
Kane’s “ Anetie Voyage” to a friend of whom  
he had borrowed it, with the remark, that  
“most of the phenomena noted might be ob-  
served in Concord.” He seemed a little envi-  
ous of the Pole, for the coincident sunrise and  
sunset, or five minutes’ day after six months: a  
splendid fact, which Annursnue had never  
forded him. He found red snow in one of  
his walks, and told me that he expected to find  
yet the Victoria regia in Concord. He was the  
attomey of the indigenous plants, and owned  
to a preference of the weeds to the imported  
plants, as of the Indian to the civilized man, —  
and noticed, with pleasure, that the willow bean-  
poles of his neighbor had grown more than. his  
beans. “See these weeds,” he said, “which  
have been hoed at by a million farmers all  
spring and summer, and yet have prevailed,  
and just now come out triumphant over all  
Janes, pastures, fields, and gardens, such is  
their vigor. We have insulted them with low  
names, too, —as Pigweed, Wormwood, Chick-

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18 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
weed, Shad-Blossom.” He says, “They have  
brave names, too, — Ambrosia, Stellaria, Ame-  
lanchia, Amaranth, ete.”  
  
T think his faney for referring everything to  
the meridian of Concord did not grow ont of  
any ignorance or depreciation of other longi-  
tudes or latitudes, but was rather a playful  
expression of his conviction of the indifferency  
of all places, and that the best place for each is  
where he stands. He expressed it once in this  
wise: “I think nothing is to be hoped from  
you, if this bit of mould under your feet is not  
sweeter to you to eat than any other in this  
world, or in any world.”  
  
‘The other weapon with which he conquered  
all obstacles in science was patience. He knew  
how to sit immovable, a part of the rock he  
rested on, until the bird, the reptile, the fish,  
which had ret from him, should come back,  
and resume its habits, nay, moved by curiosity,  
should come to him and watch him.  
  
Tt was a pleasure and a privilege to walk with  
him, He knew the country like a fox or a  
bird, and passed through it as freely by paths  
of his own, He knew every track in the snow  
or on the ground, and what creature had taken  
this path before him. One must submit ab-  
jectly to such a guide, and the reward was  
great, Under his arm he carried an old music-

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 19  
  
book to press plants; in his pocket, his diary  
and pencil, a spy-glass for birds, microscope,  
jack-knife, and twine. He wore straw hat,  
stout shoes, strong gray trousers to brave shrub-  
oaks and smilax, and to climb a tree for a  
hawk’s or a squirvel’s nest. He waded into  
the pool for the water-plants, and his strong  
legs were no insignificant part of his armor.  
On the day I speak of he looked for the Meny-  
anthes, detected it across the wide pool, and,  
‘on examination of the florets, decided that it  
hhad been in flower five days. He drew out of  
his breast-pocket his diary, and read the names  
of all the plants that should bloom on this day,  
whereof he kept account as a banker when his  
notes fall due. ‘The Cypripedium not due till  
to-morrow. He thought, that, if waked up  
from a trance, in this swamp, he could tell by  
the plants what time of the year it was within  
two days. ‘The redstart was flying about, and  
presently the pine grosbeaks, whose brilliant  
scarlet makes the rash gazer wipe his eye, and  
whose fine clear note Thorean compared to that  
of a tanager which has got rid of its hoarseness.  
Presently he heard a note which he called that  
of the night-warbler, a bird he had never iden-  
tified, had been in search of twelve years, which  
always, when he saw it, was in the act of div-  
ing down into a tree or bush, and which it was

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20 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
vain to seek; the only bird that sings indiffer-  
ently by night and by day. I told him he must  
beware of finding and booking it, lest life should  
have nothing more to show him. He said,  
“What you seck in vain for, half your life, one  
day you come full upon all the family at dinner.  
‘You sok it like a dream, and as soon as you  
find it. you become its prey.”  
/ His interest in the flower or the bird lay very  
deep in his mind, was connected with Nature,  
—and the meaning of Nature was never at-  
tempted to be defined by him. He would not  
offer a memoir of his observations to the Nat-  
ural History Society. “Why should I? To  
detach the description from its connections in  
my mind would make it no longer true or valu-  
able to me; and they do not wish what belongs  
to it” His power of observation seemed to  
indicate additional senses. He saw as with  
microscope, heard as with ear-trampet, and his  
memory was a photographie register of all he  
saw and heard. And yet none knew better than  
he that it is not the fact that imports, but the  
impression or effect of the fact on your mind.  
Every fact lay in glory in his mind, a type of  
tho order and beauty of the whole.  
  
His determination on Natural History was  
organic. He confessed that he sometimes felt  
like a hound or a panther, and, if born among

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH at  
  
Indians, would have been a fell hunter. But,  
restrained by his Massachnsetts culture, he  
played out the game in this mild form of botany  
and ichthyology. His intimacy with animals  
suggested what Thomas Fuller records of But-  
ler the apiologist, that “either he had told the  
bees things or the bees had told him.” Snakes  
coiled round his leg, the fishes swam into his  
hand, and he took them out of the water; he  
pulled the woodchuck out of its hole by the tail,  
and took the foxes under his protection from the  
hunters. Our naturalist had perfect magnanim-  
ity he had no secrets: he would carry you  
to the heron’s haunt, or even to his most prized  
botanical swamp, — possibly knowing that you  
‘could never find it again, yet willing to take his  
risks.  
  
No college ever offered him a diploma, or a  
professor's chair; no academy made him its  
corresponding secretary, its discoverer, or even  
its member. Perhaps these learned bodies  
feared the satire of his presence. Yet so much  
Knowledge of Nature’s secret and genius few  
others possessed, none in a more large and re-  
ligious synthesis. For not a particle of respect  
hhad he to the opinions of any man or body of  
men, but homage solely to the truth itself; and  
as he discovered everywhere among doctors  
some leaning of courtesy, it discredited them.

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22 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
He grew to be revered and admired by his  
townsmen, who had at first known him only as  
an oddity. ‘The farmers who employed him as  
a surveyor soon discovered his rare accuracy  
and skill, his knowledge of their lands, of  
trees, of birds, of Indian remains, and the like,  
which enabled him to tell every farmer more  
than he knew before of his own farm; so that  
he began to feel as if Mr. Thoreau had better  
rights in his land than he. They felt, too, the  
superiority of character which addressed all  
men with a native authority.  
  
Indian relies abound in Concord, —arrow-  
heads, stone chisels, pestles, and fragments of  
pottery; and on the river-bank, large heaps of  
clam-shells and ashes mark spots which the  
savages frequented. These, and every cireum-  
stance touching the Indian, were important in  
his eyes. His visits to Maine were chiefly for  
love of the Indian. He had the satisfaction of  
seeing the manufacture of the bark-eanoe, as  
well as of trying his hand in its management  
on the rapids. He was inquisitive about the  
making of the stone arrow-head, and in his last  
days charged a youth setting out for the Rocky  
‘Mountains to find an Indian who could tell him  
that: “It was well worth a visit to California  
to learn it” Occasionally, a small party of  
Penobscot Indians would visit Coneord, and

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 23  
  
pitch their tents for a few weeks in summer on  
the river-bank. He failed not to make aequain-  
tance with the best of them; though he well  
knew that asking questions of Indians is like  
eatechising beavers and rabbits. In his last  
visit to Maine he had great satisfaction from  
Joseph Polis, an intelligent Indian of Oldtown,  
who was his guide for some weeks.  
  
He was equally interested in every natural  
fact. ‘The depth of his pereeption found like-  
ness of Jaw throughout Nature, and I know  
not any genius who so swiftly inferred universal  
law from the single fact. He was no pedant  
of a department, His eye was open to beauty,  
and his ear to music. He found these, not in  
rare conditions, but wheresoever he went. He  
thought the best of musie was in single strains  
and he found poetic suggestion in the humming  
of the telegraph-wire,  
  
His poetry might be bad or good; he no  
doubt wanted a lyric facility and technical skill;  
but he had the souree of poetry in his spiritual  
perception. He was a good reader and critic,  
and his judgment on poctry was to the ground  
of it, He could not be deceived as to the pres-  
ence or absence of the poetic element in any  
composition, and his thirst for this made him  
nogligent and perhaps scornful of superficial  
graces. He would pass by many delicate

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cay BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
thythms, but he would have detected every live  
stanza or line ina volume, and knew very well  
where to find an equal poetic charm in prose.  
‘He iwas so enamored of the spiritual beauty that  
he held all actual written poems in very light  
‘esteem in the comparison. He admired Bschy-  
Jus and Pindar; but, when some one was com-  
mending them, he said that “ ischylus and the  
Grecks, in describing Apollo and Orpheus, had  
given no song, or no good one. ‘They ought  
not to have moved trees, but to have chanted to  
the gods such a hymn as would have sung all  
their old ideas out of their heads, and new ones  
in.” His own verses are often rude and defec-  
tive. The gold does not yet run pure, is drossy  
amd ernde, Tho thyme and marjoram are not  
yet honey. But if he want lyric fineness and  
technical merits, if he have not the poetic tem-  
perament, he never lacks the causal thought,  
showing that his genius was better than his  
talent. He knew the worth of the Imagination  
for the uplifting and consolation of human life,  
and liked to throw every thought into a symbol.  
‘The fact you tell is of no value, but only the  
impression. For this reason his presence was  
poetic, always piqued the curiosity to know  
‘more deeply the secrets of his mind, He had  
many reserves, an unwillingness to exhibit to  
profane eyes what was still sacred in his own,

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 25  
  
and knew well how to throw a poetic veil over  
his experience. / All readers of “Walden” will  
remember his mythical record of his disappoint-  
ments: —  
  
“I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and  
a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail,  
Many aro the travelers I have spoken concern-  
ing them, describing their tracks, and what  
calls they answered to. I have met one or two  
who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the  
horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind  
a clouds and they seemed as anxious to recover  
‘thom as if they had lost them themselves.”?  
  
His riddles were worth the reading, and I  
confide, that, if at any time I do not under-  
stand the expression, it is yot just. Such was  
the wealth of his truth that it was not worth his  
while to use words in vain. His poem entitled  
“Sympathy” reveals the tenderness under that  
triple steel of stoicism, and the intellectual sub-  
tilty it could animate. His classic poem on  
“Smoke” suggests Simonides, but is better  
than any poem of Simonides. His biography is  
in his verses. His habitual thought makes all  
his poetry a hymn to the Cause of causes, the  
Spirit which vivifies and controls his own.  
  
“T honring get, who had but ears,  
‘And sight, who ad but oye baforo;  
2 Walden, p20.

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26 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
moments live, who lived but years,  
‘And truth disoera, who Know but lerning’slor.””  
  
   
  
And still more in these religious lines  
  
   
  
‘Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,  
And to this evening hath me brought.”  
  
Whilst he used in his writings a certain pet-  
ulance of remark in reference to churches or  
churchmen, he was a person of a rare, tender,  
and absolute religion, a person incapable of any  
profanation, by act or by thought. | Of course,  
the same isolation which belonged to his origi-  
nal thinking and living detacked him from the  
social religious forms. This is neither to be  
censured nor regretted. Aristotle long ago ex-  
plained it, when he said, “One who surpasses  
his fellow-citizens in virtue is no longer a part  
of the city. Their law is not for him, since he  
is a law to himself.”  
  
‘Thoreau was sincerity itself, and might for-  
tify the convictions of prophets in the ethical  
Jaws by his holy living. It was an affirmative  
expérience which refused to be set aside, A  
truth-speaker he, capable of the most deep and  
strict conversation; a physician to the wounds  
of any soul; a friend, knowing not only tho

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH a7  
  
secret of friendship, but almost worshiped by  
those few persons who resorted to him as their  
confessor and prophet, and knew the deep value  
of his mind and great heart. He thought  
that without religion or devotion of some kind  
nothing great was ever accomplished; and he  
thought that the bigoted sectarian had better  
bear this in mind.  
  
His virtues, of course, sometimes ran into  
extremes. It was easy to trace to the inexora-  
‘ble demand on all for exact truth that austerity  
which made this willing hermit more solitary  
even than he wished. Himself of a perfect  
probity, he required not less of others. He  
had a disgust at crime, and no worldly success  
‘could cover it. He detected paltering as read-  
ily in dignified and prosperous persons as in  
beggars, and with equal scorn, Snch danger-  
ous frankness was in his dealing that his admin  
ers called him “ that terrible Thoreau,” as if  
hhe spoke when silent, and was still present  
when he had departed. I think the severity of  
his ideal interfered to deprive him of a healthy  
sufficiency of human society.  
  
‘The habit of a realist to find things the re-  
verse of their appearance inclined him to put  
every statement in a paradox. A certain habit  
of antagonism defaced his earlier writings, —a  
trick of rhetoric not quite outgrown in his later,

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28 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
of substituting for the obvious word and thought  
its diametrical opposite. He praised wild moun-  
tains and winter forests for their domestie air,  
in snow and ice he would find sultriness, and  
commended the wilderness for resembling Rome  
and Paris. “It was so dry, that you might  
call it wet.”  
  
‘The tendency to magnify the moment, to  
read all the laws of Nature in the one object or  
one combination under your eye, is of course  
comic to those who do not share the philoso-  
pher’s perception of identity. ‘To him there  
was no such thing as size. The pond was a  
small ocean; the Atlantic, a large Walden  
Pond. He referred every minite fact to cos-  
mical laws. ‘Though he meant to be just, he  
seemed haunted by a certain chronic assumption  
that the science of the day pretended complete-  
ness, and he had just found out that the savans  
hhad neglected to’ discriminate a particular bo-  
tanical variety, had failed to describe the seeds  
‘or count the sepals. “That is to say,” we re-  
plied, “the blockheads were not born in Con- ,  
cord; but who said they were? Tt was their  
unspeakable misfortune to be born in London,  
or Paris, or Rome; but, poor fellows, they did  
what they could, considering that they never  
saw Bateman’s Pond, or Nine - Acre Comer,  
or Becky-Stow’s Swamp. Besides, what were

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 29  
  
you sent into the world for, but to add this  
observation?”  
  
Had his genius been only contemplative, he  
had been fitted to his life, but with his energy  
and practical ability he seemed born for great  
enterprise and for command; and I so much  
regret the loss of his rare powers of action, that  
T cannot help counting it a fault in him that  
he had no ambition. Wanting this, instead of  
engineering for all America, he was the cap-  
tain of a huekleberry party. Pounding beans  
is good to the end of pounding empires one of  
these days; but if, at the end of years, it is still  
only beans!  
  
But these foibles, real or apparent, were fast  
vanishing in the incessant growth of a spirit so  
robust and wise, and which effaced its defeats  
with new triumphs. His study of Nature was  
a perpetual ornament to him, and inspired his  
friends with curiosity to see the world through  
his eyes, and to hear his adventures. They  
possessed every kind of interest.  
  
He had many elegances of his own, whilst he  
scoffed at conventional elegance. Thus, he  
could not bear to hear the sound of his own  
steps, the grit of gravel; and therefore never  
willingly walked in the road, but in the grass,  
on mountains and in woods. His senses were  
acute, and he remarked that by night every

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30 BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
  
dwelling-house gives out bad air, like a slaugh-  
ter-house. He liked the pure fragrance of  
molilot. He honored certain plants with spe-  
cial regard, and, over all, the pond-lily, —then,  
the gentian, and the Mikania scandens, and  
“life-everlasting,” and a bass-tree which he  
visited every year when it bloomed, in the mid-  
dle of July. He thought the scent a more  
oracular inquisition than the sight, —more  
oracular and trustworthy. The scent, of  
course, reveals what is eoncealed from the other  
senses. By it he detected earthiness. He de-  
lighted in echoes, and said they were almost the  
only kind of kindred voices that he heard. He  
loved Naturo so well, was so happy in her soli-  
tude, that he became very jealous of cities, and  
‘the sad work which their refinements and arti-  
fices made with man and his dwelling. ‘The  
axe was always destroying his forest.  
  
“Thank God,” he said, “they cannot cut  
down the clonds!” “All kinds of figures are  
drawn on the blue ground with this fibrous  
white paint.”  
  
I subjoin a few sentences taken from his  
unpublished manuscripts, not only as records of  
his thought and feeling, but for their power of  
description and literary excellence,  
  
“Some circumstantial evidence is very strong,  
as when you find a trout in the milk.”

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BIOGRAPHICAL® at  
  
“The chub is a soft fish, and #4¥es like boiled  
  
brown paper salted.”  
  
“The youth gets together his materials to  
build a ridge to the moon, or, perchance, a  
palace or temple on the earth, and at length the  
middle-aged man concludes to build a wood-  
shed with them.”  
  
“The locust:  
  
“Devil’s-needl  
“Meadow brook.”  
  
“Sugar is not so sweet to the palate as sound  
to the healthy ear.”  
  
“T put on some hemlock-bonghs, and the rich  
salt crackling of their leaves was like mustard  
to the ear, the crackling of uncountable regi-  
ments, Dead trees love the fire.”  
  
“The bluebird carries the sky on his back.”  
  
“The tanager flies through the green foliage  
as if it would ignite the leaves.”  
  
“Tf I wish for a horse-hair for my compass  
sight, I must go to the stable: but the hair-  
bind, with her sharp eyes, goes to the road.”  
  
“Tmmortal water, alive ever to the super-  
fieies.””  
  
“Fire is the most tolerable third party.”  
  
“Nature made ferns for pure leaves, to show  
what she could do in that Tine.”  
  
“No tree has so fair a bole and so handsome  
an instep as the beech.”  
  
   
  
   
  
zigeagging along the Nut-

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32 BIOGRABHICAL SKETCH  
  
“How did these beautiful rainbow-tints get  
into the shell of the fresh-water clam, buried in  
the mud at the bottom of our dark river?”  
  
“Hard are the times when the infant's shoes  
are second-foot.””  
  
“We are strictly confined to our men to whom  
wo give liberty.”  
  
“Nothing is so much to be feared as fear.  
Atheism may comparatively be popular with  
God himself.”  
  
“Of what significance the things you ean for-  
get? A little thought is sexton to all the  
world.”  
  
“How can we expect a harvest of thought  
who have not had a seed-time of character?”  
  
“Only he can be trusted with gifts who can  
present a face of bronze to expectations.”  
  
“TI ask to be melted. You can only ask of  
the metals that they be tender to the fire that  
melts them, To naught else can they be ten-  
der.”  
  
   
  
   
  
There is a flower known to botanists, one off  
the same genus with our summer plant called  
“life - everlasting,” a Gnaphalinn like that  
which grows on the most inaccessible cliffs of  
the Tyrolese mountains, where the chamois dare  
hardly venture, and which the hunter, tempted  
by its beauty, and by his love (for it is im-

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH 38.  
  
mensely valued by the Swiss maidens), climbs  
the cliffs to gather, and is sometimes found  
dead at the foot, with the flower in his hand.  
It is called by botanists the Gnaphalium leon  
topodium, but by the Swiss Edelweiss, which  
signifies Noble Purity. ‘Thoreau seemed to me  
living in the hope to gather this plant, which  
belonged to him of right, The seale on which  
his studies froceeded was so large as to require  
longevity. and we were the less prepared for his  
sudden disappearance. The country knows not  
yet, or in the least part, how great a son it has  
lost. Tt seems an injury that he should leave  
in the midst his broken task, which none else  
can finish, —a kind of indignity to so noble a  
souly that it should depart out of Nature before  
yet ‘he has been really shown to his peers for  
what he is. But he, at least, is content. His  
soul was made for the noblest society; he had  
ir{ a short life exhausted the capabilities of this  
Would; wherever there is knowledge, wherever  
there is xintue, wherever there is beauty, he  
will Gnd a home.

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sn Google

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MISCELLANIES  
  
THE SERVICE: QUALITIES OF THE  
RECRUIT  
  
‘Tae brave man is the older son of creation  
who has stepped buoyantly into his inheritance,  
while the coward, who is the younger, waiteth  
patiently for his decease. He rides as wide of  
this earth’s gravity as a star, and by yielding  
incessantly to all impulses of the soul is drawn  
upward and becomes a fixed star. His bravery  
consists not so much in resolute action as  
healthy and assured rest. Its palmy state is a  
staying at home, compelling alliance in all di-  
rections. So stands his life to heaven as some  
fair sunlit tree against the western horizon, and  
by sunrise is planted on some eastern hill to  
glisten in the first rays of the dawn. ‘The brave  
man braves nothing, nor knows he of his brav- |  
ery. . . . He does not present the gleaming  
edge to ward off harm, for that will oftenest  
attract the lightning, but rather is the all-per-  
vading ether, which the lightning does not  
strike, but purifies. It is the profanity of his  
companion, as a flash across the face of his sky,  
which lights up and reveals its serene depth.

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36 THE SERVICE  
  
A pyramid some artisan may measure with  
his line, but if he give you the dimensions of  
the Parthenon in fect and inches, the figures  
will not embrace it like a cord, but dangle from  
its entablature like an elastic drapery.  
  
‘The golden mean in ethics, as in physics, is  
| the centre of the system and that about which  
| all revolve, and though to a distant and plod-  
' ding planet it be an uttermost extreme, yet one  
  
day, when that planet’s year is completed, it  
will be found to be central.  
  
‘The coward wants resolution, which the brave  
man can do without. He recognizes no faith  
above a creed, thinking this straw by which he  
is moored does him good service, because his  
sheet anchor does not drag.  
  
‘The divinity in man is the true vestal fire of  
the temple which is never permitted to go out,  
‘but burns as steadily and with as pure a flame  
on the obscure provincial altar as in Numa’s  
temple at Rome. In the meanest are all the  
materials of manhood, only they are not rightly  
disposed.  
  
| Wo say justly that the weak person is flat,  
fonlike all flat substances, he does not stand in  
the direction of his strength, that is, on his  
edge, but affords a convenient surface to put  
upon. He slides all the way through life.  
‘Most things are strong in one direction, a straw

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QUALITIES OF THE RECRUIT 8T  
  
longitudinally, a board in the direction of its  
edge, but the brave man is a perfect sphere,  
which cannot fall on its flat side and is equally  
strong every way. The coward is wretchedly  
spheroidal at best, too much educated or drawn  
out on one side and depressed on the other, or  
may be likened to hollow sphere, whose dis-  
position of matter is least where the greatest  
‘bulk is intended. We shall not attain to be  
spherical by lying on one or the other side for  
an eternity, but only by resigning ourselves im-  
plicitly to the law of gravity in us shall we find  
our axis coincident with the celestial axis, and  
by revolving incessantly through all circles  
acquire a perfect sphericity.  
  
Tt is not enough that our life is an easy one.  
‘We must live on the stretch, retiring to our rest  
like soldiers on the eve of a battle, looking for-  
ward with ardor to the strenuous sortie of the  
morrow.

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PARADISE (10 BE) REGAINED?  
  
‘We learn that Mr. Etzler is a native of  
Germany, and originally published his book  
in Pennsylvania, ten or twelve years ago; and  
now a second English edition, from the origi-  
nal American one, is demanded by his readers  
across the water, owing, we suppose, to the re-  
cent spread of Fourier’s doctrines. It is one  
of the signs of the times. We confess that we  
hhave risen from reading this book with enlarged  
ideas, and grander conceptions of our duties in  
this world. It did expand us a little. It is  
worth attending to, if only that it entertains  
large questions. Consider what Mr. Etzler  
proposes: —  
  
“Fellow-men! I promise to show the means  
of creating a paradise within ten years, where  
everything desirable for human life may be had  
by every man in superabundance, without labor,  
and without pay; where the whole face of na-  
ture shall be changed into the most. beautiful  
  
2 The Paradise within the Reach of all Men, without Labor,  
bby Powers of Nature and Machinery. An Address to all intal-  
Tigent Mon. In Two Party. By J. A. Eisler. Part Fist.  
Second English Edition, London, 1842, Pp. 55.

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PARADISE (T0 BE) REGAINED 89  
  
forms, and man may live in the most magnifi-  
cent palaces, in all imaginable refinements of  
Tuxury, and in the most delightful gardens ;  
where he may accomplish, without labor, in one  
year, more than hitherto could be done in thou-  
sands of years; may level mountains, sink val-  
leys, ereate Jakes, drain lakes and swamps, and  
intersect the land everywhere with beautiful  
canals, and roads for transporting heavy loads  
of many thousand tons, and for traveling one  
thousand miles in twenty-four hours; may cover  
the ocean with floating islands movable in any  
desired direction with immense power and ce-  
lerity, in perfect security, and with all com-  
forts and luxuries, bearing gardens and palaces,  
with thousands of families, and provided with  
rivalets of sweet water; may explore the inte-  
rior of the globe, and travel from pole to pole  
ina fortnight; provide himself with means, un-  
heard of yet, for increasing his knowledge of  
the world, and so his intelligence; lead a life  
of continual happiness, of enjoyments yet un-  
known; free himself from almost all the evils  
that afflict mankind, except death, and even put  
death far beyond the common period of human  
life, and finally render it less afflicting. Man.  
kind may thus live in and enjoy a new world,  
far superior to the present, and raise themselves  
far higher in the seale of being.””

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40 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
Tt would seem from this and various indiea-  
tions beside, that there is a transcendentalism  
in mechanies as well as in ethies. While the  
whole field of the one reformer lies beyond the  
Doundaries of space, the other is pushing his  
schemes for the elevation of the race to its ut-  
most limits. While one scours the heavens, the  
other sweeps the earth. One says he will reform  
himself, and then nature and circumstances will,  
be right. Let us not obstruct ourselves, for  
that is the greatest friction. Tt is of little im-  
portance though a cloud obstruct the view of  
the astronomer compared with his own blind-  
ness. The other will reform nature and cir-  
cumstances, and then man will be right. ‘Talk  
no more vaguely, says he, of reforming the  
world, —I will reform the globe itself. What  
matters it whether I remove this humor out of  
my flesh, or this pestilent humor from the fleshy  
part of the globe? Nay, is not the latter the  
more generous course? At present the globe  
goes with a shattered constitution in its orbit.  
Has it not asthma, and ague, and fever, and  
Aropsy, and flatulenee, and pleurisy, and is it  
not afflicted with vermin? Tas it not its health-  
ful laws counteracted, and its vital energy  
which will yet redeem it? No doubt the simple  
powers of nature, properly directed by man,  
would make it healthy and a paradise; as the

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 41.  
  
laws of man’s own constitution but wait to be  
obeyed, to restore him to health and happiness.  
Our panaceas cure but few ails, our general  
hospitals are private and exclusive. We must  
set up another Hygeia than is now worshiped.  
Do not the quacks even direct small doses for  
children, larger for adults, and larger still for  
‘oxen and horses? Let us remember that we  
are to prescribe for the globe itself.  
  
This fair homestead has fallen to us, and how  
Tittle have we done to improve it, how little  
have we cleared and hedged and ditched! We  
are too inclined to go hence to a “better land,”  
without lifting a finger, as our farmers are mov-  
ing to the Ohio soil; but would it not be more  
heroic and faithful to till and redeem this New  
England soil of the world? ‘The still youthful  
energies of the globe have only to be directed  
in their proper channel. Every gazette brings  
accounts of the untutored freaks of the wind,  
—shipwrecks and hurricanes which the mariner  
and planter accept as special or general provi-  
dences; but they touch our consciences, they  
remind us of our sins. Another deluge would  
disgrace mankind. We confess we never had  
much respect for that antediluvian race. A  
thoroughbred business man eannot enter heart-  
ily upon the business of life without first look-  
ing into his accounts. How many things are

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42 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
now at loose ends. Who knows which way the  
wind will blow to-morrow? Let us not sue-  
cumb to nature. We will marshal the clouds  
and restrain tempests; we will bottle up pesti-  
lent exhalations; we will probe for earthquakes,  
grub them up, and give vent to the dangerous  
gas; we will disembowel the voleano, and ex-  
tract its poison, take its seed out. We will  
wash water, and warm fire, and cool iee, and  
underprop the earth. We will teach birds to  
fly, and fishes to swim, and ruminants to chew  
the cud. It is time we had looked into these  
things.  
  
‘And it becomes the moralist, too, to inquire  
what man might do to improve and beautify the  
system; what to make the stars shine more  
brightly, the sun more cheery and joyous, the  
‘moon more placid and content. Could he not  
heighten the tints of flowers and the melody of  
birds? Does he perform his duty to the infe-  
rior races? Should he not be a god to them?  
‘What is the part of magnanimity to the whale  
and the beaver? Should we not fear to ex-  
change places with them for a day, lest by their  
‘behavior they should shame us? Might we not  
treat with magnanimity the shark and the tiger,  
not descend to meet them on their own level,  
with spears of shark’s tecth and bucklers of  
tiger's skin? We slander the hyena; man is

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 43  
  
the fiereest and eruellest animal. Ab! he is of  
little faith; even the erring comets and meteors  
would thank him, and return his kindness in  
their kind,  
  
‘How meanly and grossly do we deal with  
nature! Could we not have a less gross labor?  
‘What else do these fine inventions suggest,  
—rmagnetism, the daguerreotype, electricity?  
Can we not do more than cut and trim the for-  
est, —can we not assist in its interior economy,  
in the circulation of the sap? Now we work  
superficially and violently. We do not suspect ;  
how much might be done to improve our rela- |  
tion to animated nature evens what kindness|  
and refined courtesy there might be. {  
  
‘There are certain pursuits which, if not  
wholly poetic and trae, do at least suggest a  
nobler and finer relation to nature than we  
know. ‘The keeping of bees, for instance, is a  
very slight interference. It is like directing the  
sunbeams. All nations, from the remotest an-  
tiquity, hive thus fingered nature. There are  
‘Hymettus and Hybla, and how many bee-re-  
nowned spots beside? There is nothing gross  
in the idea of these little herds, —their hum  
like the faintest low of kine in the meads. A.  
pleasant reviewer has lately reminded us that in  
some places they are led out to pasture where  
the flowers are most abundant. “Columella

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44 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
tells us,” says he, “that the inhabitants of Ara-  
bia sent their hives into Attica to benefit by the  
later-blowing flowers.” Annually are the hives,  
in immense pyramids, carried up the Nile in  
boats, and suffered to float slowly down the  
stream by night, resting by day, as the flowers  
put forth along the banks; and they determine  
the richness of any locality, and so the profitable.  
ness of delay, by the sinking of the boat in the  
water. We are told, by the same reviewer, of a  
man in Germany, whose bees yielded more honey  
than those of his neighbors, with no apparent  
advantage; but at length he informed them,  
that he had turned his hives one degree more to  
the east, and so his bees, having two hours the  
start in the morning, got the first sip of honey.  
True, there is treachery and selfishness behind  
all this, but these things suggest to the poetic  
mind what might be done. \*  
  
‘Many examples there are of a grosser inter-  
ference, yet not without their apology. We saw  
last summer, on the side of a mountain, a dog  
employed to churn for a farmer’s family, travel-  
ing upon a horizontal wheel, and though he had  
sore eyes, an alarming cough, and withal a de-  
mure aspeet, yet their bread did get buttered  
for all that. Undoubtedly, in the most. bril-  
Tiant successes, the first rank is always saeri-  
ficed. Much useless traveling of horses, in

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 45  
  
extenso, has of late years been improved for  
man’s behoof, only two forces being taken ad-  
vantage of, —the gravity of the horse, which is  
the centripetal, and his centrifugal inclination  
to go ahead, Only these two elements in the  
calculation. And is not the ereature’s whole  
economy better economized thus? Are not all  
finite beings better pleased with motions rela-  
tive than absolute? And what is the great  
globe itself but such a wheel, —a larger tread-  
mill,—so that our horse’s freest. steps over  
prairies are oftentimes balked and rendered of  
no avail by the earth's motion on its axis? But  
hore he is the central agent and motive-powers  
and, for variety of scenery, being provided with  
a window in front, do not the ever-varying  
activity and fluctuating energy of the creature  
himself work the effect of the most varied scen-  
ery on a country road? It must be confessed  
that horses at present work too exclusively for  
men, rarely men for horses; and the brute de-  
generates in man’s society.  
  
   
  
Tt will be seen that we contemplate a time  
when man’s will shall be law to the physical  
world, and he shall no longer be deterred by  
such abstractions as time and space, height and  
depth, weight and hardness, but shall indeed be  
the lord of creation, “Well,” says the faith-

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46 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
less reader, “life is short, but art is longs?  
where is the power that will effect all these  
changes?” ‘This it is the very object of Mr.  
Etzler’s volume to show. At present, he would.  
merely remind us that there are innumerable  
and immeasurable powers already existing in  
nature, unimproved on a large scale, or for gen-  
erous and universal ends, amply sufficient for  
these purposes. He would only indicate their  
existence, as a surveyor makes known the exist-  
ence of a water-power on any stream; but for  
their application he refers us to a sequel to  
this book, called the “Mechanical System.” A.  
few of the most obvious and familiar of these  
powers are the Wind, the Tide, the Waves, the  
Sunshine. Let us consider their value,  
  
First, there is the power of the Wind, con-  
stantly exerted over the globe. It appears  
from observation of a sailing-vessel, and from  
scientific tables, that the average power of the  
wind is equal to that of one horse for every one  
hundred square feet. We do not attach much  
value to this statement of the comparative  
power of the wind and horse, for no common  
ground is mentioned on which they can be  
compared. Undoubtedly, each is incomparably  
excellent in its way, and every general compar-  
ison made for such practical purposes as are  
contemplated, which gives a preference to the

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 47  
  
‘one, must be made with some unfairness to the  
other. The scientific tables are, for the most  
part, true only in a tabular sense. We suspect  
that a loaded wagon, with a light sail, ten feot  
square, would not have heen blown so far by  
the end of the year, under equal circumstances,  
as a common racer or dray horse would have  
drawn it. And how many erazy structures on  
‘our globe’s surface, of the same dimensions,  
would wait for dry-rot if the traces of one horse  
‘were hitched to them, even to their windward  
side? Plainly this is not the principle of com-  
parison, But even the steady and constant  
force of the horse may be rated as equal to his  
weight at least. Yet we should prefer to let  
the zephyrs and gales bear, with all their  
weight, upon our fences, than that Dobbin,  
with feet braced, should lean ominously against  
them for a season.  
  
Nevertheless, here is an almost incalculable  
power at our disposal, yet how trifling the use  
we make of it, It only serves to tum a few  
mills, blow a few vessels across the ocean, and  
a few trivial ends besides. What a poor com-  
pliment do we pay to our indefatigable and  
energetic servant!  
  
‘Men having discovered the power of falling  
water, which, after all, is comparatively slight,  
how eagerly do they seek out and improve these

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48 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
privileges? Let a difference of but a few feet  
in level be discovered on some stream near a  
populous town, some slight occasion for gravity  
to act, and the whole economy of the neighbor-  
hood is changed at once. Men do indeed spec-  
ulate about and with this power as if it were  
the only privilege. But meanwhile this aerial  
stream is falling from far greater heights with  
‘more constant flow, never shrank by drought,  
offering mill-sites wherever the wind blows; a  
‘Niagara in the air, with no Canada side;—  
only the application is hard.  
  
‘There are the powers, too, of the Tide and  
‘Waves, constantly ebbing and flowing, lapsing  
and relapsing, but they serve man in but few  
ways. They turn a few tide-mills, and perform  
a few other insignificant and accidental services  
only. We all perceive the effect of the tides  
how imperceptibly it creeps up into our harbors  
and rivers, and raises the heaviest navies as  
easily as the lightest chip. Everything that  
floats must yield to it, But man, slow to take  
nature’s constant hint of assistance, makes  
slight and irregular use of this power, in careen-  
ing ships and getting them afloat when aground.  
  
‘This power may be applied in various ways.  
A large body, of the heaviest materials that  
will float, may first be raised by it, and being  
attached to the end of a balance reaching from

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PARADISE (0 BE) REGAINED 49  
  
the land, or from a stationary support fastened  
to the bottom, when the tide falls the whole  
weight will be brought to bear upon the end of  
the balance. Also, when the tide rises, it may  
be made to exert a nearly equal force in the  
‘opposite direction, It can be employed wher-  
ever a point d’appui can be obtained.  
  
Verily, the land would wear a busy aspect at  
the spring and neap tide, and these island ships,  
these terrae infirm, which realize the fables of  
antiquity, affect our imagination, We have  
often thought that the fittest locality for a hu-  
man dwelling was on the edge of the land, that  
there the constant lesson and impression of the  
sea might sink deep into the life and character  
of the landsman, and perhaps impart a marine  
tint to his imagination. It is a noble word,  
that mariner, —one who is conversant with the  
sea. ‘There should be more of what it signifies  
in each of us. It is a worthy country to belong  
to, —we look to see him not disgrace it. Per-  
haps we should be equally mariners and terre-  
ners, and even our Green Mountains need some  
of that sea-green to be mixed with them.  
  
The computation of the power of the Waves  
is less satisfactory. While only the average  
power of the wind and the average height of  
the tide were taken before, now the extreme  
height of the waves is used, for they are made

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50 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
to rise ten fect above the level of the sea, to  
which, adding ten more for depression, we have  
twenty feet, or the extreme height of a wave.  
Indeed, the power of the waves, which is pro-  
Auced by the wind blowing obliquely and at  
disadvantage upon the water, is made to be,  
not only three thousand times greater than that  
of the tide, but one hundred times greater than  
that of the wind itself, meeting its object at  
right angles. Moreover, this power is measured  
hy the area of the vessel, and not by its length  
mainly, and it seems to be forgotten that the  
motion of the waves is chiefly undulatory, and  
‘exerts a power only within the limits of a vibra-  
tion, else the very continents, with their exten-  
sive coasts, would soon be set adrift.  
  
Finally, there is the power to be derived from  
Sunshine, by the prineiple on which Archimedes  
contrived his burning-mirrors, a multiplication  
of mirrors reflecting the rays of the sun upon  
the same spot, till the requisite degree of heat  
is obtained. The principal application of this  
power will be to the boiling of water and pro-  
duction of steam. So much for these few and  
more obvions powers, already used to a trifling  
extent, But there are innumerable others in  
nature, not described nor discovered. ‘These,  
however, will do for the present. This would  
be to make the sun and the moon equally our

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PARADISE (T0 BE) REGAINED 51  
  
satellites. For, as the moon is the cause of  
the tides, and the sun the cause of the wind,  
which, in turn, is the cause of the waves, all the  
work of this planet would be performed by these  
far influences,  
  
“We may store up water in some eminent  
pond, and take out of this store, at any time, as  
much water through the outlet as we want to  
employ, by which means the original power  
may react for many days after it has ceased.  
... « Such reservoirs of moderate elevation or  
size need not be made artificially, but will be  
found made by nature very frequently, requir-  
ing but little aid for their completion. They  
require no regularity of form. Any valley,  
with lower grounds in its vieinity, would answer  
the purpose. Small crevices may be filled up.  
Such places may be eligible for the beginning  
of enterprises of this kind.”  
  
‘The greater the height, of course, the less  
water required. But suppose a level and dry  
country; then hill and valley, and “eminent  
pond,” are to be constructed by main force; or,  
if the springs are unusually low, then dirt and  
stones may he used, and the disadvantage aris-  
ing from friction will be counterbalanced by  
their greater gravity. Nor shall a single rood  
of dry land be sunk in such artificial ponds as  
may be wanted, but their surfaces ‘may be cov-

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52 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
ered with rafts decked with fertile earth, and  
all kinds of vegetables which may grow there as  
well as anywhere else.”  
  
‘And, finally, by the use of thick envelopes  
retaining the heat, and other contrivances, “the  
power of steam caused by sunshine may react  
at will, and thus be rendered perpetual, no mat-  
ter how often or how long the sunshine may be  
interrupted.”  
  
Here is power enough, one would think, to  
accomplish somewhat. These are the Powers  
below. O ye millwrights, ye engineers, ye  
operatives and speculators of every elass, never  
again complain of a want of power: it is the  
grossest form of infidelity. The question is,  
not how we shall execute, but what. Let us  
not use in a niggardly manner what is thus gen-  
erously offered.  
  
Consider what revolutions are to be effected  
in agriculture. First, in the new country a  
machine is to move along, taking out trees and  
stones to any required depth, and piling them  
  
in convenient heaps; then the same machine,  
“with a little alteration,” is to plane the ground  
perfectly, till there shall be no hills nor valleys,  
making the requisite canals, ditches, and roads  
as it goes along. The same machine, “with  
some other little alterations,” is then to sift  
the ground thoroughly, supply fertile soil from  
  
   
  
up

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 58  
  
other places if wanted, and plant it; and finally  
the same machine, “with a little addition,” is  
to reap and gather in the erop, thresh and grind  
it, or press it to oil, or prepare it any way for  
final use. For the description of these ma-  
chines we are referred to “Etzler’s Mechanical  
System,” pages 11 to 27. We should be  
pleased to see that “Mechanical System.” We  
have great faith in it, But we cannot stop for  
applications now.  
  
‘Who knows but by accumulating the power  
until the end of the present century, using  
meanwhile only the smallest allowance, reserv-  
ing all that blows, all that shines, all that ebbs  
and flows, all that dashes, we may have got  
such a reserved accumulated power as to run.  
the earth off its track into a new orbit, some  
summer, and so change the tedious vicissitude  
of the seasons? Or, perchance, coming gener-  
ations will not abide the dissolution of the  
globe, but, availing themselves of future in-  
ventions in aerial locomotion, and the naviga-  
tion of space, the entire race may migrate from  
the earth, to settle some vacant and more west-  
em planet, it may be still healthy, perchance  
unearthy, not composed of dirt and stones,  
whose primary strata only are strewn, and  
where no weeds are sown. It took but little  
art, a simple application of natural laws, a

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54 PARADISE (10 BE) REGAINED  
  
canoe, a paddle, and a sail of matting, to peo-  
ple the isles of the Pacific, and a little more  
will people the shining isles of space. Do we  
not see in the firmament the lights carried along  
the shore by night, as Columbus did? Let us  
not despair nor mutiny.  
  
“The dwellings also ought to be very differ-  
ent from what is known, if the full benefit of  
‘our means is to be enjoyed. ‘They are to be of  
‘a structure for which we have no name yet.  
‘They are to be neither palaces, nor temples, nor  
cities, but a combination of all, superior to  
whatever is known.  
  
“Earth may be baked into bricks, or even  
vitrified stone by heat,—we may bake large  
‘masses of any size and form, into stone and  
vitrified substance of the greatest durability,  
lasting even thousands of years, out of clayey  
earth, or of stones ground to dust, by the appli-  
cation of burning-mirrors. This is to be done  
in the open air without other preparation than  
gathering the substance, grinding and mixing it  
with water and cement, moulding or casting it,  
and bringing the focus of the burning mirrors  
of proper size upon the same.”  
  
‘The character of the architecture is to be  
quite different from what it ever has been hith-  
erto; large solid masses are to be baked or cast  
in one piece, ready shaped in any form that

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 55  
  
may be desived. ‘The building may, therefore,  
consist of columns two hundred feet high and  
upwards, of proportionate thickness, and of one  
entire piece of vitrified substance; huge pieces  
are to be moulded so as to join and hook on to  
each other firmly, by proper joints and folds,  
and not to yield in any way without breaking,  
  
“Foundries, of any description, are to be  
heated by burning-mirrors, and will require no  
labor, except the making of the first moulds  
and the superintendence for gathering the metal  
and taking the finished articles away.”  
  
‘Alas! in the present state of science, we must  
take the finished articles away; but think not  
that man will always be the victim of eireum-  
stances.  
  
‘The countryman who visited the city, and  
found the streets cluttered with bricks and lum-  
ber, reported that it was not yet finished; and  
‘one who considers the endless repairs and re-  
forming of our houses might well wonder when.  
they will be done. But why may not the dwell-  
ings of men on this earth be built, once for all,  
of some durable material, some Roman or  
Etruscan masonry, which will stand, so that  
time shall only adorn and beautify them? Why.  
may we not finish the outward world for poster-  
ity, and Jeave them leisure to attend to the in-  
ner? Surely, all the gross necessities and econ-

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56 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
omies might be eared for in a few years, AIL  
might be built and baked and stored up, during  
this, the term-time of the world, against the  
vacant eternity, and the globe go provisioned  
and furnished, like our publi vessels, for its  
voyage through space, as through some Pacifie  
Ocean, while we would “tie up the rudder and  
sleep before the wind,” as those who sail from  
‘Lima to Manilla.  
  
But, to go back a few years in imagination,  
think not that life in these erystal palaces is to  
bear any analogy to life in our present humble  
cottages. Far from it. Clothed, once for all,  
in some “flexible stuff,” more durable than  
George Fox’s suit of leather, composed of  
“fibres of vegetables,” “glutinated” together  
hy some “cohesive substances,” and made into  
sheets, like paper, of any size or form, man will  
put far from him corroding eare and the whole  
host of ills.  
  
“The twenty-five halls in the inside of the  
square are to be each two hundred feet square  
and high; the forty corridors, each one hundred  
feet long and twenty wide; the eighty galleries,  
each from 1,000 to 1,250 fect long; about  
7,000 private rooms, the whole surrounded and  
intersected by the grandest and most. splen-  
did colonnades imaginable; floors, ceilings, col-  
umns, with their various beautiful and fanciful

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 81  
  
intervals, all shining, and reflecting to infinity  
all objects and persons, with splendid lustre of  
all beautiful colors, and fanciful shapes and pie-  
tures.  
  
“All galleries, outside and within the halls,  
are to be provided with many thousand eommo-  
dious and most elegant vehicles, in which per-  
sons may move up and down like birds, in per-  
fect. security, and without exertion. . . . Any  
member may procure himself all the common  
articles of his daily wants, by a short tum of  
some crank, without leaving his apartment.  
  
“One or two persons are sufficient to direct  
the kitchen business. ‘They have nothing else  
to do but to superintend the cookery, and to  
watch the time of the victuals being done, and  
then to remove them, with the table and vessels,  
into the dining-hall, or to the respective private  
apartments, by a slight motion of the hand at  
some crank... . Any very extraordinary  
desire of any person may be satisfied by going  
to the place where the thing is to be had ; and  
anything that requires a particular preparation  
in cooking or Baking may be done by the person  
who desires it.”  
  
This is one of those instances in which the  
individual genins is found to consent, as indeed  
it always does, at last, with the universal. This  
ast sentence has a certain sad and sober truth,

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58 PARADISE (10 BE) REGAINED  
  
which reminds us of the scripture of all nations.  
All expression of truth does at length take this  
deep ethical form. Here is hint of a place the  
‘most eligible of any in space, and of a servitor,  
in comparison with whom all other helps dwin-  
dle into insignificance. We hope to hear more  
of him anon, for even a Crystal Palace would  
be deficient without his invaluable services.  
  
And as for the environs of the establish-  
ment: —  
  
“There will be afforded the most enrapturing  
views to be fancied, out of the private apart-  
ments, from the galleries, from the roof, from  
its turrets and cupolas, — gardens, as far as the  
eye ean sce, full of fruits and flowers, arranged  
in the most beautiful order, with walks, colon-  
nades, aqueducts, canals, ponds, plains, amphi-  
theatres, terraces, fountains, sculptural works,  
pavilions, gondolas, places for public amuse-  
ment, ete., to delight the eye and fancy, the  
taste and smell. . ... The walks and roads are  
to be paved with hard vitrified lange plates, so  
as to be always clean from all dirt in any  
weather or season. . . .  
  
“The walks may be covered with porticoes  
adorned with magnificent columns, statues, and  
sculptural works; all of vitrified substance, and  
lasting forever. At night the roof and the  
inside and outside of the whole square are illu-

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 59  
  
minated by gas-light, which, in the mazes of  
many-eolored erystal-like colonnades and vault-  
ings, is reflected with a brilliancy that gives to  
the whole a lustre of precious stones, as far as  
the eye can see. Such are the future abodes  
of men. . . . Such is the life reserved to true  
intelligence, but withheld from ignorance, pre-  
judice, and stupid adherence to custom.”  
  
‘Thus is Paradise to be Regained, and that  
ol and stern decree at length reversed. Man  
shall no more earn his living by the sweat of his  
brow. All labor shall be reduced to “a short  
‘turn of some crank,” and “taking the finished  
articles away.” But there is a erank, —oh,  
how hard to be turned! Could there not be a  
crank upon a crank,—an infinitely small  
crank?—we would fain inquire. No, —alas!  
not. But there is a certain divine energy in  
every man, but sparingly employed as yet,  
which may be called the crank within, —the  
crank after all, —tho prime mover in all ma-  
chinery, —quite indispensable to all work.  
Would that we might get our hands on its han-  
dle! In fact, no work can be shirked. Tt may  
be postponed indefinitely, but not infinitely.  
Nor can any really important work be made  
easier by codperation or machinery, Not one  
particle of labor now threatening any man can  
be routed without being performed. It cannot

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60 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
‘be hunted out of the vicinity like jackals and  
hyenas. It will not run, You may begin by  
sawing the little sticks, or you may saw the  
great sticks first, but sooner or later you must  
saw them both.  
  
‘We will not be imposed upon by this vast  
application of forces. We believe that most  
things will have to be accomplished still by the  
application called Industry. We are rather  
pleased after all to consider the small private,  
but both constant and accumulated force, which  
stands behind every spade in the field. ‘This it  
is that makes the valleys shine, and the deserts  
really bloom. Sometimes, we confess, we are  
so degenerate as to reflect with pleasure on the  
days when men were yoked liked cattle, and  
drew a crooked stick for a plough. After all,  
the great interests and methods were the same.  
  
Tt is a rather serious objection to Mr. Etzler's  
schemes, that they require time, men, and  
money, three very superfluous and inconvenient  
things for an honest and well-disposed man to  
deal with, “The whole world,” he tells us,  
“might therefore be really changed into a para-  
ise, within less than ten years, commencing  
from the first year of an association for the pur-  
pose of constructing and applying the machin-  
cry.” We are sensible of a startling incon-  
gruity when time and money are mentioned in

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PARADISE (10 BE) REGAINED 61  
  
this connection. The ten years which are pro-  
posed would be a tedious while to wait, if every  
‘man were at his post and did his duty, but  
quite too short a period, if we are to take time  
for it. But this fault is by no means peculiar  
to Mr. Etzler’s schemes. ‘There is far too  
much hurry and bustle, and too little patience  
and privacy, in all our methods, as if something  
‘were to be accomplished in centuries. ‘The true  
reformer does not want time, nor money, nor  
cobperation, nor advice. What is time but the  
stuff delay is made of? And depend upon it,  
our virtue will not live on the interest of our  
money, He expects no income, but outgoes;  
80 soon as we begin to count the cost, the cost  
begins. And as for advice, the information  
floating in the atmosphere of society is as eva-  
nescent and unserviceable to him as gossamer  
for clubs of Hercules, There is absolutely no  
common sense; it is common nonsense. IE we  
are to risk a cent or a drop of our blood, who  
then shall advise us? For ourselves, we are  
too young for experience, Who is old enough?  
‘We are older by faith than by experience. In  
the unbending of the arm to do the deed there  
is experience worth all the maxims in the  
world.  
  
“It will now be plainly seen that the execu-  
tion of the proposals is not proper for individ-

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62 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
uals. Whether it be proper for government. at  
this time, before the subject has become popu-  
lar, is a question to be decided; all that is to  
be done is to step forth, after mature reflection,  
to confess loudly one’s conviction, and to con-  
stitute societies. Man is powerful but in union  
with many. Nothing great, for the improve-  
ment of his own condition, or that of his fellow-  
men, can ever be effected by individual enter-  
prise.”  
  
Alas! this is the erying sin of the age, this  
want of faith in the prevalence of aman. No-  
thing can be effected but by one man. He who  
wants help wants everything. ‘True, this is the  
condition of our weakness, but it can never be  
‘the means of our recovery. We must first sue-  
  
| ceed alone, that we may enjoy our success to-  
gether. We trust that the social movements  
which we witness indicate an aspiration not to  
be thus cheaply satisfied. In this matter of  
reforming the world, we have little faith in cor-  
porations; not thus was it first formed.  
  
But our author is wise enough to say, that  
the raw materials for the accomplishment of his  
purposes are “iron, copper, wood, earth chiefly,  
and a union of men whose eyes and understand-  
ing are not shut up by preconceptions.” Ay,  
this last may be what we want mainly,—a  
company of “odd fellows” indeed.

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 63  
  
“Small shares of twenty dollars will be suffi-  
cient,” —in all, from “200,000 to 300,000,”  
—“to create the first establishment for a whole  
community of from 3,000 to 4,000 individuals,”  
—at the end of five years we shall have a prin  
cipal of 200 millions of dollars, and so paradise  
will be wholly regained at the end of the tenth  
year. But, alas! the ten years have already  
elapsed, and there are no signs of Eden yet,  
for want of the requisite funds to begin the en-  
terprise in a hopeful manner. Yet it seems a  
safe investment. Perchanee they could he hired.  
at alow rate, the property being mortgaged for  
seourity, and, if necessary, it could be given up  
in any stage of the enterprise, without loss,  
with the fixtures.  
  
But wo see two main difficulties in the way:  
first, the successful application of the powers  
by machinery (we have not yet seen the “Me-  
chanical System”), and, secondly, which is in-  
finitely harder, the application of man to the  
work by faith. This it is, we fear, which will  
prolong the ten years to ten thousand at least.  
‘It will take a power more than “80,000 times  
greater than all the men on earth could effect  
with their nerves” to persuade men to use that  
which is already offered them. Even a greater  
than this physical power must be brought to  
boar upon that moral power. Faith, indeed,

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64 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
is all the reform that is needed; it is itself  
a reform. Doubtless, we are as slow to con-  
ceive of Paradise as of Heaven, of a perfect  
natural as of a perfect spiritual world. We  
see how past ages have loitered and erred. “Is  
perhaps our generation free from irrationality  
and error? Have we perhaps reached now the  
summit of human wisdom, and need no more  
to look out for mental or physical improve-  
ment?” Undoubtedly, we are never so vision-  
ary as to be prepared for what the next hour  
may bring forth,  
Mada 13 Ociov 8 fore roiotrov pire  
  
‘The Divine is about to be, and such is its  
nature. In our wisest moments we are secret-  
ing @ matter, which, like the lime of the shell  
fish, inerusts us quite over, and well for us if,  
Tike it, we cast our shells from time to time,  
though they be pearl and of fairest tint. Let  
  
~ us consider under what disadvantages Science  
has hitherto labored before we pronounce thus  
confidently on her progress.  
  
Mr. Eizler is not one of the enlightened prac-  
tical men, the pioneers of the actual, who move  
with the slow, deliberate tread of science, con-  
serving the world; who execute the dreams of  
the last century, though they have no dreams  
of their own; yet he deals in the very raw but

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PARADISE (10 BE) REGAINED 65  
  
still solid material of all inventions. He has  
more of the practical than usually belongs to  
to bold a schemer, so resolute a dreamer. Yet  
his success is in theory, and not in practice, and  
he feeds our faith rather than contents our un-  
derstanding. His book wants order, serenity,  
dignity, everything, —but it does not fail to  
impart what only man can impart to man of  
much importance, his own faith. Tt is true his  
dreams are not thrilling nor bright enough, and  
he leaves off to dream where he who dreams  
just before the dawn begins. His castles in  
tho air fall to the ground, because they are not  
Duilt lofty enough; they should be secured to  
heaven’s roof. After all, the theories and  
speculations of men concern us more than their  
puny accomplishment. Tt is with a certain  
coldness and languor that we loiter about the  
actual and so-called practical. How little do  
‘the most wonderful inventions of modern times  
detain us. ‘They insult mature, Every ma-  
chine, or particular application, seems a slight  
outrage against universal laws. How many fine  
inventions are there which do not clutter the  
ground? We think that thése only succeed  
which minister to our sensible and animal  
wants, which bake or brew, wash or warm, oF  
the like. But are those of no account which  
are patented by faney and imagination, and sue-

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60 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
ceed so admirably in our dreams that they give  
the tone still to our waking thoughts? Already.  
nature is serving all those uses which science  
slowly derives on a much higher and grander  
seale to him that will be served by her. When  
the sunshine falls on the path of the poet, he  
enjoys all those pure benefits and pleasures  
which the arts slowly and partially realize from  
age to age. The winds which fan his cheek  
waft him the sum of that profit and happiness  
which their lagging inventions supply.  
  
‘The chief fault of this book is, that it aims  
to secure the greatest degree of gross comfort  
and pleasure merely. It paints a Mahometan’s  
heaven, and stops short with singular abrupt-  
ness when we think it is drawing near to the  
precinets of the Christian's, —and we trust we  
have not made here a distinction without a dif-  
ference. Undoubtedly if we were to reform thi  
outward life truly and thoroughly, we should  
find no duty of the inner omitted. It would  
be employment for our whole natures and what  
we should do thereafter would be as vain a  
question as to ask the bird what it will do when  
its nest is built ind its brood reared. But a  
moral reform must take place first, and then the  
necessity of the other will be superseded, and  
wo shall sail and plough by its force alone.  
There is a speodier way than the “Mechanical

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 61  
  
System” can show to fill up marshes, to drown  
the roar of tho waves, to tame hyenas, secure  
agreeable environs, diversify the land, and re-  
fresh it with “rivulets of sweot water,” and  
that is by the power of rectitude and true be-  
havior. It is only for a little while, only ovea-  
sionally, methinks, that we want a garden,  
Surely a good man need not be at the labor to  
level a hill for the sake of a prospect, or raise  
fruits and flowers, and construct floating islands,  
for tho sake of a paradise. He enjoys better  
prospects than lie behind any hill. Where an  
angel travels it will be paradise all the way, but  
where Satan travels it will be burning marl and  
cinders. What says Veeshnoo Sarma? “Ie  
whose mind is at ease is possessed of all riches.  
Is it not the sme to one whose foot is inclosed  
in a shoe, as if the whole suxface of the earth  
wore covered with leather?”  
  
Te who is conversant with the supernal pow-  
ors will not worship these inferior deities of the  
wind, waves, tide, and sunshine. But we would  
not disparage the importance of such calculations  
as we have described. ‘They ave truths in phys-  
ies, because they are true in ethics. ‘The moral  
powers no one would presume to calculate. Sup-  
pose we could compare the moral with the phys-  
ial, and say how many horse-power the force  
of love, for instance, blowing on every square

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68 PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED  
  
   
  
foot of a man’s soul, would equal. No doubt  
we are well fore; figures would  
not ineveaso our respect for it the sunshine is  
exual to Dnt ono ray of its heat, ‘The light of  
the sun is but the shadow of love. “Lhe souls  
of men loving and fearing God,” says Raleigh,  
“receive influence from that divine light itself,  
whereof the sun’s clarity, and that of tho stars,  
is hy Plato called but a shadow. Lumen ext  
umibra Dei, Dens est Tannen Luminis. Light  
is the shadow of God's brightnoss, who is the  
light of Tight,” and, we amy add, the heat of  
heat. Love is the wind, the tide, the waves,  
the sunshine. Its power i jeulable; it is  
many horse-power. Tt never ecases, it never  
slacks; it can move the globe without a resting-  
places it ean warm without fire; it ean fecd  
without meat; it ean clothe without garments  
it ean shelter without roof; it ean make a parn-  
dise within which will dispense with-a paradi  
without, But though the wisest men in  
Jnboved to publish this force, and every  
Iman heart is, sooner ov Inter, more or less,  
maile to fecl it, yet how little is actually applied  
to social ends. Tru, it is the motive-power of  
all successful social machinery Dut, as in phys-  
ies, we have made the elements do only a little  
drudgery for us, steam to take the ylteo of a  
few horses, wind of a few oars, water of a few

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PARADISE (TO BE) REGAINED 69  
  
ranks and hand-mills; as the mechanical forces  
have not yot been generously and largely applied  
to make the physical world answer to the ideal,  
so the power of love has been but meanly and  
sparingly applied, as yet. It has patented  
only such machines as the almshouse, the hos-  
pital, and the Bible Society, while its infinite  
wind is still blowing, and blowing down these  
very structures too, from time to time. Still  
less are we accumulating its power, and prepar-  
ing to act with greater energy at a future time.  
Shall we not contribute our shares to this en-  
terprise, then?

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HERALD OF FREEDOM?!  
  
‘We had occasionally, for soveral years, met  
with a number of this spirited journal, edited,  
a8 abolitionists need not to be informed, by  
Nathaniel P. Rogers, once a counselor at law in  
Plymouth, still farther up the Merrimack, but  
now, in his riper years, come down the hills  
thus far, to be the Herald of Freedom to these  
parts. We had been refreshed not a little by  
the cheap cordial of his editorials, flowing like  
his own mountain-torrents, now clear and spar-  
Ming, now foaming and gritty, and always spiced  
with the essence of the fir and the Norway pine;  
‘but never dark nor muddy, nor threatening with  
smothered murmurs, like the rivers of the plain.  
‘The effect of one of his effusions reminds us of  
what the hydropathists say about the electricity  
in fresh spring-water, compared with that which  
has stood over night, to suit weak nerves. We  
do not know of another notable and public in-  
stance of such pure, youthful, and hearty indig-  
nation at all wrong. ‘The Chureh itself must  
  
1 Heald of Freedoms, Published weekly by the Now  
  
Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society, Concord, N. H,, vol. x  
No. 4.

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HERALD OF FREEDOM se  
  
love it, if it have any heart, though he is said  
to have dealt rudely with its sanctity. His  
clean attachment to the right, however, sane-  
tions the severest rebuke we have read,  
  
‘Mr. Rogers seems to us to have occupied an  
honorable and manly position in these days,  
and in this country, making the press a living  
and breathing organ to reach the hearts of men,  
and not merely “fine paper and good type,”  
with its civil pilot sitting aft, and magnan-  
imously waiting for the news to arrive, — the  
vehicle of the earliest news, but the Zatest in-  
telligence, —veeording the indubitable and last  
results, the marriages and deaths, alone. This,  
editor was wide awake, and standing on the  
beak of his ship; not as a scientific explorer  
under government, but a Yankee sealer rather,  
who makes those unexplored continents his  
harbors in which to refit for more adventurous  
cruises. He was a fund of news and freshness  
in himself, —had the gift of speech, and the  
knack of writing; and if anything important  
took place in the Granite State, we might be  
sure that we should hear of it in good season.  
No other paper that we know kept. pace so well  
with one forward wave of the restless public  
thought and sentiment of New England, and as-  
serted so faithfully and ingenuously the largest  
liberty in all things. ‘There was beside more

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72 HERALD OF FREEDOM  
  
unpledged poetry im his prose than in tho  
verses of many an accepted rhymer; and we  
were occasionally advertised by a mellow hun-  
ter’s note from his trumpet, that, unlike most  
reformers, his feet were still where they should  
be, on the turf, and that he looked out from a  
serener natural life into the turbid arena of  
politics. Nor was slavery always a sombre  
‘theme with him, but invested with the colors of  
his wit and faney, and an evil to be abolished  
by other means than sorrow and bitterness of  
complaint. He will fight this fight with what  
cheer may be.  
| But to speak of his composition. It is a  
} genuine Yankee style, without fiction, — real  
| guessing and calculating to some purpose,, and  
| reminds us occasionally, as does all free, brave,  
and original writing, of its great master in these  
days, Thomas Carlyle. It has a life above  
grammar, and a meaning which need not be  
parsed to be understood. But like those same  
mountain-torrents, there is rather too much  
slope to his channel, and the rainbow sprays and  
evaporations go double-quick time to heaven,  
while the body of his water falls headlong to  
the plain. We would have more pause and  
deliberation, occasionally, if only to bring his  
tide to a head, —more frequent expansions of  
the stream, — still, bottomless, mountain tarns,

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HERALD OF FREEDOM 3  
  
perchance inland seas, and at length the deep  
ocean itself.  
  
Some extracts will show in what sense he was  
‘a poet as well as a reformer. He thus raises  
the anti-slavery “war-whoop” in New Hamp-  
shire, when an important convention is to be  
held, sending the summons, —  
  
“To none but the whole-hearted, fully-com-  
mitted, cross-the-Rubicon spirits... . From  
rich ‘old Cheshire,’ from Rockingham, with her  
horizon setting down away to the salt sea. . «  
from where the sun sets behind Kearsarge, even  
to where he rises gloriously over Moses Norris's  
own town of Pittsfeld,—and from Amoskeag  
to Ragged Mountains, —Coos— Upper Coos,  
homg of the everlasting hills, —send out your  
‘old advocates of human rights, wherever they  
lay, scattered by lonely lake, or Indian stream,  
or ‘Grant,’ or ‘Location,’ from the trout-  
haunted brooks of the Amoriscoggin, and where  
the adventurous streamlet takes up its mountain  
mareh for the St. Lawrence.  
  
“Scattered and insulated men, wherever the  
light of philanthropy and liberty has beamed in  
upon your solitary spirits, come down to us like  
your streams and clouds and our own Grafton,  
all about among your dear hills, and your moun-  
tain-flanked valleys — whether you home along  
the swift Ammonoosuck, the cold Pemigewas-  
sett, or the ox-bowed Connecticut. . . .

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4 HERALD OF FREEDOM  
  
“We are slow, brethren, dishonorably slow,  
in a cause like ours. Our feet should be as  
‘hinds’ feet.’ ‘Liberty lies bleeding.’ The  
Jeaden-colored wing of slavery obscures the land.  
with its baleful shadow. Let us come together,  
and inquire at the hand of the Lord what is to  
bbe done.”  
  
And again; on occasion of a New England  
Convention in the Second-Advent Tabernacle,  
in Boston, he desires to try one more blast,  
as it were, “on Fabyan's White Mountain  
hon  
  
“Ho, then, people of the Bay State, —men,  
women, and children; children, women, and  
men, scattered friends of the friendless, where-  
soever ye inhabit, —if habitations ye have, as  
such friends have not always, —along the sea-  
beat border of Old Essex and the Puritan Land-  
ing, and up beyond sight of the sea-cloud,  
among the inland hills, where the sun rises and  
sets upon the dry land, in that vale of the Con-  
neeticnt, too fair for human content and too  
fertile for virtuous industry, —where deepens  
the haughtiest of earth’s streams, on its seaward  
way, proud with the pride of old Massachusetts.  
Are there any friends of the friendless negro  
haunting such a valley as this? In God’s  
name, I fear there are none, or few for the very  
scene looks apathy and oblivion to the genius of

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HERALD OF FREEDOM 5  
  
humanity. I blow you the summons, though.  
Come, if any of you are there. ~  
  
“And gallant little Rhode Island transcen-  
dent abolitionists of the tiny Commonwealth.  
T neod not call you. You are called the year  
round, and, instead of sleeping in your tents,  
stand harnessed, and with trumpets in your  
hands, — every one!  
  
“Connecticut! yonder, the home of the Bur-  
leighs, the Monroes, and the Hudsons, and the  
native land of old George Benson! are you  
ready? ‘All ready!”  
  
“Maine here, off east, looking from my  
mountain post like an everglade. Where is  
your Sam. Fessenden, who stood storm-proof  
\*gainst New Organization in ’38. Has he too  
much namo as a jurist and orator, to be found.  
at a New England Convention in ’43? God  
forbid! Come one and all of you from “Down  
East’ to Boston, on the 30th, and let the sails  
of your coasters whiten all the sea-road. Alas!  
there are searce enough of you to man a fishing  
oat. Come up mighty in your fewness.”  
  
Such timely, pure, and unpremeditated ex-  
pressions of a public sentiment, such publicity  
of genuine indignation and humanity, as abound  
everywhere in this journal, are the most gener-  
ous gifts which a man can make,

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WENDELL PHILLIPS BEFORE THE  
CONCORD LYCEUM  
  
Coxconn, Mass, March 12, 1845.  
‘Mr. Eprror:—  
  
‘We have now, for the third winter, had our  
spirits refreshed, and our faith in the destiny  
of the Commonwealth strengthened, by the  
presence and the eloquence of Wendell Phil-  
lips; and we wish to tender to him our thanks  
and our sympathy. The admission of this gen-  
tleman into the Lyceum has been strenuously  
opposed by a respectable portion of our fellow-  
citizens, who themselves, we trust, — whose  
descendants, at least, we know, —will be as  
faithful conservers of the true order, whenever  
that shall be the order of the day, —and in each  
instance the people have voted that they would  
hear him, by coming themselves and bringing  
their friends to the lecture-room, and being  
very silent that they might hear. We saw some  
‘men and women, who had long ago come out,  
going in once more through the free and hospi-  
table portals of the Lyceum; and many of our  
neighbors confessed that they had had a “sound  
season” this once,

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WENDELL PHILLIPS 7  
  
It was the speaker's aim to show what the |  
‘State, and above all the Church, had to do, and |  
now, alas! have done, with Texas and slavery,  
and how much, on the other hand, the individ-  
ual should have to do with Church and State.  
‘These were fair themes, and not mistimed, and  
his words were addressed to “fit audience, and  
not few.”  
  
‘We must give Mr. Phillips the credit of be-  
ing a clean, erect, and what was once called a  
consistent man, He at least is not responsible  
for slavery, nor for American Independence;  
for the hypocrisy and superstition of the  
Chureb, nor the timidity and selfishness of the  
State; nor for the indifference and willing igno-  
vance of any. He stands so distinctly, so firmly,  
and so effectively alone, and one honest man is  
so much more than a host, that we cannot but  
feel that he does himself injustice when he xe-  
minds us of “the American Society, which he  
represents.” Tt is rare that we have the plea-  
sure of listening to so clear and orthodox a  
speaker, who obviously has so few cracks or  
flaws in his moral nature, — who, having words  
at his command in a remarkable degree, has  
much more than words, if these should fail, in  
his unquestionable earnestness and integrity, —  
and, aside from their admiration at his rhetoric,  
secures the genuine respect of his audience. He

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18 WENDELL PHILLIPS BEFORE  
  
unconsciously tells his biography as he proceeds,  
and we see him early and eamestly deliberating  
on these subjects, and wisely and bravely, with-  
‘out counsel or consent of any, oceupying a  
ground at first from which the varying tides of  
public opinion cannot drive him.  
  
No one could mistake the gemuine modesty  
and truth with which he affirmed, when speak-  
ing of the framers of the Constitution, “I am  
wiser than they,” who with him has improved  
these sixty years’ experience of its working; or  
the uncompromising consistency and frankness  
of the prayer which concluded, not like the  
Thanksgiving proclamations, with— “God save  
the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,” but —  
God dash it into a thousand pieces, till there  
shall not remain a fragment on which a man  
can stand, and dare not tell his name, — refer-  
ring to the ease of Frederick —; to our dis-  
grace we know not what to call him, unless  
‘Scotland will lend us the spoils of one of her  
Donglasses, out of history or fiction, for a sea-  
son, till we be hospitable and brave enough to  
hear his proper name, —a fugitive slave in one  
more sense than we; who has proved himself the  
possessor of a fair intellect, and has won a col-  
orless reputation in these parts; and who, we  
trust, will be as superior to degradation from  
the sympathies of Freedom, as from the antipa-

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THE CONCORD LYCEUM 9  
  
thies of Slavery. When, said Mr. Phillips, he  
communicated to a New Bedford audience, the  
other day, his purpose of writing his life, and  
telling his name, and the name of his master,  
and the place he ran from, the murmur ran  
round the room, and was anxiously whispered  
‘Dy the sons of the Pilgrims, “He had better  
not!” and it was echoed under the shadow of  
Concord monument, “He had better not!”  
  
‘We would fain express our appreciation of  
the freedom and steady wisdom, so rare in the  
reformer, with which he declared that he was  
not born to abolish slavery, but to do right.  
‘We have heard a few, a vory few, good politi:  
cal speakers, who afforded us the pleasure of  
great intellectual power and acuteness, of sol-  
dier-like steadiness, and of a graceful and nat-  
ural oratory; but in this man the audience might  
detect a sort of moral principle and integrity,  
which was more stable than their firmness, more  
discriminating than his own intellect, and more  
graceful than his rhetoric, which was not work-  
ing for temporary or trivial ends. It is so rare  
and encouraging to listen to an orator who is  
content with another alliance than with the  
popular party, or even with the sympathizing  
school of the martyrs, who can afford sometimes:  
to be his own auditor if the mob stay away, and  
‘hears himself without reproof, that we feel our-  
selves in danger of slandering all mankind by

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80 WENDELL PHILLIPS  
  
affirming that here is one who is at the same  
time an eloquent speaker and a righteous man.  
  
Perhaps, on the whole, the most interesting  
fact elicited by these addresses, is the readiness  
of the people at large, of whatever sect or party,  
to entertain, with good will and hospitality, the  
most revotutionary and heretical opinions, when  
frankly and adequately, and in some sort cheer-  
fully, expressed. Such clear and candid decla-  
ration of opinion served like an clectuary to  
whet and clarify the intellect of all parties, and  
furnished each one with an additional argument  
for that right he asserted.  
  
We consider Mr. Phillips one of the most  
conspicuous and efficient champions of a true  
Chureh and State now in the field, and would  
say to him, and such as are like him, “God  
speed you.” If you know of any champion in  
the ranks of his opponents, who has the valor  
and courtesy even of Paynim chivalry, if not  
the Christian graces and refinement of this  
knight, you will do us a service by direeting  
him to these fields forthwith, where the lists are  
now open, and he shall be hospitably enter-  
tained. For as yet the Red-eross knight  
shown us only the gallant device upon his  
shield, and his admirable command of his steed,  
prancing and curveting in the-empty lists; but  
we wait to see who, in the actual breaking of  
lances, will come tumbling upon the plain.

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
‘Tuomas Cartyue is a Scotchman, born  
about fifty years ago, “at Ecelefechan, Annan-  
dale,” according to one authority, “His par-  
ents ‘good farmer people,” his father an elder  
in the Secession church there, and a man of  
strong native sense, whose words were said to  
‘nail a subject to the wall.”” We also hear of  
his “excellent mother,” still alive, and of “her  
fine old covenanting accents, concerting with  
his transcendental tones.” He seems to have  
gone to school at Annan, on the shore of the  
Solway Frith, and there, as he himself writes,  
“heard of famed professors, of high matters  
classical, mathematical, a whole Wonderland  
of Knowledge,” from Edward Irving, then a  
young man “fresh from Edinburgh, with col-  
lege prizes, . . . come to see our schoolmaster,  
who had also been his.” From this place, they  
say, you can look over into Wordsworth’s coun-  
try. Here first he may have become acquainted  
with Nature, with woods, such as are there, and  
rivers and brooks, some of whose names we have  
heard, and the last lapses of Atlantic billows.

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82 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
‘He got some of his education, too, more or less  
liberal, out of the University of Edinburgh,  
where, according to the same authority, he had  
to “support himself,” partly by “private tui-  
tion, translations for the booksellers, ete.,” and  
afterward, as we are glad to hear, “taught an  
academy in Dysart, at the same time that Irving  
was teaching in Kirkaldy,” the usual middle  
passage of a literary life. He was destined for  
the Church, but not by the powers that rule  
man’s life; made his literary début in Fraser's  
Magazine, Jong ago; read here and there in  
English and French, with more or less profit,  
‘we may suppose, such of us at least as are not  
particularly informed, and at length found some  
words which spoke to his condition in the Ger-  
man language, and set himself earnestly to un-  
ravel that mystery, —with what success many  
readers know.  
  
After his marriage he “resided partly at  
Comely Bank, Edinburgh; and for a year or  
two at Craigenputtock, a wild and solitary farm-  
house in the upper part of Dumfriesshire,” at  
which last place, amid barren heather hills,  
he was visited by our countryman, Emerson.  
‘With Emerson he still corresponds. He was  
early intimate with Edward Irving, and contin-  
ued to be his friend until the latter's death.  
Concerning this “freest, brotherliest, bravest

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 83  
  
human soul,” and Carlyle’s relation to him,  
those whom it concerns will do well to consult  
a notive of his death in Fraser's Magazine for  
1835, reprinted in the Miscellanies. He also  
corresponded with Goethe. Latterly, we hear,  
the poet Sterling was his only intimate acquain-  
tance in England.  
  
He has spent the last quarter of his life in  
London, writing books; has the fame, as all  
readers know, of having made England ac-  
qnainted with Germany, in late years, and done  
much else that is novel and remarkable in lit-  
erature. He especially is the literary man of  
those parts. You may imagine him living in  
altogether a retived and simple way, with small  
family, in a quict part of London, called Chel-  
sea, a little out of the din of commerce, in  
“Cheyne Row,” there, not far from the “Chelsea  
Hospital.” “A little past this, and an old ivy-  
clad church, with its buried generations lying  
around it,” writes one traveler, “you come to  
an antique street running at right angles with  
the Thames, and, a few steps from the river,  
you find Carlyle’s name on the door.” “A  
Scotch lass ushers you into the second story  
front chamber, which is the spacious workshop  
of the world maker.” Here he sits a long time  
together, with many books and papers about  
him; many new books, we have been told, on

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84 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
the upper shelves, uneut, with the “author's  
respects” in them; in late months, with many  
manuscripts in an old English hand, and innu-  
merable pamphlets, from the public libraries,  
relating to the Cromwellian period; now, per-  
‘haps, looking out into the street on briels and  
pavement, for a change, and now upon some  
rod of grass ground in the rears or, perchance,  
hho steps over to the British Museum, and makes  
that his studio for the time, This is the fore  
part of the day; that is the way with literary  
men commonly; and then in the afternoon, we  
presume, he takes a short ran of a mile or so  
through the suburbs out into the country; we  
think he would run that way, though so short a  
trip might not take him to very sylvan or rustie  
places. In the mean while, people are calling  
to see him, from various quarters, few very wor-  
thy of being seen by him; ‘distinguished trav-  
elers from America,” not a fews to alll and sun-  
zy of whom he gives freely of his yet unwritten  
rich and flashing soliloquy, in exchange for  
whatever they may have to offer; speaking his  
English, as they say, with a “broad Scotch,  
accent,” talking, to their astonishment and to  
ours, very much as he writes, a sort of Car-  
lylese, his discourse “coming to its climaxes,  
ever and anon, in long, deep, chest-shaking  
bursts of laughter.”

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 85  
  
He goes to Scotland sometimes, to visit his  
native heath-clad hills, having some interest  
still in the earth there; such names as Craigen-  
puttock and Eeclefechan, which we have already  
quoted, stand for habitable places there to him;  
or he rides to the seacoast of England in his  
vacations, upon his horse Yankee, bought by  
the sale of his books here, as we have been told.  
  
How, after all, he gets his living; what pro-  
portion of his daily bread he earns by day-labor  
or job-work with his pen, what he inherits, what  
steals, — questions whose answers are so signifi  
cant, and not to be omitted in his biography, —  
we, alas! are unable to answer here. It may  
be worth the while to state that he is not a Re-  
former in our sense of the term, —eats, drinks,  
and sleeps, thinks and believes, professes and  
practices, not according to the New England  
standard, nor to the Old English wholly. Nev-  
ertheless, we are told that he is a sort of lion in  
certain quarters there, “an amicable centre for  
men of the most opposite opinions,” and “lis-  
tened to as an oracle,” “smoking his perpetual  
pipe.”  
  
‘A rather tall, gaunt figure, with intent face,  
dark hair and complexion, and the air of a stu-  
dent; not altogether well in body, from sitting  
too long in his workhouse, —he, born in the  
border country and descended from moss-troop-

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86 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
ers, it may be. We have seen several pictures  
of him here; one, a full-length portrait, with  
hat and overall, if it did not tell us much, told  
the fewest lies; another, we remember, was well  
said to have ‘too combed a Jook;” one other  
also we have seen in which we diseern some fea~  
tures of the man we are thinking of; but the  
only ones worth remembering, after all, are  
those which he has unconsciously drawn of him-  
self.  
  
‘When we remember how these volumes came  
over to us, with their encouragement and pro-  
vocation from month to month, and what com-  
motion they created in many private breasts,  
we wonder that the country did not ring, from  
shore to shore, from the Atlantic to the Pacific,  
with its greeting; and the Boones and Crockets  
of the West make haste to hail him, whose wide  
humanity embraces them too. Of all that the  
packets have brought over to us, has there been  
any richer cargo than this? What else has  
been English news for so long a season? What  
else, of late years, has been England to us, —  
to us who read books, we mean? Unless we  
remembered it as the scene where the age of  
Wordsworth was spending itself, and a few  
younger muses were trying their wings, and  
from time to time as the residence of Landor,  
Carlyle alone, since the death of Coleridge, has

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 8T  
  
kept the promise of England. It is the best  
apology for all the bustle and the sin of com-  
merce, that it has made us acquainted with the  
thoughts of this man. Commerce would not  
concern us much if it were not for such results  
as this. New England owes him a debt which  
she will be slow to recognize. His earlier es-  
says reached us at a time when Coleridge's were  
the only recent words which had made any not-  
able impression so far, and they found a field  
unoccupied by him, before yet any words of  
moment hed been uttered in our midst. He  
had this advantage, too, in a teacher, that he  
stood near to his pupils; and he has no doubt  
afforded reasonable encouragement and sym-  
pathy to many an independent but solitary  
thinker.  
  
It is remarkable, but on the whole, perhaps,  
not to be lamented, that the world is so unkind  
to anew book. Any distinguished traveler who  
comes to our shores is likely to get more din-  
ners and speeches of welcome than he can well  
dispose of, but the best books, if noticed at  
all, meet with coldness and suspicion, ox, what  
is worse, gratuitous, off-hand criticism. Tt is  
plain that the reviewers, both here and abroad,  
do not know how to dispose of this man. They  
approach him too easily, as if he were one  
of the men of letters about town, who grace

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88 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
Mr. Somebody's administration, merely; but  
he already belongs to literature, and depends  
neither on the favor of reviewers, nor the hon-  
esty of booksellers, nor the pleasure of readers  
for his success. He has more to impart than  
to reeeive from his generation. He is another  
such a strong and finished workman in his craft  
as Samuel Johnson was, and, like him, makes  
the literary class respectable. Since few are  
yet out of their apprenticeship, or, even if they  
Jean to be able writers, are at the same time  
able and valuable thinkers. ‘The aged and crit-  
ical eye, especially, is incapacitated to appreci-  
ate the works of this author. To such their  
meaning is impalpable and evanescent, and they  
seem to abound only in obstinate mannerisms,  
Germanisms, and whimsical ravings of all kinds,  
with now and then an unaceountably true and  
sensible remark. On the strength of this last,  
Carlyle is admitted to have what is called gen-  
ius. We hardly know an old man to whom  
these volumes are not hopelessly sealed. The  
Janguage, they say, is foolishness and a stum-  
bling-block to them; but to many a elear-headed  
he they are plainest English, and dispatched  
with such hasty relish as his bread and milk.  
‘The fathers wonder how it is that the children  
take to this dict so readily, and digest it with  
so little difficulty. ‘They shake their heads with

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 89  
  
mistrust at their free and easy delight, and re-  
mark that “Mr. Carlyle is a very learned man;”  
for they, too, not to be out of fashion, have got  
grammar and dictionary, if the truth were  
known, and with the best faith endgeled their  
‘Drains to get a little way into the jungle, and  
they could not but confess, as often as they  
found the clue, that it was as intricate as Black-  
stone to follow, if you read it honestly. But  
merely reading, even with the best intentions,  
is not enough: you must almost have written  
these books yourself. Only he who has had the  
good fortune to read them in the nick of time,  
in the most perceptive and recipient season of  
life, can give any adequate account of them.  
‘Many have tasted of this well with an odd  
suspicion, as if it were some fountain Arethuse  
which had flowed under the sea from Germany,  
as if the materials of his books had Jain in some  
garret there, in danger of being appropriated.  
for waste-papor. Over what German ocean,  
from what Hereynian forest, he has been im-  
ported, piecemeal, into England, or whether he  
has now all arrived, we are not informed. ‘This  
article is not invoiced in Hamburg nor in Lon-  
don. Perhaps it was contraband. However,  
wwe suspect that this sort of goods cannot be im-  
ported in this way. No matter how skillful the  
stevedore, all things being got into sailing trim,

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wait for a Sunday, and aft wind, and then  
weigh anchor, and run up the main-sheet, —  
straightway what of transcendent and perma-  
nent value is there resists the aft wind, and will  
doggedly stay behind that Sunday, —it does  
not travel Sundays; while biseuit and pork  
make headway, and sailors ery heave-yo! Tt  
must part company, if it open a seam. It is  
not quite safe to send out a venture in this kind,  
unless yourself go supereargo. Where a man  
goes, there he is but the slightest virtue is im-  
movable, —it is real estate, not personal; who  
would keep it, must consent to be bought and  
sold with it,  
  
However, we need not dwell on this charge  
of a German extraction, it being generally  
admitted, by this time, that Carlyle is English,  
and an inhabitant of London, He has the Eng-  
lish for his mother-tongue, though with a Scotch  
accent, or never so many accents, and thoughts  
also, which are the legitimate growth of native  
soil, to utter therewith. His style is eminently  
colloquial, and no wonder it is strange to meet  
with in a book. It is not literary or classical  
it has not the musie of poetry, nor the pomp of  
philosophy, but the thythms and cadences of  
conversation endlessly repeated. Tt resounds  
with emphatic, natural, lively, stirring tones,  
muttering, rattling, exploding, like shells and

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shot, and with like execution. So far as it is  
merit in composition, that the written answer  
to the spoken word, and the spoken word to a  
fresh and pertinent thought in the mind, as well  
as to the half thoughts, the tumultuary misgiv-  
ings and expectancies, this author is, perhaps,  
not to be matched in literature.  
  
He is no mystic, either, more than Newton  
or Arkwright or Davy, and tolerates none.  
Not one obsenre Tine, or half line, did he ever  
write, His meaning lies plain as the daylight,  
and he who runs may read; indeed, only he who  
runs ean read, and keep up with the meaning.  
Tt has the distinetness of picture to his mind,  
and he tells us only what he sees printed in  
langost English type upon the face of things.  
He uiters substantial English thoughts in plain-  
est English dialects; for it must be confessed,  
he speaks more than one of these. All the  
shires of England, and all the shires of Europe,  
are Jaid under contribution to his genius; for  
to be English does not mean to be exclusive  
and narrow, and adapt one’s self to the appre  
hension of his nearest neighbor only. And yet  
no writer is more thoroughly Saxon. In the  
translation of those fragments of Saxon poetry,  
we have met with the same rhythm that occurs  
so often in his poem on the French Revolution.  
‘And if you would know where many of those

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92 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
obnoxious Carlyleisms and Germanisms came  
from, read the best of Milton’s prose, read those  
speeches of Cromwell which he has brought to  
light, or go and listen once more to your  
mother’s tongue. So much for his German  
extraction.  
  
Indeed, for fluency and skill in the use of  
the English tongue, he is a master unrivaled,  
His felicity and power of expression surpass  
even his special merits as historian and critic.  
‘Therein his experience has not failed him, but  
furnished him with such a store of winged, ay  
and legged words, as only a London life, per-  
chance, could give account of. We had not  
understood the wealth of the Ianguage before.  
Nature is ransacked, and all the resorts and  
purlieus of humanity are taxed, to furnish the  
fittest symbol for his thought. He does not go  
to the dictionary, the word-book, but to the  
word-manufactory itself, and has made endless  
work for the lexicographers. Yes, he has that  
same English for his mother-tongue that you  
have, but with him it is no dumb, muttering,  
mumbling faculty, concealing the thoughts, but  
a keen, unwearied, resistless weapon, He has  
such command of it as neither you nor I haves  
and it would be well for any who have a lost  
horse to advertise, or a town-meeting warrant,  
ora sermon, or a letter to write, to study this

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 93  
  
universal letter-writer, for he knows more than  
the grammar or the dictionary.  
  
‘The style is worth attending to, as one of the  
most important features of the man which we at  
this distance can discern. It is for once quite  
equal to the matter. It can carry all its load,  
and nover breaks down nor staggers. His  
books are solid and workmanlike, as all that  
England does; and they are graceful and read-  
able also. ‘They tell of huge labor done, well  
done, and all the rubbish swept away, like the  
bright cutlery which glitters in shop windows,  
while the coke and ashes, the turnings, filings,  
dust, and borings lie far away at Birmingham,  
unheard of. He is a masterly clerk, seribe,  
reporter, writer. He can reduce to writing  
most things, — gestures, winks, nods, significant  
looks, patois, brogue, accent, pantomime, and  
how much that had passed for silence before  
does he represent by written words. ‘The coun-  
tryman who puzzled the city lawyer, requiring  
him to write, among other things, his call to  
his horses, would hardly have puzzled him; he  
would have found a word for it, all right and  
classical, that would have started his team for  
him, Consider the ceaseless tide of speech for-  
ever flowing in countless cellars, garrets, par-  
Tora; that of the French, says Carlyle, “only  
ebbs toward the short hours of night,” and what

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94 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
a drop in the bucket is the printed word. Feel-  
ing, thought, speech, writing, and, we might  
add, poetry, inspiration, — for so the circle  
is completed; how they gradually dwindle at  
length, passing through successive colanders,  
into your history and classies, from the roar of  
the ocean, the murmur of the forest, to the  
squeak of a mouse; so much only parsed and  
spelt out, and punctuated, at last. The few  
who can talk like a book, they only get reported  
commonly. But this writer reports a new  
“Lieferung.”  
  
‘One wonders how so much, after all, was ex-  
pressed in the old way, so much here depends  
upon the emphasis, tone, pronunciation, style,  
and spirit of the reading, No writer uses so  
profusely all the aids to intelligibility which the  
printer’s art affords. You wonder how others  
had contrived to write so many pages without  
‘emphatie or italieized words, they are so expres-  
sive, so natural, so indispensable here, as if  
none had ever used the demonstrative pronouns  
demonstratively before. In another's sente  
the thought, though it may be immortal, is as  
it were embalmed, and does not strike you, but  
here it is so freshly living, even the body of it  
not having passed through the ordeal of death,  
that it stirs in the very extremities, and the  
smallest particles and pronouns are all alive

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 95  
  
with it. It is not simple dictionary é, yours or  
mine, but rr. The words did not come at the  
command of grammar, but of a tyrannons,  
exorable meaning; not like standing soldiers,  
by vote of Parliament, but any able-bodied  
countryman pressed. into the serviee, for “Sire,  
it is not a revolt, it is a revolution.”  
  
We have never heard him speak, but we  
should say that Carlyle was a rare talker. He  
has broken the ice, and streams freely forth  
ike a spring torrent. He does not trace back  
the stream of his thought, silently adventurous,  
up to its fountain-head, but is borne away with  
it, as it rushes through his brain like a torrent  
to overwhelm and fertilize. He holds a talk  
with you. His audience is such a tumultuous  
mob of thirty thousand as assembled at the  
University of Paris, before printing was in-  
vented. Philosophy, on the other hand, does  
not talk, but write, or, when it comes person-  
ally before an audience, lecture or read; and  
therefore it must be read to-morrow, or @ thou-  
sand years hence, But the talker must nata-  
rally be attended to at once; he does not talk  
on without an audience; the winds do not long  
bear the sound of his voice. Think of Carlyle  
reading his French Revolution to any audience.  
One might say it was never written, but spoken  
and thereafter reported and printed, that those

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96 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
not within sound of his voice might know some-  
thing about it. Some men read to you some-  
thing which they have written in a dead Jan-  
guage, of course, but it may be in a living  
letter, in a Syriac, or Roman, or Runic char-  
acter. Men must speak English who ean write  
Sanskrit; they must speak a modern language  
who write, perchance, an ancient and universal  
‘one. We do not live in those days when the  
earned used a learned language. ‘There is no  
writing of Latin with Carlyle; but as Chaucer,  
with all reverence to Homer, and Virgil, and  
‘Messieurs the Normans, sung his poetry in the  
homely Saxon tongue, —and Locke has at least  
the merit of having done philosophy into Eng-  
Tish, —so Carlyle has done a different phi-  
losophy still further into English, and thrown  
open the doors of literature and criticism to the  
populace,  
  
Such a style, —so diversified and variegated!  
It is like the face of a country; it is like a New  
England landscape, with farm-houses and vil-  
ages, and cultivated spots, and belts of forests  
and blueberry-swamps round about, with the  
fragrance of shad-blossoms and violets on cer-  
tain winds. And as for the reading of it, it is  
novel enough to the reader who has used only  
the diligence, and old Tine mail-eoach, It is  
like traveling, sometimes on foot, sometimes in

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 97  
  
a gig tandem; sometimes in a full coach, over  
highways, mended and unmended, for which  
you will proseente the town; on level roads,  
through French departments, by Simplon roads  
over the Alps, and now and then he hauls up  
for a relay, and yokes in an unbroken colt of a  
Pegasus for a leader, driving off by eart-paths,  
and across lots, by corduroy roads and gridiron  
‘bridges; and where the bridges are gone, not:  
even a string-piece left, and the reader has to  
set his breast and swim. You have got an ex-  
pert driver this time, who has driven ten thou-  
sand miles, and was never known to upsets ean  
rive six in hand on the edge of a precipice,  
and touch the leaders anywhere with his snap-  
per.  
  
‘With wonderful art he grinds into paint for  
his picture all his moods and experiences, so  
that all his forees may be brought to the en-  
counter. Apparently writing without a partic.  
ular design or responsibility, setting down his  
soliloquies from time to time, taking advantage  
of all his humors, when at length the hour  
comes to declare himself, he puts down in plain  
English, without quotation marks, what he,  
‘Thomas Carlyle, is ready to defend in the face  
of the world, and fathers the rest, often quite  
as defensible, only more modest, or plain  
spoken, or insinuating, upon “Sanerteig,” or

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some other gentleman long employed on the  
subject. Rolling his subject how many ways  
in his mind, he meets it now face to face, wres-  
tling with it at arm’s length, and striving to get  
it down, or throw it over his head; and if that  
will not do, or whether it will do or not, tries  
the back-stiteh and side-hug with it, and downs  
it again, scalps it, draws and quarters it, hangs  
it in chains, and leaves it to the winds and dogs.  
With his brows knit, his mind made up, his  
will resolved and resistless, he advances, crash-  
ing his way through the host of weak, half-  
formed, dilettante opinions, honest and dis-  
honest ways of thinking, with their standards  
raised, sentimentalities and conjectures, and  
tramples them all into dust. See how he pre-  
vails; you don’t even hear the groans of the  
wounded and dying. Certainly it is not so well  
worth the while to look through any man’s eyes  
at history, for the time, as through his; and  
his way of looking at things is fastest getting  
adopted by his generation.  
  
It is not in man to determine what his styl  
shall be. He might as well determine what his  
thoughts shall be. We would not have had  
him write always as in the chapter on Burns,  
and the Life of Schiller, and elsewhere. No;  
his thoughts were ever irregular and impetuous.  
Perhaps as he grows older and writes more

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 99  
  
he acquires a truer expression; it is in some  
respects manlier, freer, struggling up to a level  
with its fountain-head. We think it is the  
richest prose style we know of.  
  
‘Who cares what a man’s style is, so it is in- ¢  
telligible, —as intelligible as his thought. Lit-  
erally and really, the style is no more than the  
stylus, the pen he writes withs and it is not |  
worth scraping and polishing, and gilding, u-  
less it will write his thoughts the better for it.  
It is something for use, and not to look at.  
‘The question for us is, not whether Pope had a  
fine style, wrote with a peacock’s feather, but |  
whether he uttered useful thoughts. Translate  
a book a dozen times from one Janguage to(  
another, and what becomes of its style? Most  
‘books would be worn out and disappear in this  
ordeal. ‘The pen which wrote it is soon de-  
stroyed, but the poem survives, We believe  
that Carlyle has, after all, more readers, and  
is better known to-day for this very originality  
of style, and that posterity will have reason to  
thank him for emaneipating the language, in  
some measure, fm the fetters which a merely  
conservative, aimless, and pedantic literary  
class had imposed upon it, and setting an ex-  
ample of greater freedom and naturalness. No  
man’s thoughts are new, but the style of their  
expression is the never-failing novelty which |  
  
   
  
S  
  
a

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100 rHoMas CARLY)  
  
   
  
E AND HIS WORKS  
  
cheers and refreshes men. If we were to an-  
swer the question, whether the mass of men, as  
we know them, talk as the standard authors and  
reviewers write, or rather as this man writes,  
wwe should say that he alone begins to write their  
Janguage at all, and that the former is, for the  
most part, the mere effigies of a language, not  
‘the best method of concealing one’s thoughts  
oven, but frequently a method of doing without  
thoughts at all.  
  
In his graphie description of Richter’s style,  
Carlyle describes his own pretty nearly; and no  
doubt he first got his own tongue loosened at  
that fountain, and was inspired by it to equal  
freedom and originality. “The Tanguage,” as  
he says of Richter, “groans with indescribable  
metaphors and allusions to all things, human  
and divine, flowing onward, not like a river,  
but like an inundation; circling in complex  
eddies, chafing and gurgling, now this way, now  
that; but in Carlyle, “the proper current”  
never “sinks out of sight amid the boundless  
uproar.” Again: “His very language is Ti-  
tanian, —deep, strong, tumultuous, shining  
with a thousand hues, fused from a thousand  
elements, and winding in labyrinthie mazes.”  
  
In short, if it is desirable that a man be elo-  
quent, that he talk much, and address himself  
to his own age mainly, then this is not a bad

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 101  
  
style of doing it. But if it is desired rather  
‘that he pioneer into unexplored regions of  
thought, and speak to silent centuries to come,  
then, indeed, we could wish that he had eulti-  
vated the style of Goethe more, that of Richter  
less; not that Goethe’s is the kind of utterance  
most to be prized by mankind, but it will serve  
for a model of the best that ean be successfully  
cultivated.  
  
But for style, and fine writing, and Augustan  
ages, that is but a poor style, and vulgar writ-  
ing, and a degenerate age, which allows us to  
remember these things. This man has some-  
thing to communicate. Carlyle’s are not, in  
the common sense, works of art in their origin  
and aim; and yet, perhaps, no living English  
writer evinces an equal literary talent. They  
are such works of art only as the plough and  
corn-mill and steam-engine, —not as pictures  
and statues. Others speak with greater empha-  
sis to scholars, as such, but none so earnestly  
and effectually to all who can read. Others  
give their advice, he gives his sympathy also.  
Tt is no small praise that he does not take upon  
himself the airs, has none of the whims, none  
of the pride, the nice vulgarities, the starched,  
impoverished isolation, and cold glitter of the  
spoiled children of genins. He does not need  
to husband his pearl, but excels by a greater  
humanity and sincerity.

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102 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
| He is singularly serious and untrivial. We  
|are everywhere impressed by the rugged, un-  
wearied, and rich sincerity of the man. We  
are sure that he never sacrificed one jot of his  
honest thought to art or whim, but to utter  
himself in the most direct and effectual way, —  
that is the endeavor. These are merits which  
will wear well. When time has worn deeper  
into the substance of these books, this grain  
will appear. No such sermons have come to us  
here out of England, in late years, as those of  
this preacher, —sermons to kings, and sermons  
to peasants, and sermons to all intermediate  
classes. It is in vain that John Bull, or any  
of his cousins, turns a deaf ear, and pretends  
not to hear them: nature will not soon be weary  
of repeating them. ‘There are words less obvie  
ously true, more for the ages to hear, perhaps,  
‘Dut none so impossible for this age not to hear.  
What a cutting cimeter was that “Past and  
Present,” going through heaps of silken stufls,  
and glibly through the necks of men, too, with-  
out their knowing it, leaving no trace. He has  
the earnestness of a prophet. In an age of  
pedantry and dilettantism, he has no grain of  
these in his composition. There is nowhere  
else, surely, in recent readable English, or other  
books, such direct and effectual teaching, re-  
proving, encouraging, stimulating, earnestly,

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 108  
  
vehemently, almost like Mahomet, like Luthers  
not looking behind him to see how his Opera  
Omnia will look, but forward to other work to  
be done. His writings are a gospel to the  
young of this generation; they will hear his  
manly, brotherly speech with responsive joy,  
and press forward to older or newer gospels.  
  
We should omit a main attraction in these  
books, if we said nothing of their humor. OF  
this indispensable pledge of sanity, without  
some leaven of which the abstruse thinker may  
justly be suspected of mysticism, fanaticism, or  
insanity, there isa superabundance in Carlyle.  
Especially the transcendental philosophy needs  
the leaven of humor to render it light and  
digestible. In his Inter and longer works it  
is an unfailing accompaniment, reverberating  
through pages and chapters, long sustained  
without effort. The very punctuation, the ital-  
ies, the quotation marks, the blank spaces and  
dashes, and the capitals, each and all are  
pressed into its service.  
  
Carlyle’s humor is vigorous and Titanie, and  
has more sense in it than the sober philosophy  
‘of many another. It is not to be disposed of  
by laughter and smiles merely; it gots to be too  
serious for that: only they may laugh who are  
not hit by it. For those who love a merry jest,

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104 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
this is a strange kind of fun, —rather too prac  
tical joking, if they understand it. ‘The pleas-  
ant humor which the public loves is but the  
innocent pranks of the ballroom, harmless flow  
of animal spirits, the light plushy pressure of  
dandy pumps, in comparison. But when an  
elephant takes to treading on your corns, why  
then you are lucky if you sit high, or wear cow-  
hide. His humor is always subordinate to a  
serious purpose, though often the real charm  
for the reader is not so much in the essential  
progress and final upshot of the chapter as in  
this indirect side-light illustration of every hue.  
‘He sketches first, with strong, practical English  
pencil, the essential features in outline, black  
on white, more faithfully than Dryasdust would  
have done, telling us wisely whom and what  
to mark, to save time, and then with brush of  
camel's hair, or sometimes with more expedi-  
tious swab, he lays on the bright and fast colors  
of his humor everywhere. One piece of solid  
work, be it known, we have determined to do,  
about which Jet there be no jesting, but all  
things else under the heavens, to the right and  
left of that, are for the time fair game. To us  
this humor is not wearisome, as almost every  
other is. Rabelais, for instance, is intolerable;  
one chapter is better than a volume, —it may  
be sport to him, but it is death to us. A mere

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 105  
  
humorist, indeed, is a most unhappy man; and  
his readers are most unhappy also.  
  
Humor is not so distinct a quality as, for the  
purposes of criticism, it is commonly regarded,  
‘but allied to every, even the divinest faculty.  
‘The familiar and cheerful conversation about  
every hearthside, if it be analyzed, will be found  
to be sweetened by this principle. ‘There is not  
only a never-failing, pleasant, and earnest hu-  
mor kept up there, embracing the domestic  
affairs, the dinner, and the scolding, but there  
is also a constant run upon the neighbors, and  
upon Chureh and State, and to cherish and  
maintain this, in a great measure, the fire is  
kept burning, and the dinner provided. ‘There  
will be neighbors, parties to a very genuine,  
even romantic friendship, whose whole audible  
salutation and intercourse, abstaining from the  
usual cordial expressions, grasping of hands, or  
affectionate farewells, consists in the mutual  
play and interchange of a genial and healthy  
jnumor, which excepts nothing, not even them-  
selves, in its lawless range. The child plays  
continually, if you will let it, and alll its life is  
sort of practical humor of a very pure kind,  
often of so fine and ethereal a nature, that its  
“parents, its uncles and cousins, ean in no wise  
participate in it, but must stand aloof in silent,  
admiration, and reverence even. ‘The more

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106 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
quiet the more profound it is. Even Nature is  
observed to have her playful moods or aspects,  
‘of which man seems sometimes to be the sport.  
  
But, after all, we could sometimes dispense  
with the humor, though unquestionably ineor-  
porated in the blood, if it were replaced by this  
author’s gravity. We should not apply to him-  
self, without qualification, his remarks on the  
humor of Richter. With more repose in his  
inmost being, his humor would become more  
thoroughly genial and placid. Humor is apt to  
imply but a half satisfaction at best. In his  
pleasantest and most genial hour, man smiles  
but as the globe smiles, and the works of  
nature. The fruits dry ripe, and much as we  
relish some of them in their green and pulpy  
state, we lay up for our winter store, not out  
of these, but the rustling autumnal harvests.  
‘Though we never weary of this vivacious wit,  
while we are perusing its work, yet when we  
remember it from afar, we sometimes feel  
balked and disappointed, missing the security,  
the simplicity, and frankness, even the occa-  
sional magnanimity of acknowledged dullness  
and bungling. This never-failing success and  
brilliant talent become a roproach.  
  
Besides, humor does not wear well. Tt is  
commonly enough said, that a joke will not bear  
repeating. The deepest humor will not keep.

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WoRKS 107  
  
Flumors do not cireulate but stagnate, or cireu-  
ate partially. In the oldest literature, in the  
Hebrew, the Hindoo, the Persian, the Chinese,  
it is rarely humor, even the most divine, which  
still survives, but the most sober and private,  
painful or joyous thoughts, maxims of duty, to  
which the life of all men may be referred.  
Aftor time has sifted the literature of a people,  
there is left only their Scrrerure, for that is  
waItine, par excellence. This is as true of the  
‘poets, as of the philosophers and moralists by  
profession; for what subsides in any of these is  
the moral only, to reappear as dry land at some  
remote epoch.  
  
‘We confess that Carlyle’s humor is rich,  
aeep, and variegated, in direct communication  
with the backbone and risible muscles of the  
globe, — and there is nothing like it; but much  
as we relish this jovial, this rapid and delugeous  
way of conveying one’s views and impressions,  
when we would not converse but meditate, we  
pray for a man’s diamond edition of his thought,  
‘without the colored illuminations in the margin,  
—the fishes and dragons and unicorns, the red.  
or the blue ink, but its initial letter in distinet  
skeleton type, and the whole so clipped and con-  
densed down to the very essence of it, that time  
will have little to do. We know not but we  
shall immigrate soon, and would fain take with

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108 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
us all the treasures of the East; and all kinds  
of dry, portable soups, in small tin canisters,  
which contain whole herds of English beeves  
boiled down, will be acceptable.  
  
‘The difference between this flashing, fitful  
writing and pure philosophy is the difference  
between flame and light, ‘The flame, indeed,  
yields lights but when we are so near as to ob-  
serve the flame, we are apt to be incommoded  
hy the heat and smoke. But the sun, that old  
Platonist, is set so far off in the heavens, that  
only a genial summer-heat and ineffable daylight  
can reach us, But many a time, we confess, in  
wintry weather, we have been glad to forsake  
the sunlight, and warm us by these Promethean  
flames. Carlyle must undoubtedly plead guilty  
to the charge of mannerism, He npt only has  
his vein, but his peculiar manner of working it.  
He has a style which can be imitated, and some-  
times is an imitator of himself.  
  
Certainly, no critic has anywhere said what  
is more to the purpose, than this which Carlyle’s  
own writings furnish, which we quote, as well  
for its intrinsic merit as for its pertinence here,  
“Tt is true,” says he, thinking of Richter, “the  
beaten paths of literature lead the safeliest to  
the goal; and the talent pleases us most which  
submits to shine with new gracefulness through  
old forms. Nor is the noblest and most peeu-

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Yiar mind too noble or peculiar for working by  
preseribed laws; Sophocles, Shakespeare, Cer-  
vantes, and, in Richter’s own age, Goethe, how  
little did they innovate on the given forms of  
composition, how much in the spirit they  
breathed into them! All this is trues and  
Richter must lose of our esteem in proportion.”  
And again, in the chapter on Goethe, “We  
read Goethe for years before we come to see  
wherein the distinguishing peculiarity of his  
understanding, of his disposition, even of his  
way of writing, consists! Tt seems quite a sim-  
ple style, [that of his?] remarkable chiefly for  
its calmess, its perspieuity, in short, its com-  
moniiess; and yet it is the most uncommon of  
all styles.” And this, too, translated for us by  
‘the same pen from Schiller, which we will apply  
not merely to the outward form of his works,  
but to their inner form and substance. He is  
speaking of the artist. “Let some beneficent  
divinity snatch him, when a suckling, from the  
breast of his mother, and nurse him with the  
milk of a better time, that he may ripen to his  
full stature beneath a distant Grecian sky.  
And having grown to manhood, let him return,  
a foreign shape, into his century; not, how-  
ever, to delight it by his presence, but, dread-  
fal, like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it.  
‘The matter of his works he will take from the

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present, but their form he will derive from a  
nobler time; nay, from beyond all time, from  
‘the absolute unchanging unity of his own na-  
ture.”  
  
But enough of this, Our complaint is al-  
ready out of all proportion to our discontent.  
  
Carlyle’s works, it is true, have not the  
stereotyped success which we call classie, ‘They  
are a rich but inexpensive entertainment, at  
which we are not concerned lest the host has  
strained or impoverished himself to feed his  
guests. It is not the most lasting word, nor  
the loftiest wisdom, but rather the word which  
comes last. For his genius it was reserved to  
give expression to the thoughts which “were  
throbbing in a million breasts. He has plucked  
the ripest fruit in the publie garden; but this  
fruit already least concerned the tree that bore  
it, which was rather perfecting the bud at the  
foot of the leaf-stalk. His works are not to  
be studied, but read with a swift satisfaction.  
‘Their flavor and gust is like what poets tell of  
the froth of wine, which can only be tasted once  
and hastily. On a review we ean never find the  
pages we had read. Yet they are in some de-  
gree true natural products in this respect. AIL  
things are but once, and never repeated. ‘These  
works were designed for such complete success  
that they serve but for a single occasion.

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But he is willfully and pertinaciously unjust,  
even scurrilous, impolite, ungentlemanly ; calls  
us “Imbeciles,” “Dilettants,” “Philistines,”  
implying sometimes what would not sound well  
expressed. If he would adopt the newspaper  
style, and take back these hard names— But  
where is the reader who does not derive some  
benefit from these epithets, applying them to  
himself?  
  
He js, in fact, the best tempered, and not  
the least impartial of reviewers. He goes out  
of his way to do justice to profligates and  
quacks. ‘There is somewhat even Christian, in  
the rarest and most peculiar sense, in his uni-  
versal brotherliness, his simple, child-like  
durance, and earnest, honest endeavor, with  
sympathy for the like. Carlyle, to adopt his  
own classification, is himself the hero as literary  
man, ‘There is no more notable workingman  
in England, in Manchester or Birmingham, or  
the mines round about. We know not how  
many hours a day he toils, nor for what wages,  
exactly: we only know the results for us.  
  
‘Notwithstanding the very genuine, admirable,  
and loyal tributes to Burns, Schiller, Goethe,  
and others, Carlyle is not a eritie of poetry.  
In the book of heroes, Shakespeare, the hero as  
poet, comes off rather slimly. His sympathy,  
as we said, is with the men of endeavor; not

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using the life got, but still bravely getting their  
life. “In fact,” as he says of Cromwell,  
“everywhere we have to notice the decisive  
practical eye of this man, how he drives toward  
the practical and practicable; has a genuine in-  
sight into what is fact.” You must have very  
stout legs to get noticed at all by him. He is  
thoroughly English in his love of practical men,  
and dislike for cant, and ardent enthusiastic  
heads that are not supported by any legs. He  
would kindly knock them down that they may  
regain some vigor by touching their mother  
earth. We have often wondered how he ever  
found out Burns, and must still refer a good  
share of his delight in him to neighborhood  
and early association, ‘The Lycidas and Comus,  
appearing in Blackwood’s Magazine, would  
probably go unread by him, nor lead him to  
expect a Paradise Lost. The condition.of-  
England question is a practical one. ‘The con-  
dition of England demands a hero, not a poet.  
Other things demand a poets the poet answers  
other demands. Carlyle in London, with this  
question pressing on him so urgently, sees no  
‘occasion for minstrels and rhapsodists there.  
Kings may have their bards when there are any  
Kings. Homer would certainly go a-begging  
there. He lives in Chelsea, not on the plains  
of Hindostan, nor on the prairies of the West,

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where settlers are scarce, and a man must at  
least go whistling to himself.  
  
What he says of poetry is rapidly uttered,  
and suggestive of a thought, rather than the  
deliberate development of any. He answers  
your question, What is poetry? by writing a  
special poem, as that Norse one, for instance,  
in the Book of Heroes, altogether wild and  
original; —answers your question, What is  
light? by kindling a blaze which dazzles you,  
and pales sun and moon, and not as @ peasant  
might, by opening a shutter.  
  
Carlyle is not a seer, but a brave looker-on  
and reviewer ; not the most free and eatholie  
observer of men and events, for they are likely  
to find him preoccupied, but unexpectedly free  
and eatholie when they fall within the focus of  
his lens. He does not live in the present hour,  
and read men and books as they occur for his  
theme, but having chosen this, he directs his  
studies to this end. If we look again at his  
page, we are apt to retract somewhat that we  
have said. Often a genuine poetic feeling  
dawns through it, like the texture of the earth  
seen through the dead grass and leaves in the  
spring. ‘The History of the French Revolution  
is a poem, at length translated into prose, —  
an Iliad, indeed, as he himself has it, —“The  
destructive wrath of Sansculotism, this is what

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we speak, having unhappily no voice for sing-  
ing.”  
  
‘Ono improvement we could suggest in this  
last, as indeed in most epies, —that he should  
let in the sun oftener upon his picture. Tt does  
not often enough appear, but it is all revolu-  
tion, the old way of human life tured simply  
bottom upward, so that when at length we  
are inadvertently reminded of the “Brest Ship-  
ping,” a St. Domingo colony, and that anybody  
thinks of owning plantations, and simply turning  
up the soil there, and that now at Iength, after  
some years of this revolution, there is a fall-  
ing off in the importation of sugar, we feel a  
queer surprise. Had they not sweetened their  
water with revolution then? It would be well if  
there were several chapters headed “Work for  
the Month,” —Revolution-work inclusive, of  
course, —“‘Altitude of the Sun,” “State of the  
Crops and Markets,” “Meteorological Observa~  
tions,” “Attractive Industry,” “Day Labor,”  
ete., just to remind the reader that the French  
peasantry did something beside go without  
breeches, burn chateaus, get ready knotted  
cords, and embrace and throttle one another by  
turns. These things are sometimes hinted at,  
but they deserve a notice more in proportion to  
their importance. We want not only a back-  
ground to the picture, but a ground under the

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fect also. We remark, too, occasionally, an  
unphilosophical habit, common enough else-  
where, in Alison’s History of Modern Europe,  
for instance, of saying, undoubtedly with effect,  
that if a straw had not fallen this way or that,  
why then —but, of course, it is as easy in phi-  
losophy to make kingdoms rise and fall as  
straws.  
  
The poet is blithe and cheery ever, and as  
well as nature. Carlyle has not the simple  
Homeric health of Wordsworth, nor the delib-  
erate philosophic turn of Coleridge, nor the  
scholastic taste of Landor, but, though sick and  
under restraint, the constitutional vigor of one  
of his old Norse heroes, struggling in a lurid  
light, with Jétuns still, striving to throw the  
old woman, and “she was Time,” — striving to  
lift the big eat, and that was “the Great World-  
Serpent, which, tail in mouth, ginds and keeps  
up the whole created world.” The smith,  
though so brawny and tough, I should not call  
the healthiest man. ‘There is too much shop-  
work, too great extremes of heat and cold, and  
incessant ten-pounde-ten and thrashing of the  
anvil, in his life. But the haymaker’s is a true  
sunny perspiration, produced by the extreme of  
summer heat only, and conversant with the  
blast of the zephyr, not of the forge-bellows,  
‘We know very well the nature of this man’s

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sadness, but we do not know the nature of his  
gladness.  
  
The poot will maintain serenity in spite of all  
disappointments. He is expected to preserve  
an unconcerned and healthy outlook over the  
world, while he lives. Philosophia practica est  
eruditionis meta, —Philosophy practiced. is the  
goal of learning; and for that other, Oratoris  
est celare artem, we might read, Herois est  
celare pugnam,—the hero will conceal his  
struggles. Poetry is the only life got, the only  
work done, the only pure product and free labor  
‘of man, performed only when he has put all the  
world under his fect, and conquered the last of  
his foes.  
  
Carlyle speaks of Nature with a certain un-  
conscious pathos for the most part. She is to  
him a receded but ever memorable splendor,  
casting still a reflected light over all his scenery.  
‘As, we read his books here in New England,  
where there are potatoes enough, and every man  
can get his living peacefully and sportively as  
the birds and bees, and need think no more of  
that, it seems to us as if by the world he often  
meant London, at the head of the tide upon the  
‘Thames, the sorest place on the face of the  
earth, the very citadel of conservatism.  
  
Im his writings, wo should say that he, as  
conspicuously as any, though with little enough

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expressed or even conscious sympathy, repre-  
sents the Reformer class, and all the better for  
not being the acknowledged leader of any. In  
‘him the universal plaint is most settled, unap-  
peaseble, and serious. Until a thousand named.  
and nameless grievances are righted, there will  
be no repose for him in the lap of nature, or the  
seclusion of science and literature. By foresee-  
ing it, he hastens the crisis in the affairs of  
England, and is as good as many years added  
to her history.  
  
‘To do himself justice, and set some of his  
readers right, he should give us some transcen-  
dent hero at length, to rule his demigods and  
Titans; develop, perhaps, his reserved and  
dumb reverence for Christ, not speaking to a,  
London or Church of England audience merely.  
Let not “sacred silence meditate that sacred  
matter” forever, but let us have sacred speoch  
and sacred scripture thereon.  
  
Every man will include in his list of worthies  
those whom he himself best represents. Car-  
Jyle, and our countryman Emerson, whose place  
and influence must erelong obtain a more dis-  
tinct recognition, are, to a certain extent, the  
complement of each other. The age could not  
do with one of them, it cannot do with both.  
To make a broad and rude distinction, to suit  
our present purpose, the former, as eritio, deals

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with the men of action, —Mahomet, Luther,  
Cromwell; the latter with the thinkers, —  
Plato, Shakespeare, Goethe; for, though both  
have written upon Goethe, they do not meet in  
him, The one has more sympathy with the  
heroes, or practical reformers, the other with  
the observers, or philosophers. Put their  
worthies together, and you will have a pretty  
fair representation of mankind; yet with one  
or more memorable exceptions. ‘To say nothing  
of Christ, who yet awaits a just appreciation  
from literature, the peacefully practical hero,  
whom Columbus may represent, is obviously  
slighted; but above and after all, the Man of  
the Age, come to be called workingman, it is  
obvious that none yet speaks to his condition,  
for the speaker is not yet in his condition.  
  
Like speaks to like only; labor to labor,  
philosophy to philosophy, eriticism to criticism,  
poetry to poetry. Literature speaks how much  
still to the past, how little to the future, how  
much to the East, how little to the West, —  
  
In tho East fames are won,  
Ta tho West deeds are done,  
  
‘One merit: in Carlyle, let the subject be what  
it may, is the freedom of prospect he allows,  
the entire absence of cant and dogma. He re-  
‘moves many cart-loads of rubbish, and leaves  
open a broad highway. His writings are all

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uunfeneed on the side of the future and the pos-  
sible. Though he does but inadvertently direct,  
our eyes to the open heavens, nevertheless he  
lets us wander broadly underneath, and shows  
them to us reflected in innumerable pools and  
lakes.  
  
These volumes contain not the highest, but  
a very practicable wisdom, which startles and  
provokes, rather than informs us. Carlyle does  
not oblige us to think; we have thought enough  
for him already, but he compels us to act. We  
accompany him rapidly through an endless gal-  
lery of pictures, and glorious reminiscences of  
experiences unimproved. “If they hear not  
‘Moses and the prophets, neither will they be  
persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”  
‘There is no ealm philosophy of life here, such as  
you might put at the end of the Almanae, to  
hang over the farmer’s hearth, how men shall  
live in these winter, in these summer days. No  
philosophy, properly speaking, of love, or  
friendship, or religion, or polities, or education,  
or nature, or spirit; perhaps a nearer approach /~  
toa philosophy of kingship, and of the place of  
tho litermy man, than of anything else. A  
rare preacher, with prayer, and psalm, and ser-  
mon, and benediction, but no contemplation of  
‘man’s life from the serene oriental ground, nor

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yet from the stirring occidental. No thanksgiv-  
ing sermon for the holydays, or the Easter vaca~  
tions, when all men submit to float on the full  
currents of life. When we see with what spir-  
its, though with little heroism enough, wood-  
choppers, drovers, and apprentices take and  
spend life, playing all day long, sunning them-  
selves, shading themselves, eating, drinking,  
sleeping, we think that the philosophy of their  
life written would be such a level natural his-  
tory as the Gardener’s Calendar and the works  
of the early botanists, inconceivably slow to  
come to practical conclusions.  
  
‘There is no philosophy here for philosophers,  
only as every man is said to have his philoso-  
phy. No system but such as is the man him-  
self; and, indeed, he stands compactly enough;  
no progress beyond the first assertion and chal-  
Tenge, as it were, with trumpet blast. One  
thing is certain, —that we had best be doing  
something in good earnest henceforth forever;  
that's an indispensable philosophy. ‘The be-  
fore impossible precept, “‘knom thyself,” he  
translates into the partially possible one, “know  
what thou canst work at.” Sartor Resartus is,  
perhaps, the sunniest and most. philosophical,  
as it is the most autobiographical of his works,  
in which he drew most largely on tho experience  
of his youth. But we miss everywhere a calm  
  
   
  
   
  
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depth, like a lake, even stagnant, and must sub-  
mit to rapidity and whirl, as on skates, with all  
Kinds of skillful and antie motions, sculling,  
sliding, cutting punch-bowls and rings, forward  
and backward. ‘The talent is very nearly equal  
to the genius. Sometimes it would be prefer-  
able to wade slowly through a Serbonian bog,  
and feel the juices of the meadow.  
  
Beside some philosophers of larger vision,  
Carlyle stands like an honest, half-despairing  
boy, grasping at some details only of their world  
systems. Philosophy, certainly, is some ac-  
count of truths, the fragments and very insig-  
nificant parts of which man will practice in this  
workshop; truths infinite and in harmony with  
infinity, in respect to which the very objects  
and ends of the so-called practical philosopher  
will be mere propositions, like the rest. It}  
would be no reproach to a philosopher, that he  
Knew the future better than the past, or even  
than the present. It is better worth knowing.  
He will prophesy, tell what is to be, or, in other  
words, what alone is, under appearances, laying  
Tittle stress on the boiling of the pot, or, the eon-  
dition-of-England question. He has no more  
to do with the condition of England than with  
her national debt, which a vigorous generation  
would not inherit. ‘The philosopher's coneep-  
tion of things will, above all, be truer than

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other men’s, and his philosophy will subordinate  
all the circumstances of life. ‘To live Tike a  
philosopher is to live, not foolishly, like other  
men, but wisely and according to universal  
laws, If Carlyle does not take two steps in  
philosophy, are there any who take three?  
Philosophy having erept clinging to the rocks,  
so far, puts out its feelers many ways iu vain.  
It would be hard to surprise him by the relation  
of any important human experience, but in  
some nook or corner of his works you will find  
that this, too, was sometimes dreamed of in his  
philosophy.  
  
To sum up our most serious objections in a  
few words, we should say that Carlyle indicates  
a depth, —and we mean not impliedly, but dis-  
tinetly, —which he neglects to fathom. We  
want to know more about that which he wants  
to know as well. If any luminons star or un-  
dissolvable nebula is visible from his station  
which is not visible from onrs, the interests of  
science require that the fact be communieated  
tous, The universe expects every man to do  
his duty in his parallel of latitude. We want  
to hear more of his inmost life; his hymn and  
prayer more; his elegy and eulogy Jess; that he  
should speak more from his character, and less  
from his talent; communicate centrally with his  
readers, and not by a side; that he should say

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what he believes, without suspecting that men  
disbelieve it, out of his never-misunderstood  
nature. His genius can cover all the land with  
gorgeous palaces, but the reader does not abide  
in them, but pitches his tent rather in the des-  
ert and on the mountain-peak.  
  
When we look about for something to quote,  
as the fairest specimen of the man, we confess  
that we labor under an unusual difficulty; for  
his philosophy is so little of the proverbial or  
sentential kind, and opens so gradually, rising  
insensibly from the reviewer's level, and devel-  
oping its thought completely and in detail, that  
wo look in vain for the brilliant passages, for  
point and antithesis, and must end by quoting  
his works entire. What in a writer of less  
breadth would have been the proposition which  
would have bounded his discourse, his column  
of victory, his Pillar of Herenles, and ne plus  
ultra, is in Carlyle frequently the same thought  
unfolded; no Pillar of Hereules, but consid-  
erable prospect, north and south, along the At-  
antic coast. ‘There aro other pillars of Hereu-  
les, like beacons and light-houses, still further  
in the horizon, toward Atlantis, sot up by a few  
ancient and modern travelers; but, so far a8  
this traveler goes, he clears and colonizes, and  
all the surplus population of London is bound  
thither at once. What we would quote is, in

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fact, his vivacity, and not any particular wis-  
dom or sense, which last is ever synonymous  
with sentence (sententia), as in his contempora-  
ries Coleridge, Landor, and Wordsworth. We  
have not attempted to discriminate between his  
works, but have rather regarded them all as one  
work, as is the man himself. We have not  
examined so much as remembered them. To  
do otherwise would have required a more indif-  
ferent, and perhaps even less just review than  
the present.  
  
‘All his works might well enough be embraced  
under the title of one of them, a good specimen  
brick, “On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the  
Heroie in History.” Of this department he is  
the Chief Professor in the World's University,  
and even leaves Plutarch behind. Such inti-  
mate and living, such loyal and generous sym-  
pathy with the heroes of history, not one in one  
age only, but forty in forty ages, such an un-  
paralleled reviewing and greeting of all past  
worth, with exceptions, to be sure, — but excep-  
tions were the rule before, — it was, indeed, to  
make this the age of review writing, as if now  
‘one period of the human story were completing  
itself, and getting its accounts settled. ‘This  
soldier has told the stories with new emphasis,  
and will be a memorable hander-down of fame  
to posterity. And with what wise discrimina-

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tion he has selected his men, with reference  
both to his own genius and to theirs, —Ma-  
homet, Dante, Cromwell, Voltaire, Johnson,  
Burns, Goethe, Richter, Schiller, Mirabeau, —  
could any of these have been spared? These  
we wanted to hear about. We have not as  
commonly the cold and refined judgment of the  
scholar and critic merely, but something more  
human and affecting. These eulogies have the  
glow and warmth of friendship. ‘There is sym-  
pathy, not with mere fames, and formless, in-  
credible things, but with kindred men, —not  
transiently, but lifelong he has walked with  
them.  
  
No doubt, some of Carlyle's worthies, should.  
they ever return to earth, would find themselves  
unpleasantly put upon their good behavior, to  
sustain their characters; but if he ean return a  
man’s life more perfect to our hands than it  
was left at his death, following out the design  
of its author, we shall have no great cause to  
complain, We do not want a daguerreotype  
likeness. All biography is the life of Adam,  
—a much-experienced man, —and time with-  
draws something partial from the story of every  
individual, that the historian may supply some-  
thing general. If these virtues were not in this  
man, perhaps they are in his biographer, —no  
fatal mistake. Really, in any other sense, we

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nover do, nor desire to, come at the historical  
man,—unless we rob his grave, that is the  
nearest approach. Why did he die, then? He  
is with his bones, surely.  
  
No doubt Carlyle has a propensity to enag-  
gerate the heroic in history, that is, he creates  
you an ideal hero rather than another thing: he  
has most of that material. ‘This we allow in all  
its senses, and in one narrower sense it is not  
so convenient. Yet what were history if he did  
‘not exaggerate it? How comes it that history  
nover has to wait for facts, but for a man to  
write it? ‘The ages may go on forgetting the  
facts never s0 Tong, he can remember two for  
every one forgotten. ‘The musty records of his-  
tory, like the catacombs, contain the perishable  
remains, but only in the breast of genius are  
embalmed the souls of heroes. ‘There is very  
little of what is called criticism here; it is love  
and reverence, rather, which deal with qualities  
not relatively, but absolutely greats for what-  
ever is admirable ina man is something inf-  
nite, to which we cannot set bounds. These  
sentiments allow the mortal to die, the immor-  
tal and divine to survive. There is something  
antique, even, in his style of treating his sub-  
ject, reminding us that Heroes and Demi-gods,  
Fates and Furies, still exist; the common man  
is nothing to him, but after death the hero is

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 127  
  
apothoosized and has a place in heaven, as in  
the religion of the Grecks.  
  
Exaggeration! was ever any virtue attributed  
to a man without exaggeration? was ever any  
vieo, without infinite exaggeration? Do we not:  
exaggerate ourselves to ourselves, or do wo 3e-  
cognize ourselves for the actual men we are?  
‘Are we not all great men? Yet what are we  
actually to speak of? We live by exaggera-  
tion. What else is it to anticipate more than  
we enjoy? The lightning is an exaggeration  
of the light. Exaggerated history is poetry,  
and truth referred to a new standard. To a  
small man every greater is an exaggeration.  
He who cannot exaggerate is not qualified to  
utter truth, No truth, we think, was ever ex-  
pressed but with this sort of emphasis, so that  
for the time there seemed to be no other.  
Moreover, you must speak loud to those who  
are hard of hearing, and so you acquire a habit  
of shouting to those who are not. By an im-  
mense exaggeration we appreciate our Greek  
poetry and philosophy, and Egyptian rains;  
‘our Shakespeares and Miltons, our Liberty and  
Christianity. We give importanee to this hour  
over all other hours. We do not live by jus-  
tice, but by grace. As the sort of justice which  
concerns us in our daily intercourse is not that  
administered by the judge, so the historical jus-

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128 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
tice which we prize is not arrived at by nicely  
balancing the evidence, In order to appreciate  
any, even the humblest man, you must first, by  
some good fortune, have acquired a sentiment  
of admiration, even of reverence, for him, and  
there never were such exaggerators as these.  
  
To try him by the German rule of referring  
an author to his own standard, we will quote  
the following from Carlyle’s remarks on history,  
and leave the reader to consider how far his  
practice has been consistent with his theory.  
“Truly, if History is Philosophy teaching by  
Experience, the writer fitted to compose history  
is hitherto an unknown man. The Experience  
itself would require All-knowledge to record it,  
were the All-wisdom, needful for such Philoso-  
phy as would interpret it, to be had for asking.  
Better were it that mere earthly Historians  
should lower such pretensions, more suitable for  
Omniseience than for human seience; and aim-  
ing only at some picture of the things acted,  
which picture itself will at best be a poor  
approximation, leave the inscrutable purport of  
them an acknowledged secret; or, at most, in  
reverent faith, far different from that teaching  
cof Philosophy, pause over the mysterious ves-  
tiges of Him whose path is in the great deep of  
‘Time, whom History indeed reveals, but only all  
History, and in Eternity, will clearly reveal.”

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THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS 129  
  
Carlyle is a critic who lives in London to tell  
this generation who have been the great men of  
our race. We have read that on some exposed  
place in the city of Geneva, they have fixed a  
Drazen indicator for the use of travelers, with  
the names of the mountain summits in the hori-  
zon marked upon it, “so that by taking sight  
across the index you can distinguish them at  
once, You will not mistake Mont Blane, if  
you see him, but until you get accustomed to  
‘the panorama, you may easily mistake one of  
his eourt for the king.” Tt stands there a piece  
of mute brass, that seems nevertheless to know  
in what vicinity it is: and there perchance it  
will stand, when the nation that placed it there  
has passed away, still in sympathy with the  
mountains, forever discriminating in the dese  
ext.  
  
So, we may say, stands this man, pointing as,  
long as he lives, in obedience to some spiritual  
magnetism, to the summits in the historical  
horizon, for the guidance of his fellows,  
  
;\_ Truly, our greatest blessings are very cheay  
‘To have our sunlight without paying for it,”  
without any duty levied,—to have our poot  
there in England, to furnish us entertainment,  
and, what is better, provocation, from year to  
year, all our lives long, to make the world seem  
richer for us, the age more respectable, and life

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180 THOMAS CARLYLE AND HIS WORKS  
  
better worth the living, —all without expense  
of acknowledgment even, but silently accepted  
out of the east like morning light as a matter  
of course.

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
I HEARMILY accept the motto, — “That gov-  
ernment is best which governs least; and I  
should like to seo it acted up to more rapidly  
and systematically. Carried out, it finally  
amounts to this, which also I believe, — “That  
government is best which governs not at all;”  
and when men are prepared for it, that will be  
the kind of government which they will have.  
Government is at best but an expedient; but  
most governments are usually, and all govern-  
ments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objec-  
tions which have been brought against a stand-  
ing army, and they aro many and weighty, and  
deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought  
against a standing government. ‘The standing  
army is only an arm of, the standing goyen-  
ment. ‘The government itself, which is only”  
  
the people have chosen to exe-  
  
   
   
   
  
and perverted before the people can  
  
mess the present Mexican war, the  
work of comparatively a few individuals using

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182 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
the standing government as their tool; for, in  
the outset, the people would not have consented  
to this measure.  
‘This American government, —what is it but  
a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to  
transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each  
instant losing some of its integrity? It has not  
the vitality and force of a single living mans  
| for a single man can bend it to his will. It is  
a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves.  
But it is not the less necessary for this; for the  
people must have some complicated machinery  
or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea  
of government which they have, Governments  
show thus how successfully men ean be imposed  
on, even impose on themselves, for their own  
advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow.  
Yet this government never of itself furthered  
any enterprise, but by the alaerity with which  
it got out of its way. Zt does not keep the  
country free. Zé does not settle the West. Zt  
does not educate. ‘The character inherent. in  
the American people has done all that has been.  
accomplished; and it would have done some-  
what more, if the government had not some-  
times got in its way. For government is an  
expedient by which men would fain succeed in  
letting one another alone; and, as has been said,  
when it is most expedient, the governed are

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 183  
  
most let alone by it. ‘Trade and commerce,  
if they were not made of India-rubber, would  
never manage to bounce over the obstacles  
which legislators are continually putting in  
their way; and, if one were to judge these men  
wholly by the effects of their actions and not  
partly by their intentions, they would deserve to  
be classed and punished with those mischievous  
persons who put obstructions on the railroads.  
But, to speak practically and as a citizen,  
unlike those who call themselves no-government  
men, I ask for, not at once no government, but  
dat once a better government. Let every mai  
make Imown ‘what Kind of government would |  
command his respect, and that will be one step|  
toward obtaining it. et §  
(Aiter all, the practical reason why, when the i  
power is once in the hands of the people, a ma- +  
jority are permitted, and for a long period con-  
tinue, to rule is not because they are most  
likely to be in the right, nor because this seems &  
fairest to the minority, but because they are  
physically the strongest.) (But a government in  
which the majority rule in all eases cannot be  
based on justice, even as far as men understand  
it.) Can there not be a government in which /  
majorities do not virtually decide right and  
wrong, but conscience?—in which \_majoritios  
decide only those questions to which the rule

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134 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
fof expedioney is applicable? Must the citizen  
lever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign  
fhis conscience to the legislator? Why has  
levery man a conscience, then? I think that we  
should be men first, and subjects afterward,  
It is not desirable to cultivate a. respect for the  
much as for the right. The only obli-  
ition which I have a right to assume is to do  
lat any time what I think right. It is truly  
‘enough said, that a corporation has no con-  
science; but a corporation of conscientions men  
is a corporation with a conscience. Law never  
made men a whit more just; and, by means of  
their respect for it, even the well-disposed are  
daily made the agents of injustice. A common  
and natural result of an undue respect for law  
is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel,  
captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys,  
and all, marching in admirable order over hill  
and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay,  
against their common sense and consciences,  
which makes it very steep marching indeed, and  
produces a palpitation of the heart. ‘They have  
no doubt that it isa damnable business in whieh  
they are concerned; they are all peaceably in-  
clined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or  
small movable forts and magazines, at the ser-  
vice of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit  
the Nayy-Yard, and behold a marino, such a

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 135  
  
man as an American government can make, or  
such as itean make a man with its black arts,  
—a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity,  
‘a man laid ont alive and standing, and already,  
as one may say, buried under arms with funeral  
accompaniments, though it may be, —  
“Nota drum was heard, nota funeral note,  
‘As his corse to the rampart we hurtied;  
  
[Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot  
(Ter the grave where our hero-we buried.”  
  
‘The mass of men serve the state thus, not as  
‘men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies,  
They are the standing army, and the militia,  
jailers, constables, posse comitatus, ete. In most  
‘eases there is no free exercise whatever of the  
judgment or of the moral sense; but they put  
themselves on a level with wood and earth and  
stones; and wooden men can perhaps be man-  
ufactured that will serve the purpose as well.  
Such command no more respect than men of  
straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same  
sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet  
such as these even are commonly esteemed good  
citizens. Others — as most legislators, poli-  
ticians, lawyers, ministers, and office-holders —  
serve the state chiefly with their heads; and, as  
they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are  
as likely to sorve the Devil, without intending  
it, as God, A very few, as heroes, patriots,

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136 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
martyrs, reformers in the great sense, and men,  
serve the state with their consciences also, and  
so necessarily resist it for the most. part; and  
they are commonly treated as enemies by it. A  
wise man will only be useful as a man, and  
will not submit to be “clay,” and “stop a hole  
to keep the wind away,” but leave that office to  
his dust at least: —  
“Lam too high-bor to be propertiod,  
‘To bea secondary at contzol,  
  
Or usoful serving-man and instrument  
‘To any sovereign state throughout the world.”  
  
   
  
He who gives himself entirely to his fellow-  
men appears to them useless and selfish; but  
hhe who gives himself partially to them is pro-  
nounced & benefactor and philanthropist.  
  
How does it become a man to bebave toward  
this American government to-day? I answer,  
that he cannot without disgrace be associated  
with it, I cannot for an instant recognize that  
political organization as my government which  
is the slave's government also.  
  
All men recognize the right of revolution;  
that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to  
resist, the government, when its tyranny or its  
inefficiency are great and unendurable. But  
almost all say that such is not the case now.  
But such was the ease, they think, in the Revo-  
lution of °75. If one were to tell me that this

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 137  
  
was a bad government because it taxed certain  
foreign commodities brought to its ports, it is  
most probable that I should not make an ado  
about it, for I can do without them. All ma-  
chines have their friction; and possibly this  
does enough good to counterbalance the evil.  
At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir  
about it. But when the friction comes to have  
its machine, and oppression and robbery are  
organized, I say, let us not have such a machine  
any longer. In other words, when a sixth of  
the population of a nation which has under-  
taken to be the refuge of liberty are slaves, and  
a whole country is unjustly overran and con-  
quered by a foreign army, and subjected to  
military law, I think that it is not too soon for  
honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What  
makes this duty the more urgent is the fact  
that the country so overrun is not our own, but.  
ours is the invading army.  
  
Paley, a common authority with many on  
moral questions, in his chapter on the “Duty of  
Submission to Civil Government,” resolves all  
civil obligation into expediency; and he pro-  
ceeds to say, “that so long as the interest of  
the whole society requires it, that is, so long as  
the established government cannot be resisted  
or changed without public inconveniency, it is  
the will of God that the established government

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188 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
be obeyed, and no longer... . This principle  
being admitted, the justice of every particular  
‘case of resistance is reduced to a computation  
of the quantity of the danger and grievanee on  
‘tho one side, and of the probability and expense  
of redressing it on the other.” Of this, he  
says, every man shall judge for himself. But  
Paley appears never to have contemplated those  
cases to which the rule of expediency does not  
apply, in which a people, as well as an indi-  
vidual, must do justice, cost what it may. Tf T  
have unjustly wrested plank from a drowning  
man, I must restore it to him though I drown  
myself. This, according to Paley, would be  
inconvenient. But he that would save his life,  
in such a ease, shall lose it. ‘This people must  
cease to hold slaves, and to make war on Mex-  
ico, though it cost them their existence as a  
people.  
  
Tn their practice, nations agree with Paleys  
but does any one think that Massachusetts does  
exactly what is right at the present crisis?  
  
“A drab of state, a clothosilver st,  
  
‘To have her train borne up, and her soul tail nthe dist.”  
Practically speaking, the opponents to a re-  
form in Massachusetts are not a hundred thou-  
sand politicians at the South, but a hundred  
thousand merchants and farmers here, who are  
more~interested in commerce and agriculture

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 139  
  
than they are in humanity, and are not prepared.  
to do justice to the slave and to Mexico, cost.  
what it may. I quarrel not with far-off foes,  
‘but with those who, near at home, codperate  
with, and do the bidding of, those far away,  
and without whom the latter would be harm-  
less. We are accustomed to say, that the mass  
of men are unprepared; but improvement is  
slow, because the few are not materially wiser  
cor better than the many. It is not so impor-  
tant that many should be as good as you, as that  
there be some absolute goodness somewhere;  
for that will leaven the whole lump. There are  
thousands who are in opinion opposed to slavery  
and to the war, who yet in effect do nothing to  
putan end to them; who, esteeming themselves  
children of Washington and Franklin, sit down  
with their hands in their pockets, and say that  
they know not what to do, and do nothing; who  
even postpone the question of freedom to the  
question of free-trade, and quietly read the  
prices-current along with the latest advices from  
Mexico, after dinner, and, it may be, fall asleep  
over them both. What is the price-current of  
an honest, man and patriot to-day? ‘They hesi-  
tate, and they regret, and sometimes they peti-  
tion; but they do nothing in earnest and with  
effect. They will wait, well disposed, for oth-  
ers to remedy the evil, that they may no longer

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140 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
have it to regret. At most, they give only a  
cheap vote, and a feeble countenance and God-  
speed, to the right, as it goes by them. ‘There  
are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of  
virtue to one virtuous man. But it is easier to  
deal with the real possessor of a thing than with  
the temporary guardian of it.  
‘All voting is a sort of gaming, like checkers  
or backgammon, with a slight moral tinge to it,  
a playing with right and wrong, moral  
questions; and betting naturally accompanies  
it. The character of the voters is not staked.  
Teast my vote, perchance, as I think right; but  
Tam not vitally concerned that that right should  
prevail. I am willing to leave it to the ma-  
jority. Its obligation, therefore, never excoeds  
that of expediency. Even voting for the right  
is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing  
+ \ to men feebly your desire that it should prevail.  
A wise man Will not leave the right to the  
merey of chance, nor wish it to prevail through  
the power of the majority. There is but little  
virtue in the action of masses of men. When  
the majority shall at length vote for the aboli  
tion of slavery, it will be because they are in-  
different to slavery, or beeause there is but lit-  
tle slavery left to be abolished by their vote.  
They will then be the only slaves. Only his  
vote can hasten the abolition of slavery who  
asserts his own freedom by his vote.

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 141  
  
I hear of a convention to be held at Bal-  
timore, or elsewhere, for the selection of a  
candidate for the Presidency, made up chiefly  
of editors, and men who are politicians by pro-  
fession; but I think, what is it to any inde-  
pendent, intelligent, and respectable man what  
decision they may come to? Shall we not have  
the advantage of his wisdom and honesty,  
nevertheless? Can we not count upon some  
independent votes? Ave there not many indi-  
viduals in the country who do not attend con-  
ventions? But no: I find that the respectable  
man, so called, has immediately drifted from  
his position, and despairs of his country, when  
his country has more reason to despair of him.  
He forthwith adopts one of the candidates thus  
selected as the only available one, thus proving  
that he is himself available for any purposes of  
the demagogue. His vote is of no more worth  
than that of any unprincipled foreigner or hire-  
ling native, who may have been bought. O for  
a man who is a man, and, as my neighbor says,  
has a bone in his back which you cannot pass  
your hand through! Our statisties are at fault:  
the population has been returned too large.  
How many men are there to a square thousand.  
miles in this country? Hardly one. Does not:  
America offer any inducement for men to settle  
here? The American has dwindled into an

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1 ag  
  
142, CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
Oda Fellow, —one who may be known by the  
development of his organ of gregariousness, and  
a manifest lack of intellect and cheerful self-  
reliance; whose first and chief concern, on eom-  
ing into the world, is to see that the Alms-  
houses are in good repair; and, before yet he  
has lawfully donned the virile garb, to collect a  
fund for the support of the widows and orphans  
that may be; who, in short, ventures to live  
only by the aid of the Mutual Tnsuranee com-  
pany, which has promised to bury him decently.  
  
Tt is not a man’s duty, as a matter of course,  
to devote: himself to the eradication of any,  
even the most enormous wrong; he may still  
properly have other concerns to engage him;  
but it is his duty, at Jeast, to wash his hands of  
it, and, if he gives it no thought longer, not to  
give it practically his support. If T devote  
myself to other pursuits and contemplations, T  
must first see, at least, that I do not pursue  
them sitting upon another man’s shoulders. I  
must get off him first, that he may pursue his  
contemplations too. Seo what gross inconsis-  
teney is tolerated. I have heard some of my  
townsmen say, “I should like to have them  
order me out to help put down an insurrection  
of the slaves, or to march to Mexicos—see if  
would go;” and yet these very men have each,  
directly by their allegiance, and so indirectly,

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 143  
  
at least, by their money, furnished a substitute.  
‘The soldier is applauded who refuses to serve  
in an unjust war by those who do not refuse  
to sustain the unjust government which makes  
the wars is applauded by those whose own act  
and authority he disregards and sets at naught;  
as if the state were penitent to that degree thit  
it hired one to scourge it while it sinned, but  
not to that degree that it left off sinning for a  
moment. ‘Thus, under the name of Order and  
Civil Government, we are all made at last to  
pay homage to and support our own meanness.  
After the first blush of sin comes its indiffer-  
ence; and from immoral it becomes, as it were,  
‘unmoral, and not quite unnecessary to that life  
which we have made.  
  
‘The broadest and most prevalent error re-  
quires the most disinterested virtue to sustain  
it, ‘The slight reproach to which the virtue of  
patriotism is commonly liable, the noble are  
most likely to incur, ‘Those who, while they  
Aisapprove of the character and measures of a  
government, yield to it their allegiance and sup-  
port are undoubtedly its most conscientious  
supporters, and so frequently the most serious  
obstacles to reform. Some are petitioning the  
state to dissolve the Union, to disregard the  
requisitions of the President. Why do they  
not dissolve it themselves, — the union between

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144 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
themselves and the state, —and refuse to pay  
their quota into its treasury? Do not they  
stand in the same relation to the state that the  
state does to the Union? And have not the  
  
   
  
same reasons prevented the state from resisting  
‘the Union which have prevented them from  
resisting the state?  
  
How can\_a.man be satisfied to entertain, an  
  
   
   
  
Tf you are cheated out of a ue  
dollar by your neighbor, you do not rest satis  
fied with knowing that you are cheated, or with  
saying that you are cheated, or even with peti-  
tioning him to pay you your dues but you take  
effectual steps at once to obtain the full amount,  
and see that you are never cheated again, Ac-  
tion from principle, the perception and the per-  
formance of right, changes things and relations;  
it is essentially revolutionary, and does not con-  
sist wholly with anything which was. It not  
only divides states and churches, it divides  
families; ay, it divides the individual, separat-  
ing the diabolical in him from the divine.  
+ Unjust laws exist: hall we be content to  
obey them, 2¢ shall we endeavor to amend them,  
and aahtey ‘them until we have succeeded, & shall  
  
‘We transgress them at once? Men generally,  
under such a government as this, think that they

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 145  
  
ought to wait until they have persuaded the  
majority to alter them. ‘They think that, if  
they should resist, the remedy would be worse  
than the evil. But it is the fault of the govern-  
ment itself that the remedy is worse than the  
evil. Zé makes it worse. Why is it not more  
apt to anticipate and provide for reform?  
Why does it not cherish its wise minority?  
Why does it ery and resist before ‘it is hurt?  
‘Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on  
the alert to point out its faults, and do better  
than it would have them? Why does it always  
crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus  
and Luther, and pronounce Washington and  
Franklin rebels? :  
  
‘One would think, that a deliberate and prac-  
tical denial of its authority was the only offense  
never contemplated by government; else, why  
has it not assigned its definite, its suitable and  
proportionate penalty? If a man who has no  
property refuses but once to earn nine shillings  
for the state, he is put in prison for a period  
unlimited by any law that I know, and deter-  
mined only by the diseretion of those who placed  
hhim there; but if he should steal ninety times  
nine shillings from the state, he is soon permit-  
ted to go at large again.  
  
Tf the injustice is part of the necessary fric-  
tion of the machine of government, let it go,

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146 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
let it go: perchance it will wear smooth, —cor-  
tainly the machine will wear out. If the injus-  
tice has a spring, or a pulley, or @ rope, or a  
crank, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you  
may consider whether the remedy will not be  
worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature  
that it requires you to be the agent of injustice  
to another, then, I say, break the law. Let  
your life be a counter frietion to stop the ma-  
chine. [What I have to do is to see, at any  
rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong  
which I condemn;  
  
As for adopting the ways which tho state has  
provided for remedying the evil, I know not of,  
such ways. They take too much time, and a,  
man’s life will be gone. T have other affairs to  
attend to. Teame into this world, not chiefly  
to make this a good place to live in, but to live  
in it, be it good or bad. | A man has not every-  
thing to do, but something; and because he  
cannot do everything, it is not necessary that  
he should do something wrong It is not my  
business to be petitioning the Governor or the  
Legislature any more than it is theirs to petition  
‘me; and\_if they. should not hear my petition,  
what should Ido then? But in this ease the  
state has provided no way: its very Constitn-  
tion is the evil. ‘This may seem to be harsh

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 147  
  
treat with the utmost kindness and considera~  
tion the only spirit that can appreciate or de-  
serves it. So is all change for the better, like  
birth and death, which convulse the body.  
  
T do not hesitate to say, that those who call  
themselves Abolitionists should at once effect-  
ually withdraw their support, both in person,  
and property, from the government of Massa-  
chusetts, and not wait till they constitute a ma-  
jority of one, before they suffer the right to pre-  
vail through them. I think that it is enough  
if they have God on their side, without waiting  
for that other one. [Moreover, any man more  
right than his neighbors consiiniel a ‘@ majority  
of one already/ 4 vd ~ ie Rota  
  
I meet this American eae or its rep-  
resentative, the state government, directly, and  
face to face, once a year—no more—in the  
person ofits tax-gatherer; this is the only modi  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
meets it; and it then says distinetly, Recognize  
me; and the simplest, the most effectual, and,  
in the present posture of affairs, the indispensa-  
blest mode of treating with it on this head, of  
expressing your little satisfaction with and love  
for it, is to deny it then, My eivil neighbor,  
the tax-gatherer, is the very man I have to deal  
with, —for it is, after all, with men and not  
with parchment that I quarrel, —and he has

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148 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
voluntarily chosen to be an agent of the govern-  
ment. How shall he ever know well what he is  
and does as an officer of the government, or as  
a man, until he is obliged to consider whether  
he shall treat me, his neighbor, for whom he  
has respect, as a neighbor and well-disposed  
man, or as a maniae and distuxher of the peace,  
and see if he can get over this obstruction to  
his neighborliness without a ruder and more  
impetuous thought or speech corresponding with  
his action. I know this well, that if one thou-  
sand, if one hundred, if ten men whom T could  
name, —if ten honest men only,—ay, if one  
HONEST man, in this State of Massachusetts,  
ceasing to hold slaves, were actually to with-  
draw from this eopartnership, and be locked up  
in the county jail therefor, it would be the  
abolition of slavery in America. “For it matters  
not how small the beginning may seem to be:  
what\_is once well done is done forever. But  
we love better to talle about it: that we say  
is our mission. Reform keeps many scores of  
newspapers in its service, but not one man. If  
my esteemed neighbor, the State's ambassador,  
who will devote his days to the settlement of the  
question of human rights in the Couneil Cham-  
ber, instead of being threatened with the pris-  
ons of Carolina, were to sit down the prisoner of  
‘Massachusetts, that State which is so anxious

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 149  
  
to foist the sin of slavery upon her sister, —  
though at present she ean discover only an act  
‘of inhospitality to be the ground of a quarrel  
h her, —the Legislature would not wholly  
waive the subject the following winter.  
  
Under a gover  
  
   
  
   
  
aent which imprisons any  
unjustly, the tne place for a just man is also  
a prison, ‘The proper place to-day, the only  
place which Massachusetts has provided for her  
freer and less desponding spirits, is in her pris-  
ons, to be put out and locked out of the State  
by her own act, as they have already put them-  
selves ont by their principles. Tt is there that  
the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on  
parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs  
of his race should find them; on that separate,  
but-more free and honorable ground, where the  
State places those who are nob zith hor, but  
against her, —the only house in a slave State  
in which a free man can abide with honor. If  
‘any think that their influence would be lost  
there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear  
of the State, that they would not be as an enemy:  
within its walls, they do not know by how much  
truth is stronger than error, nor how much  
more eloquently and effectively he ean combat,  
injustice who has experienced a little in his own  
person, Cast your whole vote, not a strip of  
paper merely, but your whole influence. A.

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150 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
minority is powerless while it conforms to the  
majority; it is not even a minority then; but it  
is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight.  
If the alternative is to keep all just men in  
prison, or give up war and slavery, the State  
will not hesitate which to choose. If a thou-  
sand men were not to pay their tax-bills this  
year, that would not be a violent and bloody  
measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable  
the State to commit violence and shed innocent  
blood. ‘This is, in fact, the definition of @  
peaceable revolution, if any sueh is possible.  
If the tax-gatherer, or any other public officer,  
asks me, as one has done, “But what. shall T  
do?” my answer is, “If you really wish to do  
anything, resign your office.” When the sub-  
ject has refused allegiance, and the officer has  
resigned his office, then the revolution is aoeom-  
plished. But even suppose blood should flow.  
Is there not a sort of blood shed when the cox  
seience is wounded? ‘Through this wound  
‘man’s eal manhood and immortality flow out,  
and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see  
this blood flowing now.  
  
T have contemplated the imprisonment of the  
offender, rather than the seizure of his goods,  
—though both will serve the same purpose, —  
because they who assert the purest right, and  
consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 151  
  
State, commonly have not spent much time in  
accumulating property. To such the State ren-  
ders comparatively small serviee, and a slight  
tax is wont to appear exorbitant, particularly if  
they are obliged to ean it by special labor with  
their hands. If there were one who lived  
wholly without the use of money, the State it-  
self would hesitate to demand it of him, But  
the rich man—not to make any invidious eom-  
parison — is always sold to the institution  
which makes him rich. [Absolutely speaking,  
the more money, the less virtue; for money  
comes between a man and his objects, and ob-  
tains them for him; and it was certainly no  
great virtue to obtain it. | Tt puts to rest many  
questions which he would otherwise be taxed to  
answer; while the only new question which it  
puts is the hard but superfluous one, how to  
spend it. Thus his moral ground is taken from  
under his feet. ‘The opportunities of living are  
diminished in proportion as what are called the  
“mieans” are increased. ‘The best thing a man  
can do for his culture when he is rich is to en-  
deavor to carry out those schemes which he en-  
tertained when he was poor. Christ answered  
the Herodians according to their condition.  
“Show me the tribute-money,” said he;—and  
one took a penny ont of his pocket;—if you  
use money which has the image of Cesar on it,

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152 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
and which he has made current and valuable,  
that is, if you are men of the State, and gladly  
enjoy the advantages of Cresar’s government,  
then pay him back some of his own when he  
demands it. “Render therefore to Cresar that  
which is Cesar’s, and to God those things  
which are God’s,”—leaving them no wiser  
than before as to which was which; for they  
aid not wish to know.  
  
‘When I converse with the freest of my neigh-  
bors, I perceive that, whatever they may say  
about the magnitude and seriousness of the  
question, and their regard for the publie tran-  
quillity, the long and the short of the matter  
is, that they cannot spare the protection of the  
existing government, and they dread the conse-  
quences to their property and families of diso-  
bedience to it. For my own part, I should not  
like to think that I ever rely on the protection  
of the State. But, if I deny the authority of  
the State when it presents its tax-bil, it will  
soon take and waste all my property, and so  
harass me and my children without end. ‘This  
is hard. ‘This makes it impossible for a man  
to live honestly, and at the same time eomforta-  
bly, in outward respects. It will not be worth  
the while to accumulate property; that would  
be sure to.go again. You must hire or squat  
somewhere, and raise but a small erop, and eat

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 153  
  
that soon. You must live within yourself, and  
depend upon yourself always tucked up and  
ready for a start, and not have many affairs.  
A man may grow rich in Turkey even, if he  
will be in all respects a good subject of the  
Twkish government. Confucius said: “If a  
state is governed by the principles of reason,  
poverty and misery are subjects of shame; if a  
state is not governed by the principles of rea~  
son, riches and honors are the subjects of  
shame.” No: until I want the protection of  
Massachusetts to be extended to me in some dis-  
tant Southern port, where my liberty is endan-  
gered, or until I am bent solely on building up  
an estate at home by peaceful enterprise, I ean  
afford to refuse allegiance to Massachusetts, and  
her right to my property and life. It costs me  
less\_in\_every sense to ineur the penalty of dis-  
obedience to the State than it would to obey.  
I should feel as if I were worth less in that  
case.  
  
Some years ago, the State met me in bebalf  
of the Church, and commanded me to pay a  
certain sum toward the support of a clergyman  
whose preaching my father attended, but never  
Imyself, “Pay,” it said, “or be locked up in  
tho jail.” I declined to pay. But, unfortu-  
nately, another man saw fit to pay it. I did  
not see why the schoolmaster should be taxed to

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164 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
support the priest, and not the priest the school-  
master; for I was not the State’s schoolmaster,  
but I supported myself by voluntary subscrip-  
tion. |I did not see why the lyceum should not  
present its tax-bill, and have the Stato to back  
its demand, as well as the Chureh} However,  
‘at the request of the selectmen, I conilescended  
to make some such statement as this in writing:  
—\*Know all men by these presents, that I,  
Henry Thoreau, do not wish to be regarded as  
‘a member of any incorporated society which I  
have not joined.” This I gave to the town  
clerk; and he has it, The State, having thus  
earned that I did not wish to be regarded as a  
member of that church, has never made a like  
demand on me since; though it said that it  
must adhere to its original presumption that  
time. If I had known how to name them,  
I should then have signed off in detail from  
all the societies which I never signed on to;  
but I did not know where to find a complete  
list.  
  
I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was  
put into a jail once on this account, for one  
nights and, as I stood considering the walls of  
solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of  
wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grat-  
ing which strained the light, I could not. help  
being struck with the foolishness of that insti-

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 155  
  
tution which treated me as if I were mere flesh  
and blood and bones, to be locked up. I won-  
dered that it should have concluded at length  
that this was the best use it could put me to,  
and had never thought to avail itself of my ser-  
vives in some way, I saw that, if there was a  
wall of stone between me and my townsmen,  
there was a still more difficult one to climb or  
break through before they could get to be as  
free as I was. I did not for a moment feel eon-  
fined, and the walls seemed a great waste of  
stone and mortar. I felt as if T alone of alll my  
townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly did  
not know how to treat mo, but behaved like  
persons who are underbred. In every threat  
and in every compliment there was a blunder;  
for they thought that my chief desire was to  
stand the other side of that stone wall. I could  
not but smile to see how industriously they  
locked the door on my meditations, which fol-  
lowed them out again without let or hindrance,  
and they were really all that was dangerous.  
‘As they could not reach me, they had resolved  
to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot  
come at some person against whom they have a  
spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the State  
was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone  
woman with her silver spoons, and that it  
did not know its friends from its foes, and I

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166 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied  
it.  
  
‘Thus the State never intentionally confronts  
a man’s sense, intellectual or moral, but only  
his body, his senses, It is not armed with  
  
| superior wit or honesty, but with superior phys-  
  
ical strength. I was not born to be forced.  
I will breathe after my own fashion, Let us  
see who is the strongest. What force has a  
multitude? ‘They only ean force me who obey  
a higher Jaw than I. ‘They force me to become  
like themselves. I do not hear of men being  
forced to live this way or that by masses of men,  
‘What sort of life were that to live? When I  
meet & government which says to me, “Your  
money or your life,” why should I be in haste  
to give it my money? It may be in a great  
strait, and not know what to do: I cannot help  
that. Tt must help itself; do as T do. Tt is  
not worth the while to snivel about it. Tam  
not responsible for the successful working of  
the machinery of society. I am not the son  
of the engineer. I perceive that, when an acorn  
and a chestnut fall side by side, the one does  
not remain inert to make way for the other, but  
both obey their own laws, and spring and grow  
and flourish as best they can, till one, per-  
chance, overshadows and destroys the other. Tf  
a plant cannot live according to its nature, it  
dies; and so a man.

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 157  
  
‘The night in prison was novel and interesting  
enough. The prisoners in their shirt-sleeves  
were enjoying a chat and the evening air in the  
doorway, when I entered. But the jailer said,  
“Come, boys, it is time to lock up3” and so  
they dispersed, and I heard the sound of their  
‘stops returning into the hollow apartments.  
‘My room-mate was introduced to me by the  
jailer as “a first-rate fellow and a clever man.”  
‘When the door was locked, he showed me  
where to hang my hat, and how he managed  
matters there. The rooms were whitewashed  
‘once a month; and this one, at least, was the  
whitest, most simply furnished, and probably  
the meatest apartment in the town. He natu-  
rally wanted to know where I came from, and  
what brought me there; and, when I had told  
him, I asked him in my turn how he came  
there, presuming him to be an honest man, of  
course; and, as the world goes, I believe he  
was. “Why,” said he, “they accuse me of  
burning a barn; but I never did it.” As near  
as I could discover, he had probably gone to  
bed in a barn when drunk, and smoked his pipe  
there; and soa barn was burnt. He had the  
reputation of being a clever man, had been  
there some three months waiting for his trial  
to come on, and would have to wait as much  
longer; but he was quite domesticated and con-

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158 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
tented, since he got his board for nothing, and  
thought that he was well treated.  
  
He occupied one window, and I the others  
and I saw that if one stayed there long, his  
principal business would be to look out the win-  
dow. I had soon read all the tracts that were  
left there, and examined where former prisoners  
had broken out, and where a grate had been  
sawed off, and heard the history of the various  
cveupants of that room; for I found that even  
here there was a history and a gossip which  
never circulated beyond the walls of the jail.  
Probably this is the only house in the town  
where verses are composed, which are afterward  
printed in a cireular form, but not published.  
Twas shown quite a Iong list of verses which  
were composed by some young men who had  
been detected in an attempt to escape, who  
avenged themselves by singing them,  
  
I pumped my fellow-prisoner as dry as T  
could, for fear I should never see him agains  
but at length he showed me which was my bed,  
and left mo to blow out the lamp.  
  
Tt was like traveling into a far country, such  
as Ihad never expected to behold, to lie there  
for one night. It seemed to me that I never  
had heard the town-clock strike before, nor the  
evening sounds of the villages for we slept with  
the windows open, which were inside the grat-

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 159  
  
ing. It was to see my native village in the  
light of the Middle Ages, and our Concord was  
turned into a Rhine stream, and visions of  
‘Imights and castles passed before me. They  
were the voices of old burghers that I heard in  
the streets. I was an involuntary spectator and  
auditor of whatever was done and said in the  
kitchen of the adjacent village-inn, —a wholly  
new and rare experience to me. It was a  
closer view of my native town. I was fairly  
inside of it. I never had seen its institutions  
before. This is one of its peculiar institutions;  
for it is a shire town. I began to comprehend  
what its inhabitants were about.  
  
In the moming, our breakfasts were put  
through the hole in the door, in small oblong-  
square tin pans, made to fit, and holding a pint  
of chocélate, with brown bread, and an iron  
spoon. When they called for the vessels again,  
I was green enough to return what bread I had  
lefts but my comrade seized it, and said that I  
should lay that up for lunch or dinner. Soon  
after he was let out to work at haying in a  
neighboring field, whither he went every day,  
and would not be back till noon; so he bade me  
good-day, saying that he doubted if he should  
see me again,  
  
‘When T came out of prison, —for some one  
interfered, and paid that tax, —I did not per-

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160 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
ceive that great changes had taken place on the  
common, such as he observed who went in a  
youth and emerged a tottering and gray-headed  
‘man; and yet a change had to my eyes come  
over the scene, —the town, and State, and  
country, — greater than any that mere time  
could effect. I saw yet more distinctly the  
State in which I lived. I saw to what extont  
the people among whom T lived could be trusted  
‘as good neighbors and friends; that their friend-  
ship was for summer weather only; that they did  
not greatly propose to do rights that they were  
a distinct race from me by their prejudices and  
superstitions, as the Chinamen and Malays ares  
that in their sacrifices to humanity they ran  
no risks, not even to their property; that after  
all they were not so noble but they treated the  
thief ashe had treated them, and hoped, by a  
certain outward observance and a few prayers,  
and by walking in a particular straight though  
useless path from time to time, to save their  
souls. This may be to judge my neighbors  
harshly; for I believe that many of them are  
not aware that they have such an institution as  
the jail in their village.  
  
Tt was formerly the custom in our village,  
when a poor debtor came ont of jail, for his  
acquaintances to salute him, looking through  
their fingers, which were crossed to represent

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 161  
  
the grating of a jail window, “How do ye do?”  
‘My neighbors did not thus salute me, but first  
looked at me, and then at one another, as if I  
had returned from a long journey. I was put  
into jail as Twas going to the shoemaker’s to  
get @ shoe which was mended. When I was let  
out the next morning, I proceeded to finish my  
errand, and, having put on my mended shoe,  
joined a huckleberry party, who were impatient  
to put themselves under my conducts and in  
half an hour, —for the horse was soon tackled,  
—was in the midst of a huckleberry field, on  
‘one of our highest hills, two miles off, and then  
the State was nowhere to be seen.  
‘This is the whole history of “My Prisons.”  
  
T have never declined paying the highway  
tax, because I am as desirous of being « good  
neighbor as Iam of being a bad subjects (and wp  
as for supporting schools, I am doing my part  
  
to educate my fellow-countrymen now.) It is  
for no particular item in the tax-bill that I re-  
fuse to pay it, I simply wish to refuse alle- /  
giance to the State, to withdraw and stand aloof  
from it effectually. I do not care to trace the  
course of my dollar, if I could, till it buys a  
man or a musket to shoot one with, — the dollar  
  
‘is innocent, — but I am concerned to trace the  
effects of my allegiance, In fact, I quietly

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162 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
declare war with the State, after my fashion,  
though I will still make what use and get what  
advantage of her I can, as is usual in such  
cases.  
  
Tf others pay the tax which is demanded of  
me, from a sympathy with the State, they do  
‘but what they have already done in their own  
cease, or rather they abet injustice to a greater  
extent than the State requires. If they pay  
the tax from a mistaken interest in the individ-  
ual taxed, to save his property, or prevent his  
going to jail, it is because they have not consid-  
ered wisely how far they let their private fecl-  
ings interfere with the publie good.  
  
‘This, then, is my position at present. But  
one eannot be too much on his guard in such a  
case, lest his action be biased by obstinacy or  
an undue regard for the opinions of men. |Let  
him see that he does only what belongs to him-  
self and to the hour!  
  
I think sometimes, Why, this people mean  
well, they are only ignorant; they would do  
better if they knew how: why give your neigh-  
bors this pain to treat you as they are not in-  
clined to? But I think again, This is no reason  
why I should do as they do, or permit others  
to suffer much greater pain of a different kind.  
Again, I sometimes say to myself, When many  
niillions of men, without heat, without ill will,

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 168  
  
without personal feeling of any kind, demand  
of you a few shillings only, without the possibil-  
ity, such is their constitution, of retracting or  
altering their present demand, and without the  
possibility, on your side, of appeal to any other  
rillions, why expose yourself to this overwhelm-  
ing brute force? You do not resist cold and  
hunger, the winds and the waves, thus obsti-  
nately; you quietly submit to a thousand similar  
necessities. You do not put your head into the  
fire. But just in proportion as I regard this as.  
not wholly a brute force, but partly a human  
force, and consider that I have relations to  
those millions as to so many millions of men,  
and not of mere brute or inanimate things, T  
see that appeal is possible, first and instanta-  
neously, from them to the Maker of them, and,  
secondly, from them to themselves. But if I  
put my head deliberately into the fire, there is  
no appeal to fire or to the Maker of fire, and I  
have only myself to blame. If I could convinee +  
| myself that I have any right to be satisfied with  
\ men as they are, and to treat them accordingly,  
and not according, in some respects, to my re-  
| quisitions and expectations of what they and I  
ought to be, then, like a good Mussulman and  
fatalist, I should endeavor to be satisfied with  
| things as they are, and say itis the will of God.  
And, above all, there is this difference between

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164 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
resisting this and a\_purely brute or natural  
force, that T ean resist this with some effect  
but I cannot expect, like Orpheus, to change  
the nature of the rocks and trees and beasts.  
  
I do not wish to quarrel with any man or  
nation. I do not wish to split hairs, to make  
fine distinctions, or set myself up as better than  
my neighbors. I seek rather, I may say, even  
an excuse for conforming to the laws of the  
and. I am but too ready to conform to them.  
Indeed, T have reason to suspect myself on this  
heads and each year, as the tax-gatherer eomes  
round, I find myself disposed to review the acts  
and position of the general and State govern-  
ments, and the spirit of the people, to discover  
a pretext for conformity.  
  
“We must affect our country as our parent,  
[Ana if st any time we alienate  
Our love or industry from doing it honor,  
‘Wo must respect effets and teach the soul  
Matter of conscience and religion,  
‘And not desire of rule or benefit.”  
  
I believe that the State will soon be able to  
take all my work of this sort out of my hands,  
and then T shall be no better a patriot than my  
fellow-countrymen. Seen from a lower point  
of view, the Constitution, with all its faults, is  
very good; the law and the courts are very re-  
spectable; even this State and this American  
government are, in many respects, very admira-

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 165  
  
ble, and rare things, to be thankful for, such  
asa great many have described them but seen  
from a point of view a little higher, they are  
what I have described them; seen from a higher  
still, and the highest, who shall say what they  
are, or that they are worth looking at or think-  
ing of at all?  
\_Mowever, the government does not concer  
  
“me much, and I shall bestow the fewest possible  
thoughts on it. It is not many moments that I  
live under a government, even in this world.  
If a man is thought-free, faney-free, imagina-  
tion-free, that which is not never for a long  
time appearing éo be to him, unwise rulers or  
reformers cannot fatally interrupt him.  
  
T know that most men think differently from  
myself; but those whose Jives are by profession  
devoted to the study of these or kindred sub-  
jects content me as little as any. LStatesmen ays  
and legislators, standing so completely within  
the institution, never distinctly and nakedly  
behold it.) They speak of moving society, but  
‘have no resting-place without it. ‘They may be  
men of a certain experience and discrimination,  
and have no doubt invented ingenious and even  
useful systems, for which we sincerely thank  
thems but all their wit and usefulness lie within  
certain not very wide limits. They are wont to  
forget that. the world is not governed by policy

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166 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
and expediency. Webster never goes behind  
government, and so cannot speak with authority  
about it. His words are wisdom to those legis-  
ators who contemplate no essential reform in  
the existing government; but for thinkers, and  
those who legislate for all time, he never once  
glances at the subject. I know of those whose  
serene and wise speculations on this theme  
would soon reveal the limits of his mind’s range  
and hospitality. Yet, compared with the cheap  
professions of most reformers,cand the still  
cheaper wisdom and eloquence of politicians in  
general, his are almost the only sensible and  
valuable words, and we thank Heaven for him.  
Comparatively, he is always strong, original,  
and, above all, practical. Still, his quality is  
not wisdom, but prudence. ‘The lawyer’s truth  
is not Trath, but consistency or a consistent  
expediency. ‘Truth is always in harmony with  
herself, and is not concerned chiefly to reveal  
the justice that may consist with wrong-doing.  
He well deserves to be called, as he has been  
called, the Defender of the Constitution.  
There are really no blows to be given by him  
but defensive ones. He is not a leader, but  
a follower. His leaders are the men of ’87.  
“I have never made an effort,” he says, “and  
never propose to make an effort; I have never  
countenanced an effort, and never mean to

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 167  
  
countenance an effort, to disturb the arrange-  
ment as originally made, by which the various  
‘States came into the Union.” Still thinking of  
the sanetion which the Constitution gives to  
slavery, he says, “Because it was a part of the  
original compact, —let it stand.” Notwith-  
standing his special acuteness and ability, he is  
unable to take a fact out of its merely political  
relations, and behold it as it lies absolutely to  
be disposed of by the intellect, —what, for in-  
stanee, it behooves a man to do here in America  
to-day with regard to slavery,— but ventures, or  
is driven, to make some such desperate answer  
as the following, while professing to speak ab-  
solutely, and as a private man, —from which  
what new and singular eode of social duties  
might be inferred? “The manner,” says he,  
“in which the governments of those States  
where slavery exists are to regulate it is for  
their own consideration, under their responsi-  
Dility to their constituents, to the general laws  
of propriety, humanity, and justice, and to God.  
Associations formed elsewhere, springing from  
a feeling of humanity, or any other cause, have  
nothing whatever to do with it. ‘They have  
nover received any encouragement from me, and  
they never will.”!  
  
1 These extracts have Deon inserted singe the lecture was  
read,

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168 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
‘They who know of no purer sourees of truth,  
  
. who have traced up its stream no higher, stand,  
and wisely stand, by the Bible and the Consti-  
tution, and drink at it there with reverence and  
Inumility; but they who behold where it comes  
trickling into this Iake or that pool, gird up  
  
Jeet awitnily their loins once more, and continue their pile  
  
   
  
grimage toward its fountain-head,  
No man with a genius for legislation has  
appeared in America. They are rare in the  
history of the world. ‘There are orators, po-  
liticians, and eloquent men, by the thousand;  
but the speaker has not yet opened his mouth  
to speak who is capable of settling the much-  
vexed questions of the day. We love eloquence  
for its own sake, and not for any truth which it  
‘may utter, or any heroism it may inspire. Our  
legislators have not yet learned the comparative  
value of free-trade and of freedom, of union,  
and of rectitude, to a nation. ‘They have no  
genius or talent for comparatively humble ques-  
tions of taxation and finance, commerce and  
manufactures and agriculture. If we were left  
solely to the wordy wit of legislators in Con-  
gress for our guidance, uncorrected by the sea~  
sonable experience and the effectual complaints  
of the people, America would not long retail  
hor rank among the nations. For eighteen hun-  
dred years, though perchance T have no right

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE 169  
  
to say it, the New Testament has been written; Rat! oh s  
yet where is the legislator who has wisdom sand The Chai a  
practical talent enough to avail himself of the = “"O""  
light which it sheds on the science of legisla- =  
tion?  
  
The authority of government, even such as T  
am willing to submit to, —for I will cheerfully  
‘obey those who know and can do better than I,  
and in many things even those who neither  
Know nor can do so well, —is still an impure  
one: to be strictly just, it must have the sanc-  
tion and consent of the governed. Tt can have  
no pure right over my person and property but  
what I coneede to it. ‘The progress from an  
absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited  
monarchy to a democracy, is a progress toward  
a true respect for the individual. Even the  
Chinese philosopher was wise enough to regard  
the individual as the basis of the empire. Isa,  
democracy, such as we know it, the last im-  
provement possible in government? Is it not  
possible to take a step further towards recogniz-  
ing and organizing the rights of man? ‘There  
will never be a really free and enlightened  
State until the State comes to recognize the  
individual as a higher and independent power,  
from which all its own power and authority are  
derived, and treats him aceordingly. I please  
myself with imagining a State at last which

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170 CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
  
can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the  
individual with respect as a neighbor; which  
even would not think it inconsistent with its  
‘own repose if a few were to live aloof from it,  
not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who  
fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow-  
men. A State which bore this kind of fruit,  
and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened,  
would prepare the way for a still more perfect  
and glorious State, which also T have imagined,  
but not yet anywhere seen.

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
I LaTeLy attended a meeting of the citizens  
of Concord, expecting, as one among many, to  
speak on the subject of slavery in Massachu-  
setts; but I was surprised and disappointed to  
find that what had called my townsmen together  
was the destiny of Nebraska, and not of Massa-  
chnsetis, and that what I had to say would be  
entirely out of order. I had thought that the  
house was on fire, and not the prairies but  
though several of the citizens of Massachusetts  
are now in prison for attempting to reseue a  
slave from her own clutches, not one of the  
speakers at that meeting expressed regret for it,  
not one even referred to it. It was only the  
disposition of some wild lands a thousand miles  
off which appeared to concern them. ‘The in-  
habitants of Concord are not prepared to stand  
by one of their own bridges, but talk only of  
taking up a position on the highlands beyond tho  
Yellowstone River. Our Buttricks and Davises  
and Hosmers are retreating thither, and I fear  
that they will leave no Lexington Common be-  
tween them and the enemy, There is not one

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172 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
slave in Nebraska; there are perhaps a million  
slaves in Massachusetts.  
  
‘They who have been bred in the school of  
polities fail now and always to face the facts.  
‘Their measures are half measures and make-  
shifts merely. ‘They put off the day of settle-  
ment indefinitely, and meanwhile the debt ac-  
cumulates. Though the Fugitive Slave Law  
had not been the subject of discussion on that  
occasion, it was at length faintly resolved by  
my townsmen, at an adjourned meeting, as I  
learn, that the compromise compact of 1820  
having been repudiated by one of the parties,  
“Therefore, . . . the Fugitive Slave Law of  
1850 must be repealed.” But this is not the  
reason why an iniquitous law should be re-  
pealed. The fact which the politician faces is  
merely that there is less honor among thieves  
than was supposed, and not the fact that they  
are thieves.  
  
As I had no opportunity to express. my  
thoughts at that meeting, will you allow me to  
do so here?  
  
Again it happens that the Boston Court-  
House is fall of armed men, holding prisoner  
and trying a MAN, to find out if he is not really  
a stave. Does any one think that justice or  
God awaits Mr. Loring’s decision? For him  
to sit there deciding still, when this question is

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 173  
  
already decided from eternity to eternity, and  
the unlettered slave himself and the multitude  
around have long since heard and assented to  
the decision, is simply to make himself ridicu-  
lous. We may be tempted to ask from whom  
the received his commission, and who he is that  
received it; what novel statutes he obeys, and  
what precedents are to him of authority. Such  
an arbiter’s very existence is an impertinence,  
‘We do not ask him to make up his mind, but  
to make up his pack.  
  
I listen to hear the voice of a Governor,  
Commander-in-Chief of the forces of Massachu-  
setts, I hear only the creaking of crickets and  
the hum of insects which now fill the summer  
air. The Governor's exploit is to review the  
troops on muster days. I have seen him on  
horseback, with his hat off, listening to a ehap-  
Jain’s prayer. Tt chanees that that is all I have  
ever seen of a Governor. I think that I could  
manage to got along without one. If he is not  
of the least use to prevent my being kidnapped,  
pray of what important use is he likely to be to  
me? When freedom is most endangered, he  
dwells in the deepest obscurity. A distin-  
guished clergyman told me that he chose the  
profession of a clergyman because it afforded  
the most leisure for literary pursuits. I would  
recommend to him the profession of a Governor.

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114 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
‘Three years ago, also, when the Sims tragedy  
was acted, I said to myself, There is such an  
officer, if not such a man, as the Governor of  
Massachusetts, —what has he been about the  
last fortnight? Has he had as much as he  
could do to keep on the fenee during this moral  
earthquake? It seemed to me that no keener  
satire could have been aimed at, no more eut-  
ting insult have been offered to that man, than.  
just what happened, — the absence of alll in-  
quiry after him in that crisis, The worst and  
the most I chance to know of him is that he  
did not improve that opportunity to make him-  
self known, and worthily known. He could  
at least have resigned himself into fame, It  
appeared to be forgotten that there was such a  
man or such an office. Yet no doubt he was  
endeavoring to fill the gubernatorial chair all  
the while. He was no Governor of mine. He  
did not govern me.  
  
But at last, in the present case, the Governor  
was heard from. After he and the United  
States government had perfectly succeeded in  
robbing a poor innocent black man of his lib-  
erty for life, and, as far as they could, of his  
Creator's likeness in his breast, he made a  
speech to his accomplices, at a congratulatory  
supper!  
  
Thave read a recent law of this State, mak-

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 115  
  
ing it penal for any officer of the “Common-  
wealth” to “detain or aid in the . . . de-  
tention,” anywhere within its limits, “of any  
person, for the reason that he is claimed as a  
fugitive slave.” Also, it was a matter of noto-  
riety that a writ of replevin to take the fugitive  
out of the custody of the United States Mar-  
shal could not be served for want of sufficient  
foree to aid the officer.  
  
T had thought that the Governor was, in some  
sense, the executive officer of the State; that it  
was his business, as a Governor, to see that the  
laws of the State were executed; while, as a  
man, he took care that he did not, by so doing,  
break the laws of humanity; but when there is  
any special important use for him, he is useless,  
or worse than useless, and permits the laws of  
the State to go unexeeuted. Perhaps I do not  
know what are the duties of a Governor; but if  
to be a Governor requires to subject one’s self  
to so much ignominy without remedy, if it is to  
puta restraint upon my manhood, I shall take  
care never to be Governor of Massachusetts. I  
have not read far in the statutes of this Com-  
monwealth. It is not profitable reading. They  
do not always say what is trae; and they do not  
always mean what they say. What Iam eon-  
corned to know is, that that man’s influence and  
authority were on the side of the slaveholder,

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116 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
and not of the slave, —of the guilty, and not of  
the innocent, — of injustice, and not of justice.  
T never saw him of whom I speak; indeed, I  
did not know that he was Governor until this  
event occurred, I heard of him and Anthony  
Burns at the same time, and thus, undoubtedly,  
most will hear of him, So far am I from being  
governed by him. I do not mean that it was  
anything to his discredit that I had not heard  
of him, only that I heard what I did. ‘The  
worst I shall say of him is, that he proved no  
better than the majority of his constituents  
would be likely to prove. In my opinion, he  
wwas not equal to the occasion,  
  
‘The whole military force of the State is at  
the service of a Mr. Suttle, a slaveholder from  
Virginia, to enable him to catch a man whom  
he calls his property; but not a soldier is  
offered to save a citizen of Massachusetts from  
being kidnapped! Is this what all these sol-  
diers, all this training, have been for these  
seventy -nine years past? Have they been  
trained merely to rob Mexico and carry back  
fugitive slaves to their masters?  
  
‘These very nights I heard the sound of a  
drum in our streets. ‘There were men training  
still; and for what? I could with an effort  
pardon the cockerels of Concord for crowing  
still, for they, perchance, had not been beaten

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 117  
  
that morning; but I could not excuse this rub-  
a-dub of the “trainers.” ‘The slave was carried  
back by exactly such as theses i. e., by the sol-  
dier, of whom the best you can say in this con-  
neetion is that he is a fool made conspicuous  
by a painted coat.  
  
‘Three years ago, also, just a week after the  
authorities of Boston assembled to camy back  
a perfectly innocent man, and one whom they  
Knew to be innocent, into slavery, the inhabi-  
tants of Concord caused the bells to be rung  
and the cannons to be fired, to celebrate their  
—and the courage and love of liberty:  
ancestors who fought at the bridge.  
‘As if those threo millions had fought for the  
right to be free themselves, but to hold in  
slavery three million others. Nowadays, men  
wear a fool’s-cap, and call it a liberty-eap. I  
do not know but there are some who, if they  
were tied to a whipping-post, and could but get  
one hand free, would use it to ring the bells and  
fire the cannons to celebrate their liberty. So  
some of my townsmen took the liberty to ring  
and fire. That was the extent of their freedom;  
and when the sound of the bells died away, their  
liberty died away also; when the powder was  
all expended, their liberty went off with the  
smoke.  
  
‘The joke could be no broader if the inmates

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178 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
of the prisons were to subscribe for all the pow-  
der to be used in such salutes, and hire the jai  
ers to do the firing and ringing for them, while  
they enjoyed it through the grating.  
  
‘This is what I thought about my neighbors.  
  
‘Every humane and intelligent inhabitant of  
Concord, when he or she heard those bells and  
those cannons, thought not with pride of the  
events of the 19th of April, 1775, but with  
shame of the events of the 12th of April, 1851.  
But now we have half buried that old shame  
under a new one.  
  
Massachusetts sat waiting Mr. Loring’s de-  
cision, as if it could in any way affect her own  
criminality. Her crime, the most conspicuous  
and fatal erime of all, was permitting him to  
be the umpire in such a case. It was really  
the trial of Massachusett Every moment that  
she hesitated to set this man free, every moment  
that she now hesitates to atone for her crime,  
she is convicted. The Commissioncr on her  
case is Gods not Edward G. God, but simple  
God.  
  
I wish my countrymen to consider, that what-  
ever the human law may be, neither an individ-  
ual nor a nation ean ever commit the least act  
of injustice against the obscurest. individual  
without having to pay the penalty for it. A  
government which deliberately enacts injustice,

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 119  
  
and persists in it, will at length even become  
the langhing-stock of the world.  
  
‘Much has been said about American slavery,  
but I think that we do not even yet realize what  
slavery is. If I were seriously to propose to  
Congress to make mankind into sausages, T  
have no doubt that most of the members would  
smile at my proposition, and if any believed me  
to be in earnest, they would think that I pro-  
posed something much worse than Congress had  
ever done, But if any of them will tell me that  
to make a man into a sausage would be much  
worse, —would be any worse, —than to make  
him into a slave, —than it was to enact the  
Fugitive Slave Law,—TI will aceuse him of  
foolishness, of intellectual incapacity, of mak-  
ing a distinction without a difference. The  
one is just as sensible a proposition as the  
other. -  
  
Thear a good deal said about trampling this,  
law under foot. Why, one need not go out of  
his way to do that. This law rises not to the  
level of the head or the reason; its natural  
habitat is in the dirt. Tt was born and bred,  
and has its life, only in the dust and mire, on a  
level with the feet; and he who walks with free-  
dom, and does not with Hindoo merey avoid  
treading on every venomous reptile, will inevi-  
tably tread on it, and so trample it under foot,

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180 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
—and Webster, its maker, with it, like the dirt-  
‘ng and its ball.  
  
Recent events will be valuable as a criticism,  
on the administration of justice in our midst,  
or, rather, as showing what are the true re-  
sonrees of justice in any community. It has  
come to this, that the friends of liberty, the  
friends of the slave, have shuddered when they:  
have understood that his fate was left to the legal  
tribunals of the country to be decided. Free  
men have no faith that justice will be awarded  
insnch a case. The judge may decide this way  
or that; it is a kind of accident, at best. It is  
evident that ho is not a competent authority in  
so important a ease. It is no time, then, to  
‘be judging according to his precedents, but to  
establish a precedent for the future, I would  
much rather trust to the sentiment of the people.  
In their vote you would get something of some  
value, at least, however small; but in the other  
case, only the trammeled judgment of an indi-  
vidual, of no significance, be it which way it  
might.  
  
Tt is to some extent fatal to the courts, when  
the people are compelled to go behind them. I  
do not wish to believe that the courts were made  
for fair weather, and for very civil cases merely  
‘ut think of leaving it to any court in the land  
to decide whether more than three millions of

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 181  
  
people, in this case a sixth part of a nation,  
have a right to be freemen or not! Bat it has  
been left to the courts of justice, so called, —to  
the Supreme Court of the land, —and, as you  
all know, recognizing no authority but the Gon-  
stitution, it has decided that the three millions  
are and shall continue to be slaves. Such  
judges as these are merely the inspectors of a  
pick-lock and murderer's tools, to tell him  
whether they are in working order or not, and  
there they think that their responsibility ends.  
‘There was a prior case on the docket, which  
they, as judges appointed by God, had no right  
to skip; which having been justly settled, they  
would have been saved from this humiliation.  
Tt was the ease of the murderer himself.  
  
‘The law will never make men free; it is men  
who have got to make the law free. ‘They are  
the lovers of law and order who observe the law  
when the government breaks it.  
  
Among human beings, the judge whose words  
seal the fate of a man furthest into eternity is  
not he who merely pronounces the verdict of the  
Jaw, but he, whoever he may be, who, from a  
love of truth, and unprejudiced by any custom  
or enactment of men, utters a true opinion or  
sentence concerning him. He it is that sen-  
tences him. Whoever can discern truth has  
received his commission from a higher source

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182 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
than the chiefest justice in the world who can  
discern only law. He finds himself constituted.  
judge of the judge. Strange that it should be  
necessary to state such simple truths!  
  
I am more and more convinced that, with  
reference to any publie question, it is more im-  
portant to know what the country thinks of it  
than what the city thinks. ‘The city does not  
think much. On any moral question, I would  
rather have the opinion of Boxboro’ than of  
Boston and New York put together. When  
the former speaks, I feel as if somebody had  
spoken, as if humanity was yet, and a reasona-  
ble being had asserted its rights, —as if some  
unprejudiced men among the country’s hills had  
at length turned their attention to the subject,  
and by a few sensible words redeemed the rep-  
utation of the race. When, in some obscure  
country town, the farmers come together to a  
special town-ineeting, to express their opinion  
on some subject which is vexing the land, that,  
I think, is the true Congress, and the most  
respectable one that is ever assembled in the  
United States.  
  
Tt is evident that there are, in this Common-  
wealth at least, two parties, becoming more and  
more distinct, — the party of the city, and the  
party of the country. I know that the country  
is mean enough, but I am glad to believe that

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 183  
  
there is a slight difference in her favor. But  
as yet she has few, if any organs, through  
which to express herself. ‘The editorials which  
she reads, like the news, come from the sea-  
board. Let us, the inhabitants of the country,  
cultivate self-respect. Let us not send to the  
city for aught more essential than our broad-  
cloths and groceries; or, if we read the opin-  
ions of the city, let us entertain opinions of our  
Among measures to be adopted, I would sug- L  
gest to make as earnest and vigorous an assault  
on the press as has already been made, and with  
effect, on the church. The church has much  
improved within a few years; but the press is,  
almost without exeeption, corrupt. I believe  
that in this country the press exerts a greater | 70 SS  
and a more pernicious influence than the chuxeh  
did in its worst period. We are not a religious  
people, but we are a nation of politicians. We  
do not eare for the Bible, but we do care for  
the newspaper. At any meeting of politicians,  
—like that at Concord the other evening, for  
instance, —how impertinent it would be to  
quote from the Bible! how pertinent to quote  
from a newspaper or from the Constitution!  
‘The newspaper is a Bible which we read every  
‘morning and every afternoon, standing and sit-  
ting, riding and walking. It is a Bible which

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js  
  
184 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
every man carries in his pocket, which lies on  
every table and counter, and which the mail,  
and thousands of missionaries, are continually  
dispersing. It is, in short, the only book  
which America has printed, and which America  
reads. So wide is its influence. ‘The editor  
is a preacher whom you voluntarily support.  
Your tax is commonly one cent daily, and it,  
costs nothing for pew hire. But how many of  
these preachers preach the truth? I repeat the  
testimony of many an intelligent foreigner, as  
well as my own convietions, when T say, that  
probably no country was ever ruled by so mean  
fa class of tyrants as, with a few noble excep-  
tions, are the editors of the periodical press in  
this country. And as they live and rule only  
by their servility, and appealing to the worse,  
and not the better, nature of man, the people  
who read them are in the eondition of the dog  
‘that returns to his vomit.  
  
‘The Liberator and the Commonwealth were  
the only papers in Boston, as far as I know,  
which made themselves heard in condemnation  
of the cowardice and meanness of the authori-  
ties of that city, as exhibited in "61. ‘The  
other journals, almost without exception, by  
their manner of referring to and speaking of  
the Fugitive Slave Law, and the carrying back  
of the slave Sims, insulted the common sense

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 185  
  
of the country, at least. And, for the most  
part, they did this, one would say, because they  
thought so to secure the approbation of their  
patrons, not being aware that a sounder senti-  
‘mont prevailed to any extent in the heart of the  
Commonwealth. Tam told that some of them  
have improved of late; but they are still emi-  
nently time-serving. Such is the character they  
have won.  
  
But, thank fortune, this preacher can be even  
more easily reached by the weapons of the  
reformer than could the recreant priest. The  
free men of New England have only to refrain  
from purchasing and reading these sheets, have  
only to withhold their cents, to kill a score of  
them at once. One whom I respect told me  
that he purchased Mitchell's Citizen in the  
cars, and then threw it out the window. But  
would not his contempt have been more fatally  
expressed if he had not bought it?  
  
‘Are they Americans? are they New Eng-  
landers? are they inhabitants of Lexington and  
Concord and Framingham, who read and sup-  
port the Boston Post, Mail, Journal, Adver-  
tiser, Courier, and Times? Are these tho  
Flags of our Union? I am not a newspaper  
reader, and may omit to name the worst.  
  
Could slavery suggest a more complete ser-  
vility than some of these journals exhibit? Is  
  
ib

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186 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
there any dust which their conduct does not  
Vick, and make fouler still with its slime? I do  
not know whether the Boston Herald is still in  
existence, but T remember to have seen it ahout:  
the streets when Sims was carried off. Did it  
not act its part well, —serve its master faith-  
fully! How could it have gone lower on its  
belly? How ean a man stoop lower than he is  
low? do more than put his extremities in the  
place of the head he has? than make his head  
his lower extremity? When I have taken up  
this paper with my cuffs turned up, I have  
heard the gurgling of the sewer through every  
column. I have felt that I was handling a  
paper picked out of the public gutters, a leaf  
from the gospel of the gambling-house, the  
groggery, and the brothel, harmonizing with the  
gospel of the Merchants’ Exchange.  
  
The majority of the men of the North, and  
of the South and East and West, are not men  
of principle. If they vote, they do not send  
men to Congress on errands of humanity; but  
while their brothers and sisters are being  
seourged and hung for loving liberty, while —I  
might here insert all that slavery implies and is  
—it is the mismanagement of wood and iron  
and stone and gold which concerns them. Do  
what you will, O Government, with my wife and.  
children, my mother and brother, my father

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 18T  
  
and sister, I will obey your commands to the  
letter. It will indeed grieve me if you hurt  
them, if you deliver them to overseers to be  
hunted by hounds or to be whipped to death;  
but, nevertheless, I will peaceably pursue my  
chosen calling on this fair earth, until per-  
chance, one day, when I have put on mourning  
for them dead, I shall have persuaded you to  
relent. Such is the attitude, such are the words  
of Massachusetts.  
  
Rather than do thus, I need not say what  
match T would touch, what system endeavor to  
blow up; but as I love my life, I would side  
with the light, and let the dark earth roll from  
under me, calling my mother and my brother to  
follow.  
  
T would remind my countrymen that they  
are to be men first, and Americans only at a.  
late and convenient hour. No matter how val-  
uable law may be to protect your property, even  
to keep sonl and body together, if it do not keep  
you and humanity together.  
  
I am sorry to.say that T doubt if there is a  
judge in Massachusetts who is prepared to re-  
sign his office, and get his living innocently,  
whenever it is required of him to pass sentence  
under a law which is merely contrary to the law  
of God. I am compelled to see that they put  
themselves, or rather are by character, in this

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188 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
respect, exactly on a level with the marine who  
discharges his musket in any direction he is  
ordered to. They are just as much tools, and  
as little men. Certainly, they are not the more  
to be respected, because their master enslaves  
their understandings and consciences, instead  
of their bodies.  
  
‘The judges and lawyers, — simply as such, T  
mean, —and all men of expediency, try this  
case by a very low and incompetent standard.  
‘They consider, not whether the Fugitive Slave  
Law is right, but whether it is what they call  
constitutional. Is virtue constitutional, or  
viee? Is equity constitutional, or iniquity?  
In important moral and vital questions, like  
this, it is just as impertinent to ask whether a  
law is constitutional or not, as to ask whether  
it is profitable or not. They persist in being  
the servants of the worst of men, and not the  
servants of humanity. ‘The question is, not  
whether you or your grandfather, seventy years  
ago, did not enter into an agreement to serve  
the Devil, and that service is not accordingly  
now due; but whether you will not now, for  
once and at last, serve God, —in spite of your  
own past reereancy, or that of your ancestor,  
by obeying that: eternal and only just Const1-  
uno, which He, and not any Jefferson or  
Adams, has written in your being.

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 189  
  
‘The amount of it is, if the majority vote the  
Devil to be God, the minority will live and  
behave accordingly, —and obey the successful  
candidate, trusting that, some time or other,  
by some Speaker's casting-vote, perhaps, they  
may reinstate God. This is the highest prin-  
ciple T can get out or invent for my neighbors.  
‘These men act as if they believed that they  
could safely slide down a hill a little way, —or  
a good way,—and would surely come to a  
place, by and by, where they could begin to  
slide up again. This is expediency, or choos-  
ing that course which offers the slightest obsta-  
cles to the feet, that is, a downhill one. But  
there is no such thing as accomplishing a  
righteous reform by the use of “expediency.”  
‘There is no such thing as sliding up hill. In  
morals the only sliders are backsliders.  
  
‘Thus we steadily worship Mammon, both  
school and state and chureh, and on the seventh  
day curse God with a tintamar from one end of  
the Union to the other.  
  
‘Will mankind never lea that policy is not  
morality, —that it never secures any moral  
right, but considers merely what is expedient?  
chooses the available candidate, — who is in-  
variably the Devil, —and what right have his  
constituents to be surprised, beeause the Devil  
does not behave like an angel of light? What

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190 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
is wanted is men, not of policy, but of probity,  
——who recognize a higher law than the Consti-  
tution, or the decision of the majority. The  
fate of the country does not depend on how you  
vote at the polls, —the worst man is as strong  
as the best at that game; it does not depend on  
what kind of paper you drop into the ballot-  
box once a year, but on what kind of man you  
drop from your chamber into the street every  
morning.  
  
What should concern Massachusetts is not  
the Nebraska Bill, nor the Fugitive Slave Bill,  
but her own slaveholding and servility. Let  
the State dissolve her union with the slave-  
holder. She may wriggle and hesitate, and ask  
eave to read the Constitution once mores but  
she can find no respectable law or precedent  
which sanctions the continuance of such a  
union for an instant.  
  
Let each inhabitant of the State dissolve his  
union with her, as long as she delays to do her  
duty.  
  
The events of the past month teach me to dis-  
trust Fame. T see that she does not finely dis-  
criminate, but coarsely hurrahs. She considers  
not the simple heroism of an action, but only as  
it is connected with its apparent consequences.  
She praises till she is hoarse the easy exploit of  
the Boston tea party, but will be comparatively

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 191  
  
silent about the braver and more disinterestedly  
hheroie attack on the Boston Court-House, sim-  
ply because it was unsuecessful!  
  
Covered with disgrace, the State has sat  
down coolly to try for their lives and liberties  
the men who attempted to do its duty for it.  
And this is called justice? ‘They who have  
shown that they ean behave particularly well  
may perchance be put under bonds for their  
good behavior. They whom truth requires at  
present to plead guilty are, of all the inhabi-  
tants of the State, preéminently innocent.  
While the Governor, and the Mayor, and  
countless ‘officers of the Commonwealth are at  
large, the champions of liberty are imprisoned.  
  
Only they are guiltless who commit the erime  
of contempt of such a court. It behooves every  
man to see that his influence is on the side of  
justice, and let the courts make their own char-  
‘acters. My sympathies in this case are wholly  
with the accused, and wholly against their accus-  
ers and judges. Justice is sweet and musical;  
but injustice is harsh and discordant. ‘The  
judge still sits grinding at his ongan, but it  
Yields no music, and we hear only the sound of  
the handle. He believes that all the musie re-  
sides in the handle, and the crowd toss him their  
coppers the same as before.  
  
Do you suppose that that Massachusetts

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192 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
which is now doing these things, — which hesi-  
tates to crown these men, some of whose law-  
yers, and even judges, perchance, may be  
riven to take refuge in some poor quibble,  
that they may not wholly outrage their instine-  
tive sense of justice, —do you suppose that: she  
is anything but base and servile? that she is the  
champion of liberty?  
  
Show me a free state, and a court truly of  
justice, and I will fight for thom, if need bes  
but show me Massachusetts, and I refuse her  
my allegiance, and express contempt for her  
courts.  
  
‘The effect of a good government is to make  
Jife more valuable, —of a bad one, to make it  
less valuable. We can afford that railroad and  
all merely material stock should lose some of  
its value, for that only compels us to live more  
simply and economically; but suppose that the  
value of life itsclf should be diminished! How  
can we make a Jess demand on man and nature,  
how live more economically in respect to virtue  
and all noble qualities, than we do? I have  
lived for the Inst month—and T think that  
every man in Massachusetts eapable of the sen-  
timent of patriotism must have had a similar  
experience —with the sense of having suffered  
a vast and indefinite loss. I did not know at  
first what ailed me. At last it occurred to me

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 193  
  
‘that what T had lost was a country. ‘Thad never  
respected the government near to which I lived,  
but Thad foolishly thought that I might manage  
to live here, minding my private affairs, and  
forget it. For my part, my old and worthiest  
pursuits have lost T eannot say how much of  
their attraction, and I feel that my investment,  
in life here is worth many per cent. less since  
Massachusetts Just deliberately sent back an  
immocent man, Anthony Burns, to slavery. I  
welt before, perhaps, in the illusion that my  
life passed somewhere only Between heaven and  
hell, but now I cannot persuade myself that I  
do not dwell wholly within hell. ‘The site of  
that political organization called Massachusetts  
is to me morally covered with voleanie scoris  
and cinders, such as Milton describes in the  
infernal regions. If there is any hell more  
unprincipled than our rulers, and we, the ruled,  
I feel curious to see it. Life itself being worth  
Jess, all things with it, which minister to it, are  
worth less. Suppose you have a small library,  
with pictures to adorn the walls,—a garden  
aid out around, —and contemplate scientific  
and literary pursuits, and discover all at once  
that your villa, with all its contents, is located  
in hell, and that the justice of the peace has a  
cloven foot anda forked tail,—do not these  
things suddenly lose their value in your eyes?

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194 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
T feel that, to some oxtont, the State has fa-  
tally interfered with my lawful business. Tt has  
not only interrupted me in my passage through  
Court Street on errands of trade, but it has in-  
terrupted me and every man on his onward and  
upward path, on which he had trusted soon to  
leave Court Street far behind. What right had  
it to remind me of Court Street? I have found  
that hollow which even I had relied on for solid.  
  
Lam surprised to see men going about their  
business as if nothing had happened. I say to  
myself, “Unfortunates ! they have not heard  
the news.” Iam surprised that the man whom  
TI just met on horseback should be so earnest to  
overtake his newly bought cows running away,  
—since all property is insecure, and if they do  
not ran away again, they may be taken away  
from him when he gets them. Fool! does he  
not know that his seed-corn is worth less this  
year, —that all beneficent harvests fail as you  
approach the empire of hell? No prudent nan  
will build a stone house under these cixeum-  
stances, or engage in any peaceful enterprise  
which it requires a long time to accomplish.  
Ant is as long as ever, but life is more inter-  
rupted and less available for a man’s proper  
pursuits. It is not an era of repose. We havo  
used up all onr inherited freedom. Tf we would  
save our lives, we must fight for them.

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SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS 195  
  
I walk toward one of our ponds; but what  
signifies the beauty of nature when men aro  
base? We walk to lakes to see our serenity  
reflected in them; when we are not serene, we  
go not to them. Who can be serene in a coun-  
try where both the rulers and the ruled are  
without principle? ‘The remembrance of my  
country spoils my wall. My thoughts are mur-  
der to the State, and involuntarily. go plotting  
against her.  
  
But it chanced the othor day that I scented a  
white water-ily, and a season I had waited for  
had arrived. Tt is the emblem of purity. It  
bursts up so pure and fair to the eye, and so  
sweet to the scent, as if to show us what purity  
and sweetness reside in, and can be extracted  
from, the slime and muck of earth. I think I  
have plucked the first one that has opened for a  
mile. What confirmation of our hopes is in  
the fragrance of this flower! I shall not so  
soon despair of the world for it, notwithstand-  
ing slavery, and the cowardice and want of  
principle of Northern men. It suggests what  
Kind of laws have prevailed longest and widest,  
and still prevail, and that the time may come  
when man’s deeds will smell as sweet. Such is  
the odor which the plant emits, If Nature ean  
compound this fragrance still annually, I shall  
believe her still young and full of vigor, her

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196 SLAVERY IN MASSACHUSETTS  
  
integrity and genius unimpaired, and that there  
is virtue even in man, too, who is fitted to per-  
ceive and love it. It reminds me that Nature  
has been partner to no Missouri Compromise. I  
seent no compromise in the fragrance of the  
waterlily. It is not a Nymphaea Dovenasstt.  
In it, the sweet, and pure, and innocent are  
wholly sundered from the obscene and baleful.  
I do not scent in this the time-serving irresolu-  
tion of a Massachusetts Governor, nor of a Bos-  
ton Mayor. So behave that the odor of your  
actions may enhance the general sweetness of  
the atmosphere, that when we behold or scent a  
flower, we may not be reminded how inconsis-  
tent your deeds are with its for all odor is but  
one form of advertisement of a moral quality,  
and if fair actions had not been performed, the  
ily would not smell sweet. ‘The foul slime  
stands for the sloth and vice of man, the decay  
of humanity; the fragrant flower that springs  
from it, for the purity and courage which are  
immortal.  
  
Slavery and servility have produced no sweet-  
seented flower annually, to chai the senses of  
‘men, for they have no real life: they are merely  
a decaying and a death, offensive to all healthy  
nostrils. We do not complain that they Zi  
but that they do not get buried. Let the li  
bury them; even they are good for manure,

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
T revsr that you will pardon me for being  
here. I do not wish to force my thoughts upon  
you, but I feel forced myself. Little as I know  
‘of Captain Brown, I would fain do my part to  
correct the tone and the statements of the news-  
papers, and of my countrymen generally, re-  
speeting his character and actions. It costs us  
nothing to be just. We can at least express our  
sympathy with, and admiration of, him and his  
‘companions, and that is what I now propose to do.  
  
First, as to his history. I will endeavor to  
omit, as much as possible, what you have al-  
ready read. I need not describe his person to  
you, for probably most of you have seen and  
‘will not soon forget bisi.+ I am told that his  
grandfather, John Brown, was an officer in the  
Revolution; that he himself was born in Con-  
necticut about the beginning of this century,  
but early went with his father to Ohio, T heard.  
him say that his father was a tractor who:  
furnished beef to the army there, in the war of  
1812; that he accompanied him to the camp,  
and assisted him in that employment, seeing

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198 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
a good deal of military life, more, perhaps,  
than if he had been a soldier; for he was often  
present at the councils of the officers. Espe-  
cially, he learned by experience how armies are  
supplied and maintained in the field, —a work  
which, he observed, requires at Teast as much  
experience and skill as to lead them in battle.  
He said that few persons had any conception of  
tho cost, even the pecuniary cost, of firing @  
single bullet in war. He saw enough, at any  
rate, to disgust him with a military life; indeed,  
to excite in him a great abhorrence of it; so  
much so, that though he was tempted by the  
offer of some petty office in the army, when he  
‘was about eighteen, he not only declined that,  
but he also refused to train when warned, and  
was fined for it. He then resolved that he  
would never have anything to do with any war,  
unless it were a war for liberty.  
  
‘When the troubles in Kansas began, he sent  
several of his sons thither to strengthen the  
party of the Free State men, fitting them out  
with such weapons as he had; telling them that  
if the troubles should inerease, and there should  
‘be need of him, he would follow, to assist them  
with his hand and counsel. This, as you all  
mow, he soon after did; and it was through  
his agency, far more than any other’s, that  
Kansas was made free,

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BRowN 199  
  
For a part of his life he was a surveyor, and  
at one time he was engaged in wool-growing,  
and he went to Europe as an agent about that  
Dusiness, ‘There, as everywhere, he had his  
eyes about him, and made many original obser-  
vations. He said, for instance, that he saw  
why the soil of England was so rich, and that  
of Germany (I think it was) so poor, and he  
thought of writing to some of the crowned heads  
about it. Tt was because in England the peas-  
antry live on the soil which they cultivate, but  
in Germany they are gathered into villages at  
night. It is a pity that he did not make a book.  
of his observations.  
  
I should say that he was an old-fashioned  
man in his respect for the Constitution, and his  
faith in the permanence of this Union. Sla-  
very he deemed to be wholly opposed to these,  
and he was its determined foe.  
  
He was by descent and birth a New England  
farmer, a man of great common sense, deliber-  
ate and practical as that class is, and tenfold  
more so. He was like the best of those who  
stood at Concord Bridge once, on Lexington  
Common, and on Bunker Hill, only he was  
firmer and higher principled than any that I  
have chanced to hear of as there. It was no  
abolition lecturer that converted him. Ethan  
Allen and Stark, with whom he may in some

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200 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOIN BROWN  
  
respects be compared, were rangers in a lower  
and less important field. They could bravely  
face their country’s foes, but he had the courage  
to face his country herself when she was in the  
wrong. A Western writer says, to account for  
his eseape from so many perils, that he was  
concealed under a “rural exterior;” as if, in  
that prairie land, a hero should, by good rights,  
wear a citizen's dress only.  
  
He did not go to the college called Harvard,  
good old Alma Mater as she is. He was not  
fed on the pap that is there furnished. As he  
phrased it, “I know no more of grammar than  
one of your calves.” But he went to the great  
university of the West, where he sedulously  
pursued the study of Liberty, for which he had  
early betrayed a fondness, and having taken  
many degrees, he finally commenced the public  
practice of Humanity in Kansas, as you all  
mow. Such were his humanities, and not any  
study of grammar, He would have left a Greek  
aceent slanting the wrong way, and righted up  
a falling man,  
  
He was one of that class of whom we hear a  
great deal, but, for the most part, see nothing  
at all,—the Puritans. It would be in vain to  
Kill him. He died lately in the time of Crom-  
well, but he reappeared here. Why should he  
not? Some of the Puritan stock are said to

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 201  
  
have come over and settled in New England.  
‘They were a class that did something else than  
celebrate their forefathers’ day, and eat parched  
corn in remembrance of that time. ‘They were  
neither Democrats nor Republicans, but men of  
simple habits, straightforward, prayerful; not  
thinking much of rulers who did not fear God,  
not making many compromises, nor secking  
after available candidates.  
  
“In his camp,” as one has recently written,  
and as I have myself heard him state, “he per-  
mitted no profanity; no man of loose morals  
‘was suffered to remain there, unless, indeed, as  
a prisoner of war. ‘I would rather,’ said he,  
‘have the small-pox, yellow fever, and cholera,  
all together in my camp, than a man without,  
principle... It is a mistake, sir, that our  
people make, when they think that bullies are  
the best fighters, or that they are the fit men  
to oppose these Southerners. Give me men  
of good principles, —God-fearing men, —men  
who respect themselves, and with a dozen of  
them I will oppose any hundred such men as  
these Buford rufians.’” He said that if one  
offered himself to be a soldier under him, who  
was forward to tell what he could or would do  
if he could only get sight of the enemy, he had  
but little confidence in him.  
  
He was never able to find more than a score

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202 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
or so of reernits whom he would accept, and  
only about a dozen, among them his sons, in  
whom he had perfect faith. When he was here,  
some years ago, he showed to a few a little  
manuscript book, — his “orderly book” I think  
he called it, — containing the names of his com-  
pany in Kansas, and the rules by which they  
bound themselves; and he stated that several of  
them had already sealed the contract with their  
blood. When some one remarked that, with  
the addition of a chaplain, it would have been a  
perfect Cromwellian troop, he observed that he  
would have been glad to add a chaplain to the  
list, if he could have found one who could fill  
that office worthily. Tt is easy enough to find  
one for the United States army. I believe that  
he had prayers in his camp morning and even-  
ing, nevertheless.  
  
‘He was a man of Spartan habits, and at sixty  
was scrupulous about his diet at your table,  
excusing himself by saying that he must eat  
sparingly and fare hard, as became a soldier,  
or one who was fitting himself for difficult en-  
terprises, a life of exposure.  
  
A man of rare common sense and directness  
of speech, as of action; a transcendentalist  
above all, a man of ideas and principles, — that  
‘was what distinguished him. Not yielding to a  
whim or transient impulse, but carrying out the

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 203  
  
purpose of a life. I noticed that he did not  
overstate anything, but spoke within bounds. I  
remember, particularly, how, in his speech  
here, he referred to what his family had suffered  
in Kansas, without ever giving the least vent  
to his pent-up fire. It was a voleano with an  
ordinary chimney-Aue. Also referring to the  
deeds of certain Border Ruffians, he said, rap-  
idly paring away his speech, like an experienced.  
soldier, keeping a reserve of force and mean-  
ing, “They had a perfect right to be hung.”  
He was not in the least a rhetorician, was not  
talking to Buncombe or his constituents any-  
where, had no need to invent anything but to  
tell the simple truth, and communicate his own  
resolution; therefore he appeared incomparably.  
strong, and eloquence in Congress and elsewhere  
seemed to me at a discount. It was like the  
speeches of Cromwell compared with those of an  
ordinary king.  
  
As for his tact and pradence, I will merely  
say, that at a time when searcely a man from  
the Free States was able to reach Kansas by  
any direct route, at least without having his  
arms taken from him, he, carrying what imper-  
fect guns and other weapons he could collect,  
openly and slowly drove an ox-cart through  
“Missouri, apparently in the eapacity of a sur-  
veyor, with his surveying compass exposed in

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204 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
it, and so passed unsuspected, and had ample  
opportunity to learn the designs of the enemy.  
For some time after his arrival he still followed  
the same profession. When, for instance, he  
saw aknot of the ruffians on the prairie, diseuss-  
ing, of course, the single topie which then oceu-  
pied their minds, he would, perhaps, take his  
compass and one of his sons, and proceed to run  
aan imaginary line right through the very spot on  
which that conclave had assembled, and when  
he came up to them, he would naturally pause  
and have some talk with them, learning their  
news, and, at last, all their plans perfeetly; and  
having thus completed his real survey he would  
resume his imaginary one, and run on his line  
till he was out of sight.  
  
‘When I expressed surprise that he could live  
in Kansas at all, with a price set upon his head,  
and so large a number, including the authori-  
ties, exasperated against him, he accounted for  
it by saying, “It is perfectly well understood  
that I will not be taken.” Much of the time  
for some years he has had to skulk in swamps,  
suffering from poverty and from sickness, which  
was the consequence of exposure, befriended  
only by Indians and a few whites. But though  
it might be known that he was lurking in a par-  
ticular swamp, his foes commonly did not care  
to goin after him. He could even come ont

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 205  
  
into a town where there were more Border Ruf-  
fians than Freo State men, and transact some  
Dasiness, withont delaying long, and yet not be  
molested; for, said he, “no little handful of  
men were willing to undertake it, and a large  
body could not be got together in season.””  
  
As for his recent failure, we do not know the  
facts about it. Tt was evidently far from being  
‘a wild and desperate attempt. His enemy, Mr.  
Vallandigham, is compelled to say that “it was  
among the est planned and executed conspira-  
cies that ever failed.”  
  
Not to mention his other successes, was it a  
failure, or did it show a want of good manage-  
ment, to deliver from bondage a dozen human  
beings, and walk off with them by broad day-  
light, for weeks if not months, at a leisurely  
pace, through one State after another, for half  
the length of the North, conspicuous to all par-  
ties, with a price set upon his head, going into  
a court-room on his way and telling what he had  
done, thus convincing Missouri that it was not  
profitable to try to hold slaves in his neighbor-  
hood? —and this, not because the government  
menials were lenient, but because they were  
afraid of him.  
  
‘Yet he did not attribute his suecess, foolishly,  
to “his star,” or to any magic. He said, truly,  
that the reason why such greatly superior num-

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206 A PLEA FOR CAPTALN JOHN BROWN  
  
bers quailed before him was, as one of ‘his pris-  
oners confessed, because they Jacked @ cause, —  
akind of armor which he and his party never  
lacked. When the time eame, few men were  
found willing to lay down their lives in defense  
of what they knew to be wrong; they did not  
like that this should be their last act in this  
world.  
  
But to make haste to his last act, and its  
effects.  
  
‘The newspapers seem to ignore, or perhaps  
are really ignorant, of the fact that there are at  
least as many as two or three individuals to a  
town throughout the North who think much as  
the present speaker does about him and his en-  
terprise. I do not hesitato to say that they are  
‘an important and growing party. We aspire  
to be something more than stupid and timid  
chattels, pretending to read history and our  
Bibles, but deseerating every house and every  
day we breathe in, Perhaps anxious politicians  
may prove that only seventeen white men and  
five negroes were concerned in the late en-  
terprise; but their very anxiety to prove this  
might suggest to themselves that all is not told.  
Why do they still dodge the truth? They are  
so anxious heeause of a dim consciousness of  
the fact, which they do not distinctly face, that  
at least a million of the free inhabitants of the

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 207  
  
United States would have rejoiced if it had sue-  
ceeded. They at most only criticise the tacties.  
‘Though we wear no crape, the thought of that  
man’s position and probable fate is spoiling  
many a man’s day here at the North for other  
thinking. If any one who has seen him here  
can pursue successfully any other train of  
thought, I do not know what he is made of If  
there is any such who gets his usual allowance  
of sleep, I will warrant him to fatten easily  
under any circumstances which do not touch his  
body or purse. I put a piece of paper and a  
pencil under my pillow, and when I could not  
sleep I wrote in the dark.  
  
On the whole, my respect for my fellow-men,  
except as one may outweigh a million, is not  
‘being inereased these days. I have noticed the  
cold-blooded way in which newspaper writers,  
and men generally speak of this event, as if  
an ordinary malefactor, though one of unusual  
“pluck,” —as the Governor of Virginia is re-  
ported to have said, using the language of the  
cock-pit, “the gamest man he ever saw,” —had  
‘been caught, and were about to be hung. He  
‘was not dreaming of his foes when the governor  
thought he looked so brave. It turns what  
sweetness I have to gall, to hear, or hear of,  
‘the remarks of some of my neighbors. When  
we heard at first that he was dead, one of my

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townsmen observed that “he died as the fool  
dieth;” which, pardon me, for an instant sug-  
gested a likeness in him dying to my neighbor  
living. Others, eraven-hearted, said disparag-  
ingly, that “he threw his life away,” because  
ho resisted the government. Which way have  
they thrown their lives, pray?—such as would  
praise a man for attacking singly an ordinary  
band of thieves or murderers. I hear another  
ask, Yankee-like,«\* What will he gain by it?”  
as if he expected to fill his pockets by this en-  
terprise. Such a one has no idea of gain but  
in this worldly sense. If it does not Iead to a  
“sarprise” party, if he does not get a new pair  
of boots, or a vote of thanks, it must be a fail-  
ure. “But he won't gain anything by it.”  
Well, no, I don’t suppose he could get four-  
and-sixpence a day for being hung, take the  
year round; but then he stands a ehaneo to save  
a considerable part of his soul, —and such a  
soul!—when you do not. No doubt you ean  
get more in your market for a quart of milk  
than for a quart of blood, but that is not the  
market that heroes earry their blood to.  
  
Such do not know that like the seed is the  
fruit, and that, in the moral world, when good  
seed is planted, good fruit is inevitable, and  
does not depend on our watering and cultivat-  
ing; that when you plant, or bury, a hero in his

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4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 209  
  
field, a crop of heroes is sure to spring up.  
‘This is a seed of such force and vitality, that it  
does not ask our leave to germinate.  
  
‘Tho momentary charge at Balaklava, in obe-  
dience toa bhundering command, proving what  
a perfect machine the soldier is, has, properly  
enough, been celebrated by a poet laureate; but  
the steady, and for the most part successful,  
charge of this man, for some years, against the  
legions of Slavery, in obedience to an infinitely  
higher command, is as much more memorable  
than that as an intelligent and conscientious  
man is superior toa machine. Do you think  
that that will go unsung?  
  
“Served him right,”—“A dangerous man,”  
—“He is undoubtedly insane.” So they pro-  
ceed to live their sane, and wise, and altogether  
admirable lives, reading their Plutarch a little,  
but chiefly pausing at that feat of Putnam, who  
was let down into a wolf's den; and in this wise  
they nourish themselves for brave and patriotie  
deeds some time or other. ‘The Tract Society  
could afford to print that story of Putnam.  
You might open the district schools with the  
reading of it, for there is nothing about Slavery  
or the Church in its unless it occurs to the  
reader that some pastors are solves in sheep's  
clothing. “The American Board of Commis-  
sioners for Foreign Missions,” even, might dare

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210 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
to protest against that wolf. I have heard of  
boards, and of American boards, but it chances  
that I never heard of this particular Jumber till  
lately. And yet I hear of Northern men, and  
women, and children, by families, buying a  
“lifemembership” in such societies as these.  
A life-membership in the grave! You can get  
buried cheaper than that.  
  
Our foes are in our midst and all about us.  
‘There is hardly a house but is divided against  
itself, for our foe is the all but universal wood-  
enness of both head and heart, the want of vi-  
tality in man, which is the effect of our vices  
and hence are begotten fear, superstition, big-  
otry, persecution, and slavery of all kinds. We  
are mere figure-heads upon a hulk, with livers  
in the place of hearts. The curse is the worship  
of idols, which at length changes the worshiper  
into a stone image himself; and the New Eng-  
lander is just as much an idolater as the Hin-  
doo. This man was an exception, for he did  
not set up even a political graven image be-  
tween him and his God.  
  
A church that can never have done with ex-  
‘communicating Christ while it exists! Away  
with your broad and flat churches, and your nar-  
row and tall churches! Take a step forward,  
and invent a new style of out-houses. Invent a  
salt that will save you, and defend our nostrils.

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 211  
  
‘The modern Christian fs a man who has con-  
sented to say all the prayers in the liturgy, pro-  
  
} vided you will let him go straight to bed and  
sleep quietly afterward. AM his prayers begin  
with “Now I lay me down to sleep,” and he is  
forever looking forward to the time when he  
shall go to his “ong rest.” He has consented  
to perform certain oli-established charities, too,  
after a fashion, but he does not wish to hear of  
any new-fangled ones; he doesn’t wish to have  
any supplementary articles added to the con-  
tract, to fit it to the present time. He shows  
the whites of his eyes on the Sabbath, and the  
lacks all the rest of the week. ‘The evil is not  
merely a stagnation of blood, but a stagnation  
of spirit. Many, no doubt, are well disposed,  
but sluggish by constitution and by habit, and  
they cannot conceive of a man who is actuated  
by higher motives than they are. Accordingly  
they pronounce this man insane, for they know  
that they could never act as he does, as long as  
they are themselves.  
  
‘We dream of foreign countries, of other  
times and races of men, placing them at a dis-  
tance in history or space; but let some signif  
cant event like the present oceur in our midst,  
and we discover, often, this distanee and this  
strangeness between us and our nearest neigh-  
bors. They are our Austrias, and Chinas, and

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212 A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
South Sea Islands. Our crowded society be-  
comes well spaced all at once, clean and hand-  
some to the eye,—a city of magnificent dis-  
tances. We discover why it was that we never  
got beyond compliments and surfaces with them  
before; we become aware of as many yersts  
between us and them as here are between a  
wandering Tartar and a Chinese town. The  
thoughtful man becomes a hermit in the thor-  
oughfares of the market~place. Impassable  
seas suddenly find their level between us, or  
dumb steppes stretch themselves out there. Tt  
is the difference of constitution, of intelligence,  
and faith, and not streams and mountains, that  
make the true and impassable boundaries be-  
‘tween individuals and between states. None  
but the like-minded can come plenipotentiary to  
our court,  
  
Tread all the newspapers T could get within  
a week after this event, and I do not remember  
in them a single expression of sympathy for  
these men. I have sinee seen one noble state  
ment, in a Boston paper, not editorial. Some  
voluminous sheets decided not to print the full  
report of Brown’s words to the exclusion of  
other matter. It was as if a publisher should  
reject the manuscript of the New Testament,  
and print Wilson's last speech. The same  
journal which contained this pregnant news

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4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 213  
  
was chiefly filled, in parallel columns, with the  
reports of the political conventions that were  
being held. But tho descent to them was too  
steep. They should have been spared this con-  
trast, —been printed in an extra, at least. To  
tum from the voices and deeds of earnest men  
to the cackling of political conventions! Office  
seekers and speech-makers, who do not so much  
as lay an honest egg, but wear their breasts  
‘Dare upon an egg of chalk! Their great game  
is the game of straws, or rather that universal  
aboriginal game of the platter, at which the  
Indians cried Jub, bub!) Exclude the reports  
of religious and political conventions, and pub-  
lish the words of a living man.  
  
But I object not so much to what they have  
omitted as to what they have inserted. Even  
the Liberator called it “a misguided, wild, and  
apparently insane —effort.” As for the herd  
of newspapers and magazines, I do not chance  
to know an editor in the country who will de-  
Hberately print anything which he knows will  
ultimately and permanently reduce the number  
of his subscribers. They do not believe that it  
would be expedient. How then ean they print  
truth? If we do not say pleasant things, they  
argue, nobody will attend to us. And so they  
do like some traveling auetioneers, who sing an  
‘obscene song, in order to draw a crowd around

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214 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
them, Republican editors, obliged to get their  
sentences ready for the morning edition, and  
accustomed to look at everything by the twi-  
light of polities, express no admiration, nor  
true sorrow even, but call these men “deluded  
fanaties,” — ‘mistaken men,” — “insane,” or  
“crazed.” Tt suggests what a sane set of edi-  
tors we are blessed with, not “mistaken men;””  
who know very well on which side their bread  
is buttered, at least.  
  
A man does a brave and humane deed, and  
at onee, on all sides, we hear people and parties  
declaring, “I didn’t do it, nor countenance  
Kim to do it, in any conceivable way. Tt can’t  
be fairly inferred from my past career.” I, for  
one, am not interested to hear you define your  
position. I don’t know that I ever was or  
ever shall be. I think it is mere egotism, or  
impertinent at this time. Ye need n’t take so  
much pains to wash your skirts of him. No  
intelligent man will ever be convinced that he  
was any creature of yours. He went and came,  
as he himself informs us, “under the auspices  
of John Brown and nobody else.” ‘The Repub-  
ican party does not perceive how many his  
failure will make to vote more correctly than  
‘they would have them. ‘They have counted the  
votes of Pennsylvania & Co., but they have not  
correctly counted Captain Brown's vote. He

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 215  
  
has taken the wind out of their sails, —the lite  
tle wind they had, —and they may as well lie  
to and repair.  
  
What though he did not belong to your  
alique! Though you may not approve of his  
method or his principles, recognize his magna-  
nimity. Would you not like to claim kindred  
ship with him in that, though in no other thing  
he is Hike, or likely, to you? Do you think  
that you would lose your reputation so? What:  
you lost at the spile, you would gain at the  
bung.  
  
If they do not mean all this, then they do  
not speak the truth, and say what they mean,  
‘They are simply at their old tricks still.  
  
“Tt was always conceded to him,” says one  
who calls him crazy, “that he was a conseien-  
tions man, very modest in his demeanor, appar-  
ently inoffensive, until the subject of Slavery  
was introduced, when he would exhibit a feel-  
ing of indignation unparalleled.”  
  
‘The slave-ship is on her way, crowded with  
its dying vietims; new cargoes are being added  
in mid-ocean; a small crew of slaveholders,  
countenaneed by a large body of passengers, is  
smothering four millions under the hatches, and  
yet the politician asserts that the only proper  
way by which deliveraneo is to be obtained  
is by “the quiet diffusion of the sentiments of

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216 A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
humanity,” without any “outbreak.” As if the  
sentiments of humanity were ever found unac-  
companied by its deeds, and you could disperse  
them, all finished to order, the pure article, as  
easily as water with a watering-pot, and so lay  
the dust. What is that that I hear cast over-  
board? ‘The bodies of the dead that have found  
deliverance. ‘That is the way we are “diffus-  
ing” humanity, and its sentiments with it.  
Prominent and influential editors, aceustomed  
to deal with politicians, men of an infinitely  
lower grade, say, in their ignorance, that he  
acted “on the principle of revenge.” ‘They do  
not know the man. ‘They must enlarge them-  
selves to conceive of him. I have no doubt  
that the time will come when they will begin to  
seo him as he was. ‘They have got to conceive  
of a man of faith and of religious prineiple, and  
not a politician or an Indian} of a man who did  
not wait till ho was personally interfered with  
or thwarted in some harmless business before  
he gave his life to the cause of the oppressed.  
Tf Walker may be considered the representa-  
tive of the South, I wish I could say that Brown  
was the representative of the North. He was a  
superior man. He did not value his bodily life  
in comparison with ideal things. He did not  
recognize unjust human laws, but resisted them  
as he was bid. For once we are lifted ont of the

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 217  
  
trivialness and dust of polities into the region  
of truth and manhood. No man in America  
has ever stood up so persistently and effectively  
for the dignity of human nature, knowing him-  
self for a man, and the equal of any and all  
governments. In that sense he was the most  
‘American of us all. He needed no babbling  
lawyer, making false issnes, to defend him.  
He was more than a match for all the judges  
that American voters, or office-holders of what  
ever grade, can create. He could not have  
been tried by a jury of his peers, because his  
peers did not exist. When a man stands up  
serenely against the condemnation and ven-  
geance of mankind, rising above them literally  
by a whole body, —even though he were of late  
the vilest murderer, who has settled that matter  
with himself, —the spectacle is a sublime one,  
—did n’t ye know it, ye Liberators, ye Tri  
dunes, ye Republicans? —and we become crim-  
inal in comparison. Do yourselves the honor  
to recognize him. He needs none of your re-  
spect.  
  
As for the Democratic journals, they are not  
Inman enongh to affect me at all. I do not  
feel indignation at anything they may say.  
  
T am aware that I anticipate a little, — that  
he was still, at the last accounts, alive in the  
hands of his foes; but that being the case, I

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218 A PLEA POR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
have all along found myself thinking and speak-  
ing of him as physically dead,  
  
T do not believe in erecting statues to those  
who still live in our hearts, whose bones have  
not yet crumbled in the earth around us, but I  
would rather see the statue of Captain Brown  
in the Massachusetts State~Hlouse yard than  
that of any other man whom I know. I rejoice  
that I live in this age, that Iam his contempo-  
rary.  
  
‘What a contrast, when we turn to that politi-  
eal party which is so anxiously shuffling him  
and his plot out of its way, and looking around  
for some available slaveholder, perhaps, to be  
its candidate, at least for one who will execute  
the Fugitive Slave Law, and all those other  
unjust Jaws which he took up arms to annul!  
  
Insane! A father and six sons, and one son-  
in-law, and several more men besides, —as  
many at least as twelve disciples, —all struck  
with insanity at once; while the same tyrant  
holds with a firmer gripe than ever his four  
millions of slaves, and a thousand sane editors,  
his abettors, are saving their country and their  
bacon! Just as insane were his efforts in Kan-  
sas. Ask the tyrant who is his most dangerous  
foe, the sane man or the insane? Do the thou-  
sands who know him best, who have rejoiced at  
his deeds in Kansas, and have afforded him

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 219  
  
material aid there, think him insane? Such a  
use of this word is a mere trope with most who  
persist in using it and I have no doubt: that  
many of the rest have already in silence re-  
tracted their words.  
  
Read his admirable answers to Mason and  
others. How they are dwarfed and defeated by  
the contrast! On the one side, half-brutish,  
half-timid questioning; on the other, truth,  
clear as lightning, crashing into their obscene  
temples. ‘They are made to stand with Pilate,  
and Gessler, and the Inquisition, How ineffee-  
tual their speech and action! and what a void  
their silence! They are but helpless tools in  
this great work. Tt was no human power that  
gathered them about this preacher.  
  
‘What have Massachusetts and the North sent:  
a few sane representatives to Congress for, of  
Inte years?—to declare with effect what kind  
of sentiments? All their speeches put together  
and boiled down —and probably they them-  
selves will confess it —do not match for manly  
directness and force, and for simple truth, the  
few casual remarks of crazy John Brown on  
the floor of the Harper’s Ferry engine-house, —  
that man whom you are about to hang, to send  
to the other world, though not to represent you  
there, No, he was not our representative in  
any sense, He was too fair a specimen of a

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220 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
man to represent the like of us. Who, then,  
were his constituents? If you read his words  
understandingly you will find out. In his ease  
there is no idle eloquence, no made, nor maiden  
speech, no compliments to the oppressor.  
‘Truth is his inspirer, and earnestness the pol-  
isher of his sentences. He could afford to lose  
his Sharps rifles, while he retained his faculty  
of speech, —a Sharps rifle of infinitely surer  
and longer range.  
  
And the New York Herald reports the con-  
versation verbatim! It does not know of what  
undying words it is made the vehicle.  
  
T have no respect for the penetration of any  
man who can read the report of that conversa~  
tion and still call the principal in it insane  
Tt has the ring of a saner sanity than an ordi-  
nary discipline and habits of Tife, than an ordi-  
nary organization, secure. Take any sentence  
of it, —“Any questions that I ean honorably  
answer, I will; not otherwise, So far as T am  
myself coneorned, I have told everything truth-  
fully. I value my word, sir.” The few who  
talk about his vindictive spirit, while they really  
admire his heroism, have no test by which to  
detect a noble man, no amalgam to combine  
with his pure gold. They mix their own dross  
with it,  
  
It is a relief to turn from theso slanders to

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 221  
  
the testimony of his more truthful, but fright  
ened jailers and hangmen, Governor Wise  
speaks far more justly and appreciatingly of  
him than any Northern editor, or politician, or  
public personage, that I chance to have heard  
from. I know that you can afford to hear him  
again on this subject. He says: “They are  
themselves mistaken who take him to be a mad-  
man, He is cool, collected, and indomita-  
ble, and it is but just to him to say that he was  
humane to his prisoners. . . . And he inspired  
me with great trust. in his integrity as a man of  
truth, He is a fanatic, vain and garrulous”  
(I leave that part to Mr. Wise), “but firm,  
truthful, and intelligent. His men, too, who  
survive, are like him. . . . Colonel Washing-  
ton says that he was the coolest and firmest man  
he ever saw in defying danger and death. With  
‘one son dead by his side, and another shot  
through, he felt the pulse of his dying son with  
one hand, and held his rifle with the other, and  
commanded his men with the utmost composure,  
encouraging them to be firm, and to sell their  
lives as dear as they could. Of the three white  
prisoners, Brown, Stevens, and Coppoe, it was  
hard to say which was most firm.”  
  
Almost the first Northern men whom the  
slaveholder has learned to respect!  
  
‘The testimony of Mr. Vallandigham, though

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222 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
less valuable, is of the same purport, that “it is  
vain to underrate either the man or his conspi-  
racy... . Ho is the farthest possible removed  
from the ordinary ruffian, fanatie, or madman.”  
  
“All is quiet at Harper’s Ferry,” say the  
journals. What is the character of that calm  
Which follows when the law and the slaveholder  
prevail? I regard this event as a touchstone  
designed to bring out, with glaring distinctness,  
the character of this government. We needed  
to be thus assisted to see it by the light of his-  
tory. It needed to sce itself, When a govern-  
ment puts forth its strength on the side of in-  
justice, as ours to maintain slavery and kill the  
liberators of the slave, it reveals itself a merely  
brute force, or worse, a demoniacal fore. It is  
the head of the Plug-Uglies. It is more mani  
fest than ever that tyranny rules. I see-this  
government to be effectually allied with France  
and Austria in oppressing mankind. There  
sits a tyrant holding fettered four millions of  
slaves; here comes their heroic liberator. This  
most hypocritieal and diabolical government  
looks up from its seat on the gasping four mil-  
lions, and inquires with an assumption of inmo-  
cence: “What do you assault me for? Am T  
not an honest man? Cease agitation on this  
subject, or I will make a slave of you, too, or  
else hang you.”

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 223  
  
We talk about a representative government;  
ut what a monster of a government is that  
where the noblest faculties of the mind, and the  
whole heart, are not represented. A semi-  
human tiger or ox, stalking over the earth, with  
its heart taken ont and the top of its brain shot  
away. Heroes have fought well on their stumps  
when their legs were shot off, but I never heard  
of any good done by such a government as that.  
  
‘The only government that I recognize —and  
it matters not how few are at the head of it, or  
how small its army —is that power that estab-  
lishes justice in the Iand, never that which es-  
tablishes injustice. What shall we think of a  
government to which all the truly brave and  
just men in the land are enemies, standing be-  
‘tween it and those whom it oppresses? A gov-  
emment that pretends to be Christian and eru-  
cifies a million Christs every day!  
  
‘Preason! Where does such treason take its  
rise? I cannot help thinking of you as you  
deserve, ye governments, Can you dry up the  
fountains of thought? High treason, when it  
is resistance to tyranny here below, has its  
origin in, and is first committed by, the power  
that makes and forever reereates man, When  
you have caught and hung all these human  
rebels, you have accomplished nothing but your  
own guilt, for you have not struck at the foun-

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224 A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
tain-head. You presume to contend with a foe  
against whom West Point cadets and rifled ean-  
non point not. Can all the art of the cannon-  
founder tempt matter to turn against its maker?  
Is the form in which the founder thinks he casts  
it more essential than the constitution of it and  
of himself?  
  
‘The United States have a coffle of four mil-  
Jions of slaves. They are determined to keep  
them in this condition; and Massachusetts is  
one of the eonfederated overseers to prevent  
their escape. Such are not all the inhabitants  
of Massachusetts, but such are they who rule  
and are obeyed here. It was Massachusetts,  
as well as Virginia, that put down this insur-  
rection at Harper's Ferry. She sent the ma-  
rines there, and she will have to pay the penalty  
Of her sin.  
  
Suppose that there is a society in this State  
that out of its own purse and magnanimity  
sayes all the fugitive slaves that run to us, and  
protects our colored fellow-eitizens, and leaves  
the other work to the government, so called.  
Is not that government fast losing its occupa-  
tion, and becoming contemptible to mankind?  
If private men are obliged to perform the offices  
of government, to protect the weak and dispense  
justice, then the government becomes only a  
hired man, or clerk, to perform menial or in-

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 225  
  
different services. Of course, that is but the  
shadow of @ government whose existence neces-  
sitates a Vigilant Committee. What should we  
think of the Oriental Cadi even, behind whom  
worked in secret a Vigilant Committee? But  
such is the character of our Northern States  
generally; each has its Vigilant Committee.  
‘And, to a certain extent, these crazy govern-  
ments recognize and accept this relation. They  
say, virtually, “We'll be glad to work for you  
‘on these terms, only don’t make a noise about  
it.” And thus the government, its salary being  
insured, withdraws into the back shop, taking  
the Constitution with it, and bestows most of  
its labor on repairing that. When I hear it at  
work sometimes, as I go by, it reminds me, at  
best, of those farmers who in winter contrive to  
turn a penny by following the coopering busi-  
ness, And what kind of spirit is their barrel  
made to hold? ‘They speculate in stocks, and  
bore holes in mountains, but they are not com-  
petent to lay out even a decent highway. The  
only free road, the Underground Railroad, is  
owned and managed by the Vigilant Committee.  
They have tunneled under the whole breadth  
of the land, Such a government is losing its  
power and respectability as surely as water runs  
out of a leaky vessel, and is held by one that  
can contain it.

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226 A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
hear many condemn these men because they  
were 60 few. When were the good and the  
brave ever in a majority? Would you have  
had him wait till that. time came? —till you  
and I came over to him? ‘The very fact that  
he had no rabble or troop of hirelings about  
him would alone distinguish him from ordinary  
heroes. His company was small indeed, be-  
‘cause few could be found worthy to pass muster.  
Each one who there laid down his life for the  
poor and oppressed was a picked man, culled  
‘out of imany thousands, if not millions; appar-  
ently a man of principle, of rare courage, and  
devoted humanity; ready to sacrifice his life at  
any moment for the benefit of his fellow-man.  
It may be doubted if there were as many more  
their equals in these respects in all the coun-  
try, —I speak of his followers only, — for their  
eader, no doubt, scoured the land far and wide,  
seeking to swell his troop. ‘These alone were  
ready to step between the oppressor and the op-  
pressed. Surely they were the very best men  
you could select to be hung. ‘That was the  
greatest compliment which this country could  
pay them. They were ripe for her gallows.  
She has tried a long time, she has hung a good  
many, but never found the right one before.  
‘When I think of him, and his six sons, and  
his son-in-law, not to enumerate the others,

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enlisted for this fight, proceeding coolly, rever-  
ently, humanely to work, for months if not  
years, sleeping and waking upon it, summering  
and wintering the thought, without expecting  
any reward but a good conseience, while almost.  
all America stood ranked on the other side, —  
I say again that it affects me as a sublime spec-  
tacle. If he had had any journal advocating  
“his cause,” any organ, as the phrase is, monot-  
‘onously and wearisomely playing the same old  
tune, and then passing round the hat, it would  
have been fatal to his efficiency. If he had  
acted in any way s0 as to be let alone by the  
government, he might have been suspected. Tt  
was the fact that the tyrant must give place to  
him, or he to the tyrant, that distinguished him  
from all the reformers of the day that I know.  
It was his peculiar doctrine that a man has a  
perfect right to interfere by force with the slave-  
holder, in order to rescue the slave. I agree  
with him, ‘They who are continually shocked  
by slavery have some right to be shocked by the  
violent death of the slaveholder, but no others.  
Such will be more shocked by his life than  
by his death. I shall not be forward to think  
him mistaken in his method who quickest sue-  
coeds to liberate the slave. I speak for the  
slave when I say that I prefer the philanthropy  
of Captain Brown to that philanthropy which

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neither shoots me nor liberates me. At any  
rate, I do not think it is quite sane for one to  
spend his whole life in talking or writing about:  
this matter, unless he is continuously inspired,  
and I have not done so. A man may have other  
affairs to attend to. I do not wish to kill nor  
to be killed, but T ean foresee circumstances in  
which both these things would be by me un-  
avoidable. We preserve the so-called peace of  
our community by deeds of petty violence every  
day. Look at the policeman’s billy and hand-  
cfs! Look at the jail! Look at the gallows!  
Look at the chaplain of the regiment! We are  
hoping only to live safely on tho outskirts of  
this provisional army. So we defend ourselves  
and our hen-roosts, and maintain slavery. I  
Know that the mass of my countrymen think  
that the only righteous use that ean be made  
of Sharps rifles and revolvers is to fight duels  
with them, when we are insulted by other na-  
tions, or to hunt Indians, or shoot fugitive  
slaves with them, or the like. I think that for  
‘once the Sharps rifles and the revolvers were  
employed in a righteous cause. The tools were  
in the hands of one who could uso them.  
  
‘The same indignation that is said to have  
cleared the temple once will clear it again.  
‘The question is not about the weapon, but the  
spirit in which you use it. No man has ap-

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 229  
  
peared in America, as yet, who loved his fellow-  
= man so well, and treated him so tenderly. He  
lived for him. He took up his life and he laid  
it down for him. What sort of violence is that  
which is encouraged, not hy soldiers, but by  
peaceable citizens, not so much by laymen as by  
ministers of the Gospel, not so much by the  
fighting sects as by the Quakers, and not so  
much by Quaker men as by Quaker women?  
‘This event advertises me that there is such a  
fact as death, —the possibility of a man’s dy-  
ing. Tt seems as if no man had ever died in  
America before; for in order to die you must  
first have lived. I don’t believe in the hearses,  
and palls, and funerals that they have had.  
‘There was no death in the ease, beeause there  
had been no life; they merely rotted or sloughed  
off, pretty much as they had rotted or sloughed  
along. No temple’s veil was rent, only a hole  
dug somewhere. Let the dead bury their dead.  
‘The best of them fairly ran down like a lock.  
‘Franklin, — Washington, — they were let off  
without dying; they were merely missing one  
day. Thear a good many pretend that they are  
going to die; or that they have died, for aught  
that I know. Nonsense! I'll defy them to  
do it. ‘They have n’t got life enough in them.  
‘They "ll deliquesce like fungi, and keep a hun-  
dred eulogists mopping the spot where they left

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230 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
off. Only half a dozen or so have died since  
the world began. Do you think that yon are  
going to die, sir? No! there ’s no hope of you.  
You have n't got your lesson yet. You ’ve  
got to stay after school. We make a needless  
ado about capital punishment, — taking lives,  
when there is no life to take. Memento mori!  
We don’t understand that sublime senter  
which some worthy got sculptured on his grave-  
stone once. We ’ve interpreted it in a grovel-  
ing and sniveling sense; we ’ve wholly forgot-  
ten how to die,  
  
But be sure you do die nevertheless. Do  
your work, and finish it. If you know how to  
begin, you will know when to end.  
  
‘These men, in teaching us how to die, have  
at the same time taught us how to live. If this  
man’s acts and words do not ereate a revival, it  
will be the severest possible satire on the acts  
and words that do. It is the best news that  
America has ever heard. Tt has already quick-  
ened the feeble pulse of the North, and infused  
more and more generous blood into her veins  
and heart than any number of years of what is  
called commercial and political prosperity could.  
How many a man who was lately contemplating  
snicide has now something to live for!  
  
One writer says that Brown’s peculiar mono-  
mania made him to be “dreaded by the Missou-

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 281  
  
rians as a supernatural being.” Sure enough,  
ahero in the midst of us cowards is always so  
dreaded. He is just that thing. He shows  
himself superior to nature. He has a spark of  
divinity in him.  
\*Uleesabore himself he can  
roct himself, how poor a thing is man”  
  
Newspaper editors argue also that it is a  
proof of his insanity that he thought he was  
appointed to do this work which he did, — that  
he did not suspect himself for a moment! They  
talk as if it were impossible that a man could  
be “divinely appointed” in these days to do  
any work whatever; as if vows and religion  
were out of date as connected with any man’s  
daily work; as if the agent to abolish slavery  
could only be somebody appointed by the Presi-  
dent, or by some political party. They talls as  
if a man’s death were a failure, and his contin-  
ued life, be it of whatever character, were a  
success.  
  
When I reflect to what a cause this man  
devoted himself, and how religiously, and then  
reflect to what cause his judges and all who  
condemn him so angrily and fluently devote  
themselves, I seo that they are as far apart as  
the heavens and earth are asunder.  
  
‘The amount of it is, our “Jeading men” ar  
a harmless kind of folk, and they know well

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282 A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
enough that they were not divinely appointed,  
but elected by the votes of their party.  
  
‘Who is it whose safety requires that Captain  
Brown be hung? Ts it indispensable to any  
Northern man? Is there no resource but to  
cast this man also to the Minotaur? If you do  
not wish it, say so distinetly. While these  
things are being done, beauty stands veiled and  
music is a screeching lie. Think of him, —of  
his rare qualities! —such a man as it takes ages  
to make, and ages to understand; no mock hero,  
nor the representative of any party. A man  
such as the sun may not rise upon again in this  
benighted land. To whose making went the  
costliest material, the finest adamant; sent to  
be the redeemer of those in captivity; and the  
only use to which you can put him is to bang  
him at the end of a rope! You who pretend to  
care for Christ crucified, consider what you are  
about to do to him who offered himself to be  
the saviour of four millions of men.  
  
Any man knows when he is justified, and all  
the wits in the world cannot enlighten him on  
that point. The murderer always knows that  
he is justly punished; but when a government  
takes the life of a man without the consent of  
his conscience, it is an audacious government,  
and is taking a step towards its own dissolution.  
Is it not possible that an individual may be

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 238  
  
right and a government wrong? Are laws to  
be enforced simply becanse they were made? or  
declared by any number of men to be good, if  
they are not good? Is there any necessity for  
a man’s being a tool to perform a deed of which  
his better nature disapproves? Is it the inten-  
tion of law-makers that good men shall be hung  
ever? Are judges to interpret the law accord-  
ing to the letter, and not he spirit? What  
right have you to enter into a compact with  
yourself that you wild do thus or so, against the  
ight within you? Ts it for you to make up  
your mind, —to form any resolution whatever,  
“and not accept the convictions that are  
forced upon you, and which ever pass your un-  
derstanding? I do not believe in lawyers, in  
that mode of attacking or defending a man,  
‘because you descend to meet the judge on his  
‘own ground, and, in cases of the highest impor-  
tance, it is of no consequence whether a man  
breaks a human law or not. Let lawyers decide  
trivial cases. Business men may arrange that  
among themselves. If they were the interpre-  
tors of the everlasting laws which rightfully  
man, that would be another thing. A  
counterfeiting law-factory, standing half in a  
slave land and half in a free! What kind of  
laws for free men can you expect from that?  
Tam here to plead his eause with you. I

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284 4 PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN.  
  
plead not for his life, but for his character, —  
‘his immortal life; and so it becomes your cause  
wholly, and is not his in the least. Some  
eighteen hundred years ago Christ was eruci-  
fied; this morning, perchance, Captain Brown.  
was hung. ‘These are the two ends of a chain  
which is not without its Tinks. He is not Old  
Brown any longer; he is an angel of light.  
  
I see now that it was necessary that the brav-  
est and humanest man in all the country should  
be hung. Perhaps he saw it himself. I almost  
fear that I may yet hear of his deliverance,  
doubting if a prolonged life, if any life, ean do  
as much good as his death.  
  
“Misguided!” “Garrulous!” “Insane!”  
“Vindietive!” So ye write in your easy-  
chairs, and thus he wounded responds from the  
floor of the Armory, clear as a cloudless sky,  
true as the voice of nature is: “No man sent  
‘me here; it was my own prompting and that of  
my Maker. I acknowledge no master in human  
form.”  
  
And in what a sweet and noble strain he pro-  
coeds, addressing his eaptors, who stand over  
him: “I think, my friends, you are guilty of a  
great wrong against God and humanity, and it  
would be perfectly right for any one to inter-  
fere with you so far as to free those you will-  
fully and wickedly hold in bondage.”

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A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN 235  
  
And, refering to his movement: “Tt is, in  
my opinion, the greatest service a man ean ren-  
der to God.”  
  
“I pity the poor in bondage that have none  
to help thems that is why I am here; not to  
gratify any personal animosity, revenge, or vin-  
dictive spirit. It is my sympathy with the op-  
pressed and the wronged, that are as good as”  
you, and as precious in the sight of God.”  
  
‘You don’t know your testament when you  
see it.  
  
“I want you to understand that I respect the  
rights of the poorest and weakest of colored  
people, oppressed by the slave power, just as  
much as I do those of the most wealthy and  
powerful.”  
  
“I wish to say, furthermore, that you had  
better, all you people at the South, prepare  
yourselves for a settlement of that question, that  
must come up for settlement sooner than you  
are prepared for it. The sooner you are pre-  
pared the better. You may dispose of me very  
easily. I am nearly disposed of nows but this  
question is still to be settled, — this negro ques-  
tion, I mean; the end of that is not yet.”  
  
I foresee the time when the painter will paint  
that scene, no longer going to Rome for a sub-  
jects the poct will sing it; the historian record  
its and, with the Landing of the Pilgrims and

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286 A PLEA FOR CAPTAIN JOHN BROWN  
  
the Declaration of Independenee, it will he the  
omament of some future national gallery, when  
at least the present form of slavery shall be no  
more here. We shall then be at liberty to  
weep for Captain Brown, ‘Then, and not till  
then, we will take our revenge.

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THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN  
  
Joux Brown's career for the last six weeks  
of his life was meteor-like, flashing through the  
darkness in which we live. I know of nothing  
s0 miraculous in our history.  
  
If any person, in a lecture or conversation at  
that time, cited any ancient example of heroism,  
such as Cato or Tell or Winkelried, passing  
over the recent deeds and words of Brown, it  
was felt by any intelligent audience of Northern  
men to be tame and inexcusably far-fetched.  
  
For my own part, I commonly attend more  
to nature than to man, but any affecting human.  
event may blind our eyes to natural objects. I  
‘was so absorbed in him as to be surprised when-  
ever I detected the routine of the natural world  
surviving still, or met persons going about their  
affairs indifferent. It appeared strange to me  
that the “little dipper” should be still diving  
quietly in the river, as of yore; and it suggested.  
that this bind might continue to dive here when  
Concord should be no more.  
  
T felt that he, a prisoner in the midst of his  
enemies and under sentence of death, if con-

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238 THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN  
  
sulted as to his next step or resource, could  
answer more wisely than all his countrymen  
beside. He best understood his position; he  
contemplated it most calmly. Comparatively,  
all other men, North and South, were beside  
themselves. Our thoughts could not revert to  
any greater or wiser or better man with whom  
to contrast him, for he, then and there, was  
above them all. ‘The man this country was  
about to hang appeared the greatest and best  
in it,  
Years were not required for a revolution of  
public opinion; days, nay hours, produced  
marked changes in this case. Fifty who were  
ready to say, on going into our meeting in honor  
of him in Concord, that he ought to be hung,  
would not say it when they came out. ‘They  
heard his words read; they saw the earnest  
faces of the congregation; and perhaps they  
joined at last in singing the hymm in his praise.  
‘Tho order of instructors was reversed. I  
heard that one preacher, who at first was  
shocked and stood aloof, felt obliged at last,  
after he was hung, to make him the subject of  
a sermon, in which, to some extent, he eulogized  
the man, but said that his act was a failure.  
An influential elass-teacher thought it neces-  
sary, after the services, to tell his grown-up  
pupils that at first he thought as the preacher

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THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN 239  
  
did then, but now he thought that John Brown  
was right. But it was understood that his pu-  
pils were as much ahead of the teacher as he  
was ahead of the priest; and I know for a cer-  
tainty that very little boys at home had already  
asked their parents, in a tone of surprise, why  
God did not interfere to save him. In each  
case, the constituted teachers were only half  
conscious that they were not leading, but being  
dragged, with some loss of time and power.  
  
The more conscientious preachers, the Bible  
men, they who talk about prineiple, and doing  
to others as you would that they should do unto  
you, —how could they fail to recognize him, by  
far the greatest preacher of them all, with the  
Bible in his life and in his acts, the embodi-  
ment of principle, who actually carried out the  
golden rule? All whose moral sense had been  
aroused, who had a calling from on high to  
preach, sided with him. What confessions he  
extracted from the cold and conservative! Tt  
is remarkable, but on the whole it is well, that  
it did not prove the occasion for a new sect of  
Brownites being formed in our midst.  
  
‘They, whether within the Church or out of  
it, whoadhere to the spirit and let go the let  
ter, and are accordingly called infidel, were as  
usual foremost to recognize him. Men have  
been hung in the South before for attempting

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240 THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN  
  
to resene slaves, and the North was not much  
stirred by it. Whence, then, this wonderful  
difference? We were not so sure of their devo-  
tion to principle. We made a subtle distine-  
tion, forgot human laws, and did homage to an.  
idea. The North, I mean the living North,  
was suddenly all transcendental. It went be-  
hind the hnman law, it went behind the appar-  
ent failure, and recognized eternal justice and  
glory. Commonly, men live according to a  
formula, and are satisfied if the order of law is  
observed, but in this instance they, to some ex-  
tent, returned to original perceptions, and there  
was a slight revival of old religion. ‘They saw  
that what was called order was confusion, what  
was called justice, injustice, and that the best  
was deemed the worst. This attitude suggested  
a more intelligent and generous spirit than that  
which actuated our forefathers, and the possi-  
Dility, in the course of ages, of a revolution in  
behalf of another and an oppressed people.  
‘Most Northen men, and a few Southern  
ones, were wonderfully stirred by Brown’s be-  
havior and words. ‘They saw and felt that they  
were heroic and noble, and that there had been  
nothing quite equal to them in their kind in  
this country, or in the recent history of the  
world. But the minority were unmoved by  
them. ‘They were only surprised and provoked

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THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN 241  
  
by the attitude of their neighbors. ‘They saw  
that Brown was brave, and that he believed  
that he had done right, but they did not detect  
any further peculiarity in him. Not being ac-  
customed to make fine distinctions, or to appre-  
ciate magnanimity, they read his letters and  
speeches as if they read them not. ‘They were  
‘not aware when they approached a heroic state-  
ment, —they did not know when they dumed.  
‘They id not feel that he spoke with authority,  
and hence they only remembered that the Zaw  
must be executed. They remembered the old  
formula, but did not hear the new revelation.  
‘The man who does not recognize in Brown's  
words a wisdom and nobleness, and therefore  
an authority, superior to our laws, is a modern  
Democrat. ‘This is the test by which to dis  
cover him. He is not willfully but eonstitution-  
ally blind on this side, and he is consistent  
with himself. Such has been his past life; no  
doubt of it. In like manner he has read history  
and his Bible, and he accepts, or seems to ac-  
copt, the last only as an established formula,  
and not beeanse he has been convicted by it.  
You will not find kindred sentiments in his  
commonplace book, if he has one.  
  
When a noble deed is done, who is likely to  
appreciate it? They who are noble themselves,  
T was not surprised that certain of my neigh-

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242 THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN  
  
‘bors spoke of John Brown as an ordinary felon,  
for who are they? They have either much  
flesh, or much office, or much coarseness of  
some kind. They are not ethereal natures in  
any sense, ‘The dark qualities predominate in  
them, Several of them are decidedly pachy-  
dermatous. I say it in sorrow, not in anger.  
How can a man behold the light who has no  
answering inward light? They are true to  
their right, but when they look this way they  
see nothing, they are blind. For the children  
of the light to contend with them is as if there  
should be ® contest between eagles and owls.  
Show me a man who feels bitterly toward John  
Brown, and let me hear what noble verse he ean  
repeat. He ‘Il be as dumb as if his lips were  
stone.  
  
Tt is not every man who ean be a Christian,  
even in a very moderate sense, whatever educa-  
tion you give him. Tt is a matter of constitu-  
tion and temperament, after all. He may have  
to be born again many times. I have known  
many aman who pretended to be a Christian,  
in whom it was ridiculous, for he had no genius  
for it. Tt is not every man who can be a free-  
‘man, even,  
  
‘Editors persevered for a good while in saying  
‘that Brown was crazy; but at last they said  
only that it was “a erazy scheme,” and the only

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THE LAST PAYS OF JOHN BROWN 243  
  
evidence brought to prove it was that it cost  
him his life. I have no doubt that if he had  
gone with five thousand men, liberated a thou-  
sand slaves, killed a hundred or two slavehold-  
ers, and had as many more killed on his own  
side, but not lost his own life, these same edi-  
tors would have called it by a more respectable  
name. Yet he has been far more successful  
than that. He has liberated many thousands  
of slaves, both North and-South. ‘They seem  
to have known nothing about living or dying  
for aprinciple. They all ealled him erazy then  
who calls him crazy now?  
  
‘All through the excitement occasioned by his  
remarkable attempt and subsequent behavior  
the Massachusetts Legislature, not taking any  
steps for the defense of her citizens who were  
likely to be carried to Virginia as witnesses  
and exposed to the violence of a slaveholding  
mob, was wholly absorbed in a liquor-ageney  
question, and indulging in poor jokes on the  
word “extension.” Bad spirits ocoupied their  
thoughts. I am sure that no statesman up to  
the oeeasion could have attended to that ques-  
tion at all at that time, —a very vulgar ques-  
tion to attend to at any time!  
  
When T looked into a liturgy of the Church  
of England, printed near the end of the last  
century, in order to find a service applicable to

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244 THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN  
  
the case of Brown, I found that the only martyr  
recognized and provided for by it was King  
Charles the First, an eminent seamp. Of all  
the inhabitants of England and of the world, he  
‘was the only one, according to this authority,  
whom that church had made a martyr and saint  
of; and for more than a century it had eele-  
brated his martyrdom, so called, by an annual  
service. What a satire on the Church is that!  
  
Look not to legislatures and churches for  
your guidance, nor to any soulless incorporated  
bodies, but to inspirited or inspired ones.  
  
What avail all your scholarly accomplish-  
ments and learning, compared with wisdom and  
manhood? To omit his other behavior, see  
what a work this comparatively unread and un-  
lettered man wrote within six weeks. Where  
is our professor of belles-lettres, or of logie and.  
rhetoric, who can write so well? He wrote in  
prison, not a History of the World, like Ra-  
leigh, but an American book which I think will  
live longer than that. I do not know of such  
words, uttered under such circumstances, and  
so copiously withal, in Roman or English or  
any history. What a variety of themes he  
touched on in that short space! There are  
words in that letter to his wife, respecting the  
education of his daughters, which deserve to  
be framed and hung over every mantelpiece in

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THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN 245  
  
the land. Compare this earnest wisdom with  
that of Poor Richard.  
  
‘The death of Irving, which at any other  
time would have attracted universal attention,  
having occurred while these things were tran-  
spiring, went almost unobserved. I shall have  
to read of it in the biography of author  
  
Literary gentlemen, editors, and critics think  
that they mow how to write, because they  
have studied grammar and rhetorie; but they  
are egregiously mistaken. ‘The art of composi-  
tion is as simple as the discharge of a bullet  
from a rifle, and its masterpieces imply an infi-  
nitely greater force behind them. This unlet-  
tered man’s speaking and writing are standard  
English. Some words and phrases deemed vul-  
garisms and Americanisms before, he has made  
standard American; such as “Jt will pay.” Tt  
suggests that the one great rule of composition  
  
id if I were a professor of rhetorie I should  
insist on this—is, to speak the truth. This  
first, this second, this third; pebbles in your  
mouth or not. ‘This demands earnestness and  
manhood chiefly.  
  
‘We seem to have forgotten that the ex-  
pression, a liberal education, originally meant  
among the Romans one worthy of free mens  
while the leaning of trades and professions by  
which to get your livelihood merely was consid-

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ered worthy of slaves only. But taking a hint  
from the word, I would go a step further, and  
say that it is not the man of wealth and leisure  
simply, though devoted to art, or seience, or  
literature, who, in a true sense, is liberally edu-  
cated, but only the earnest and free man, In  
a slaveholding country like this, there can be  
no such thing as a liberal education tolerated  
‘by the State; and those scholars of Austria and  
France who, however learned they may be, are  
contented under their tyrannies have received  
only a servile education.  
  
Nothing could his enemies do but it re-  
dounded to his infinite advantage, — that is, to  
the advantage of his cause. They did not hang  
him at once, but reserved him to preach to  
them. And then there was another great  
blunder. They did not hang his four followers  
with him; that scene was still postponed; and  
so his victory was prolonged and completed.  
No theatrical manager could have arranged  
things so wisely to give effect to his behavior  
and words. And who, think you, was the  
manager? Who placed the slave-woman and  
her child, whom he stooped to kiss for a sym-  
bol, between his prison and the gallows?  
  
‘We soon saw, as he saw, that he was not to  
be pardoned or rescued by men. That would  
have been to disarm him, to restore to him a

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THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN 247  
  
material weapon, a Sharps rifle, whon he had  
taken up the sword of the spirit, —the sword  
with which he has really won his greatest and  
most memorable vietories. Now he has not  
  
   
  
spirit himself, and his sword is pure spirit also.  
  
‘Ho nothing common did or mean  
Upon that memorable  
‘Nor called the gods with valgar spit,  
‘To vindicate his helpless right;  
  
But bowed his comely head  
‘Down aa upon a bed.”  
  
‘What a transit was that of his horizontal  
body alone, but just eut down from the gallows-  
tree! We read that at such a time it passed  
through Philadelphia, and by Saturday night  
had reached New York. ‘Thus like a meteor  
it shot through the Union from the Southern  
regions toward the North! No sueh freight had  
tho cars borne since they earried him South-  
ward alive.  
  
On the day of his translation, I heard, to be  
sure, that ho was kung, but I aid not know  
what that meant; I felt mo sorrow on that ac-  
count; but not for a day or two did T even hear  
that he was dead, and not after any number of  
days shall I believe it. Of all the men who  
wore said to be my contemporaries, it seemed  
to me that John Brown was the only one who

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248 THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN BROWN  
  
had not died. never hear of a man named  
Brown now, —and I hear of them pretty often,  
—I never hear of any partiewlarly brave and  
eamest man, but my first thought is of Jobn  
Brown, and what relation he may be to him.  
I mect him at every turn. He is more alive  
than ever he was. He has earned immortality.  
He is not confined to North Elba nor to Kan-  
sas. He is no longer working in secret. He  
works in public, and in the clearest light that  
shines on this land,

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AFTER THE DEATH OF JOHN BROWN  
  
[Ar the services held in Concord, Massachu-  
setts, December 2, 1859, in commemoration of  
John Brown, exeonted that day, Mr. Thoreau  
said :] So universal and widely related is any  
transcendent moral greatness, and so nearly  
identical with greatness everywhere and in  
every age,—as a pyramid contracts the nearer  
you approach its apex,—that, when I now  
look over my commonplace book of poetry, I  
find that the best of it is oftenest applicable, in  
part or wholly, to the case of Captain Brown.  
‘Only what is true, and strong, and solemnly  
‘earnest will recommend itself to our mood at  
this time. Almost any noble verse may be  
read, either as his elegy or eulogy, or be made  
the text of an oration on him. Indeed, such  
are now discovered to be the parts of a univer-  
sal liturgy, applicable to those rare cases of  
hheroes and martyrs for which the ritual of no  
church has provided. This is the formula  
established on high, —their burial service, —  
to which every great genius bas contributed its  
stanza or line. As Marvell wrote: —

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250 AFTER THE DEATH OF JOHN BROWN  
  
“When the sword glitters o'er the judge's head,  
And fear has coward churchmen silenced,  
“Then i the yoo time; "tis Chen he draws,  
‘Ad single fights forsaken vires cas  
He, when the whee! of empire whitth backs,  
‘And though the world’s disjointed axle crack,  
Sing sll af aneent rights and bettor ines,  
Seoks sufaring good, arraigs sucessful crimes."  
  
‘The sense of grand poetry, read by the light  
of this event, is brought out distinctly like an  
invisible writing held to the fire: —  
  
\* AM heads mast come  
‘To the cold tomb, —  
Only the actions ofthe junt  
Smell sweet and blowom inthe dust.”  
  
We have heard that the Boston lady who  
recently visited our hero in prison found him  
wearing still the clothes, all eut and torn by  
sabres and by bayonet thrusts, in which he had  
boon taken prisoner; and thus he had gone to  
his trial; and without a hat. She spent her  
time in prison mending those clothes, and, for  
a memento, brought home a pin covered with  
blood.  
  
‘What are the clothes that endure?  
  
“The garments lasting evermore  
‘Are works of merey tthe Foor}  
‘And neither tate, time, nor moth  
Shall fray that sil oe vt this cloth.”  
  
‘The well-known verses called “The Soul's  
Errand,” supposed, by some, to have been

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AFTER THE DEATH OF JOHN BROWN 251  
  
written by Sir Walter Raleigh when he was  
expecting to be executed the following day, are  
at least worthy of such an origin, and are  
equally applicable to the present case. [Mr.  
‘Thoreau then read these verses, as well as a  
number of poetical passages selected by another  
citizen of Concord, and closed with the follow-  
ing translation from Tacitus made by himself.]  
  
‘You, Agricola, are fortunate, not only be-  
cause your life was glorious, but. because your  
death was timely. As they tell us who heard  
your last words, unchanged and willing you  
aecepted your fate; as if, as far as in your  
power, you would make the emperor appear  
innocent. But, besides the bitterness of hav-  
ing lost a parent, it adds to our grief, that it  
‘was not permitted us to minister to your health,  
+ + « to gaze on your countenance, and reeeive  
your last embrace; surely, we might have  
eaught some words and commands which we  
could have treasured in the inmost part of our  
souls. ‘This is our pain, this our wound. . . .  
‘You were buried with the fewer tears, and in  
your last earthly light your eyes looked around  
for something which they did not see.  
  
If there is any abode for the spirits of the  
pious, if, as wise men suppose, great souls are  
not extinguished with the body, may you rest  
placidly, and call your family from weak re-

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252 AFTER THE DEATH OF JOHN BROWN  
  
grets and womanly laments to the contempla-  
tion of your virtues, which must not be Ia-  
mented, either silently or aloud. Let us honor  
you by our admiration rather than by short-  
lived praises, and, if nature aid us, by our em-  
ulation of you. That is true honor, that the  
piety of whoever is most akin to you. This  
also I would teach your family, 80 to venerate  
your memory as to eall to mind all your actions  
and words, and embrace your character and the  
form of your soul rather than of your body;  
not because I think that statues which are made  
of marble or brass are to be condemned, but as  
the features of men, so images of the features  
are frail and perishable. The form of the soul  
is etemal; and this we can retain and express,  
not by a foreign material and art, but by our  
own lives, Whatever of Agricola we have  
loved, whatever we have admired, remains, and  
will remain, in the minds of men and the re-  
cords of history, through the eternity of ages.  
For oblivion will overtake many of the an-  
cients, as if they were inglorious and ignoble:  
Agricola, described and transmitted to poster-  
ity, will survive.

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
Ar a lyceum, not long since, I felt that the  
lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to him-  
self, and so failed to intorest me as much as he  
might have done. He described things not in  
or near to his heart, but toward his extremities  
and superficies. There was, in this sense, no  
truly central or centralizing thought in the lec-  
ture. I would have had him deal with his pri-  
‘vatost experience, as the poet does. The great-  
‘est compliment that was ever paid me was when  
one asked me what I thought, and attended to  
my answer. I am surprised, as well as de-  
lighted, when this happens, it is such a rare use  
he would make of me, as if he were acquainted  
with the tool. Commonly, if men want any-  
thing of mo, it is only to know how many acres  
I make of their land, — since Tam a surveyor,  
—or, at most, what trivial news I have bur-  
dened myself with. ‘They never will go to law  
for my meat; they prefer the shell. A man.  
once came a considerable distance to ask me to  
lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him,  
T found that he and his clique expected seven

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254 LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one  
eighth mine; so Ideclined. Itake it for granted,  
when Iam invited to lecture anywhere, — for I  
have had a little experience in that business, —  
that there is a desire to hear what J think on  
some subject, though I may be the greatest fool  
in the country, —and not that I should say  
pleasant things merely, or such as the audience  
will assent to; and T resolve, accordingly, that  
I will give them a strong dose of myself. ‘They  
have sent for me, and engaged to pay for me,  
and I am determined that they shall have me,  
though I bore them beyond all precedent.  
  
So now I would say something similar to you,  
my readers. Since you are my readers, and I  
have not been much of a traveler, I will not talle  
about people a thousand miles off, but come as  
near home as I ean, As the time is short, I  
will leave out all the flattery, and retain all the  
criticism.  
  
‘Let us consider the way in which we spend  
our lives.  
  
‘This world is a place of business. What an  
infinite bustle! I am awaked almost every  
night by the panting of the locomotive. It in-  
terrupts my dreams. There is no sabbath. Tt  
would be glorious to see mankind at leisure  
for once. It is nothing but work, work, work.  
T cannot easily buy a blank-book to write

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE — 255  
  
thoughts in; they are commonly ruled for dol-  
lars and cents. An Irishman, seeing me mak~  
ing a minute in the fields, took it for granted  
that I was calculating my wages. If a man was  
tossed out of a window when an infant, and so  
made a cripple for life, or scared out of his wits  
by the Indians, it is regretted chiefly because  
he was thus incapacitated for—business! I  
think that there is nothing, not even crime,  
more opposed to poetry, to philosophy, ay, to  
Jife itself, than this incessant business.  
  
‘There is a coarse and boisterous money-make  
ing fellow in the outskirts of our town, who is  
going to build a bank-wall under the hill along  
the edge of his meadow. The powers have put  
this into his head to keep him ont of mischief,  
and he wishes me to spend three weeks digging  
there with him. ‘The result will be that: he will  
perhaps get some more money to hoard, and  
eave for his heirs to spend foolishly. If I do  
this, most will commend me as an industrious  
and hard-working man; but if I choose to  
devote myself to certain labors which yield  
more real profit, though but little money, they  
may be inclined to look on me as an idler.  
Nevertheless, as I do not need the police of  
meaningless labor to regulate me, and do not  
see anything absolutely praiseworthy in this  
fellow’s undertaking any more than in many

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256 © LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
an enterprise of our own or foreign govern-  
ments, however amusing it may be to him or  
them, I prefer to finish my education at a dif-  
ferent school.  
  
Tf a ian walk in the woods for love of them  
half of each day, he is in danger of being re-  
garded as a loafer; but if he spends his whole  
day as a speculator, shearing off those woods  
and making earth bald before her time, he is  
esteemed an industrious and enterprising citi-  
zen. As if a town had no interest in its forests  
Dut to cut them down!  
  
‘Most men would feel insulted if it were pro-  
posed to employ them in throwing stones over a  
wall, and then in throwing them back, merely  
that they might eam their wages. But many  
are no more worthily employed now. For in-  
  
\* stance: just after sunrise, one summer morning,  
T noticed one of my neighbors walking beside  
his team, which was slowly drawing a heavy  
hewn stone swung under the axle, surrounded  
by an atmosphere of industry, —his day’s work  
begun, —his brow commenced to sweat, —a re-  
proach to all sluggards and idlers, —pansing  
abreast the shoulders of his oxen, and half turn-  
ing round with a flourish of his mereiful whip,  
while they gained their length on him, And I  
thought, Such is the Inbor which the American  
Congress exists to protect, —honest, manly toil,

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 257  
  
—honest as the day is long, — that makes his  
Dread taste sweet, and keeps society sweet, —  
which all nen respect and have consecrated one  
of, the sacred band, doing the needful but i  
afl sdradgery. Indeed, I felt a slight re-  
proach, because I observed this from a window,  
and was mot abroad and stixvin  
  
   
  
about a similar  
business. The day went by, and at evening I  
passed the yard of another neighbor, who keeps  
many servants, and spends much money fool-  
ishly, while he adds nothing to the common  
stock, and there T saw the stone of the morning  
lying beside a whimsical structure intended to  
adorn this Lord Timothy Dexter's premises,  
and the dignity forthwith departed from the  
‘teamster's Tabor, in my eyes. In my opinion,  
the sum was made to light worthier toil than  
this. T may ada that his employer has since  
run off, in debt to a good part of the town, and,  
after passing through Chancery, has settled  
somewhere else, there to become once more a  
patron of the arts.  
  
The ways by which you may get money al-  
most without exception lead downward. To  
have done anything by which you earned money  
merely is to have been truly idle or worse. If  
the Iaborer gets no more than the wages which  
his employer pays him, he is cheated, he cheats  
himself. “If you would get money as a writer

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238 © LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
or lecturer, you must be popular, which is  
to go down perpendicularly. ‘Those services  
which the community will most readily pay for,  
it is most disagreeable to render. Yon 270  
paid for being something less than a mam, ‘Te  
State does not commonly reward a genius any  
more wisely. Even the poet-laureate would  
rather not have to celebrate the accidents of  
royalty. He must be bribed with a pipe of  
wines and perhaps another poet is called ai  
from his muse to gauge that  
my own business, even that kind of surv  
which I could do with most satisfactio  
employers do not want. ‘They would prefer  
that T should do my work eoarsely and not too  
well, ay, not well enough. When I observe  
that there are different ways of surveying, my  
employer commonly asks which will give him  
the most land, not which is most correct. I  
‘once invented a rule for measuring cord-wood,  
and tried to introduce it in Boston; but the  
measurer there told me that the sellers did not  
red correctly,  
—that he was alveady too accurate for them,  
and therefore they commonly got their wood  
measured in Charlestown before crossing the  
bridge.  
  
‘The aim of the laborer should be, not to get  
his living, to get “a good job,” but to perform  
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
   
  
wish to have their wood mea:

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 259  
  
well a  
  
   
  
stain work; and, even in a pecuniary  
sense, it wonld be economy for a town to pay  
its laborers so well that they would not feel that  
they were working for low ends, as for a liveli-  
hood merely, but for scientific, or even moral  
ends. Do not hire a man who does your work  
for money, but him who does it for love of  
  
It is remarkable that there are few men so  
well employed, so much to thefr minds, but that  
a little money or fame would eommonly buy  
them off from their present pursuit. I see ad-  
vertisements for active young men, as if acti  
were the whole of a young man’s capital. Yet  
Thave beon surprised when one has with eonfi-  
dence proposed to me, a grown man, to embark  
in some enterprise of his, as if T had absolutely  
nothing to do, my life having been a complete  
failure hitherto. What a doubtful compliment  
this to pay me! As if he had met me halfway  
across the ocean beating up against the wind,  
‘but bound nowhere, and proposed to me to go  
along with him! If I did, what do you think  
the underwriters would say? No, no! Tam  
not without employment at this stage of the  
voyage. To tell the truth, T saw an advertise-  
ment for able-bodied seamen, when T was a  
boy, sauntering in my native port, and as soon  
as T came of age I embarked.  
  
‘The community has no bribe that will tempt

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260 LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
a wise man, You may raise money enough to  
tunnel a mountain, but. you cannot raise money  
enough to hire a man who is minding his oun  
business. An efficient and valuable man does  
what he can, whether the community pay him  
for it or not. ‘Tho inefficient offer their inefii-  
cieney to the highest bidder, and are forever  
expecting to be put into office. One would  
suppose that they were rarely disappointed,  
Perhaps Tam more than usually jealous with  
respect to my freedom. I feel that my conne  
tion with and obligation to society are still very  
slight and transient. Those slight labors which  
afford me a livelihood, aud by which it is al-  
lowed that Iam to some extent serviceable to  
my contemporaries, are as yet eommonly a plea-  
sure to me, and I am not often reminded that  
they are a necessity. So far I am successful.  
But I foresee that if my wants should be much  
increased, the labor required to supply them  
would become a drudgery. If I should sell  
both my forenoons and afternoons to society, 2s  
most appear to do, Iam sure that for me there  
would be nothing left worth living for. T trust  
that I shall never thus sell my birthright for a  
mess of pottage. I wish to suggest that a man  
may be very industrious, and yet not spend his  
time well. There is no more fata) blunderer  
than he who consumes the greater part of his,

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 261  
  
   
  
life getting his living. All great enterprises  
are self-supporting, ‘The poet, for instance,  
must sustain his body by his poetry, as a steam  
planing-mill feeds its boilers with the shavings  
it makes. You must get yoursliving by loving.  
But as it is said of the merchants that ninet  
seven in a hundred fail, so the life of men ge  
erally, tried by this standard, is a failiure, and  
bankruptey may be surely prophesied,  
  
Merely to come into the world the heir of a  
fortune is not to be born, but to be still-born,  
rather. ‘To be supported by the charity of  
friends, or a government-pension, — provided  
you continue to breathe,—by whatever fine  
synonyms you deseribe these relations, is to go  
into the almshouse. On Sundays the poor  
debtor goes to church to take an account of  
stock, and finds, of course, that his outgoes  
have been greater than his income. In the  
Catholic Church, especially, they go into Chan-  
cory, make a clean confession, give up all, and  
think to start again. ‘Thus men will lie on  
their backs, talking abont the fall of man, and  
nover make an effort to get up.  
  
‘As for the comparative demand which men  
make on life, it is an important difference be-  
tween two, that the one is satisfied with a level  
success, that his marks can all be hit by point-  
blank shots, but the other, however low and

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262 LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
unsuccessful his life may be, constantly elevates  
his aim, though at a very slight angle to the  
horizon, T should much rather be the last man,  
—though, as the Qrientals say, “Greatness  
doth not approach him who is forever looking  
down: and allAhose who are looking high are  
growing poor.  
  
It is remarkable that there is little or nothing  
to bo’remembered written on the subject of get-  
ting a living; how to make getting a living not  
merely honest and honorable, but altogether  
inviting and glorious; for if getting a living is  
not s0, then living is not. One would think,  
from looking at literature, that this question  
had never disturbed a solitary individual's mus-  
ings. Is it that men are too much disgusted  
with their experience to speak of it? The les-  
son of value which money teaches, which the  
Author of the Universe has taken so much pains  
to teach us, we are inclined to skip altogether.  
AAs for the means of living, it is wonderful  
how indifferent men of all classes are about it,  
reformers, so called, —whether they in-  
herit, or earn, or steal it. I think that Society  
has done nothing for us in this respeet, or at  
least has undone what she has done, Cold and  
hunger seem more friendly to my nature than  
those methods which men have adopted and  
advise to ward them off.

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 263  
  
The title wise is, for the most part, falsely  
applied. How ean one be a wise man, if he  
does not know any better how to live than other  
men?—if he is only more cunning and intellee-  
tually subtle? Does Wisdom work in a tread-  
mill? or does she teach how to succeed by her  
example? Is there any such thing as wisdom  
not applied to life? Is she merely the miller  
who grinds the finest logic? It is pertinent to  
ask if Plato got his living in a better way or  
‘more successfully than his contemporaries, — or  
did he succumb to the difficulties of life like  
other men? Did he seem to prevail over some  
of them merely by indifference, or by assuming  
‘grand airs? or find it easier to live, because his  
aunt remembered him in her will? ‘The ways  
in which most men get their living, that is, live,  
are mere make-shifts, and a shirking of the real  
business of life, —chiefly because they do not  
Know, but partly because they do not mean,  
any better.  
  
‘The rush to California, for instance, and the  
attitude, not merely of merchants, but of phi-  
losophers and prophets, so called, in relation to  
it, reflect the greatest disgrace on mankind.  
‘That so many are ready to live by luck, and s0  
get the means of commanding the labor of oth-  
ers Joss lucky, without contributing any value  
to society! And that is called enterprise! I

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264 LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
know of no more startling development of tho  
immorality of trade, and all the common modes  
of getting a living. The philosophy and poetry  
and religion of such a mankind are not worth  
the dust of a puff-ball. ‘The hog that gets his  
living by rooting, stirring up the soil so, would  
be ashamed of such company. If I could com-  
mand the wealth of all the worlds by lifting my  
finger, I would not pay such a price for it.  
Even Mahomet knew that God did not make  
this world in jest. It makes God to be a mon-  
eyed gentleman who scatters a handful of pen-  
nies in order to see mankind seramble for them.  
‘The world’s raffle! A subsistence in the do-  
mains of Nature a thing to be railed for!  
‘What a comment, what a satire, on our institu-  
tions! ‘The conclusion will be, that mankind  
will hang itself upon a tree. And have all the  
precepts in all the Bibles taught men only this?  
and is the last and most admirable invention of  
the human race only an improved muck-rake?  
Is this the ground on which Orientals and Ocei-  
dentals meet? Did God direct us so to get our  
living, digging where we never planted, —and  
He would, perchance, reward us with lumps of  
gold?  
  
God gave the righteous man a certificate en-  
titling him to food and raiment, but the un-  
righteous man found a facsimile of the same in

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 265  
  
God's coffers, and appropriated it, and obtained  
food and raiment like the former, It is one  
‘of the most extensive systems of counterfeiting  
that the world has seen. I did not know that  
mankind were suffering for want of gold. I  
hhave seen a little of it. I know that it is very  
malleable, but not so malleable as wit. A  
grain of gold will gild a great surface, but not  
so much as a grain of wisdom,  
  
‘The gold-digger in the ravines of the moun-  
tains is as much a gambler as his fellow in the  
saloons of San Francisco, What difference  
does it make whether you shake dirt or shake  
dice? Tf you win, society is the loser. ‘The  
gold-digger is the enemy of the honest laborer,  
whatever checks and compensations there may  
be. It is not enough to tell me that you worked  
hard to get your gold. So does the Devil work  
hard. The way of transgressors may be hard  
in many respects. ‘The humblest observer who  
goes to the mines sees and says that gold-dig-  
ging is of the character of a lottery; the gold  
thus obtained is not the same thing with the  
wages of honest toil. But, practically, he for-  
gets what he has seen, for he has seen only the  
fact, not the principle, and goes into trade  
there, that is, buys a ticket: in what commonly  
proves another lottery, where the fact is not so  
obvious.

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266 © LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
After reading Howitt’s account of the Aus-  
tralian gold-diggings one evening, I had in my  
mind’s eye, all night, the numerous valleys,  
with their streams, all eut up with foul pits,  
from ten to one hundred feet deep, and half a  
dozen feet across, as close as they ean be dug,  
and partly filled with water, —jhe locality to  
which men furiously rush to probe for their  
fortunes, —uncertain where they shall break  
ground, —not knowing but the gold is under  
their camp itself, —sometimes digging one  
hundred and sixty feet before they strike the  
vein, or then missing it by a foot, —tumed  
into demons, and regardless of each others’  
rights, in their thirst for riches, — whole val-  
leys, for thirty miles, suddenly honeycombed  
‘y the pits of the miners, so that even hundreds  
are drowned in them, —standing in water, and  
covered with mud and clay, they work night)  
and day, dying of exposure and disease. Hav-  
ing read this, and partly forgotten it, T was  
thinking, accidentally, of my own unsatisfac-  
tory life, doing as others do; and with that  
vision of the diggings still before me, I asked  
myself why J might not be washing some gold  
daily, though it were only the finest particles,  
—why I might not sink a shaft down to the  
gold within me, and work that mine. There is  
a Ballarat, a Bendigo for you, —what though

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE — 26T  
  
it were a sulky-gully? At any rate, I might  
pursue some path, however solitary and narrow  
and crooked, in which I could walk with love  
and reverence. Wherever a man separates  
from the multitude, and goes his own way in  
this mood, there indeed is a fork in the road,  
though ordinary travelers may see only a gap  
in the paling. His solitary path across-lots  
will tum out the higher way of the two.  
  
Men rush to California and Australia as if  
the true gold were to be found in that directions  
but that is to go to the very opposite extreme  
to where it lies. They go prospecting farther  
and farther away from the true lead, and are  
‘most unfortunate when they think themselves  
most successful, Is not our native soil aurife-  
yous? Does not a stream from the golden  
mountains flow through our native valley? and  
has not this for more than geologic ages been  
bringing down the shining particles and form-  
ing the nuggets for us? Yet, strange to tell,  
if a digger steal away, prospecting for this true  
gold, into the unexplored solitudes around us,  
there is no danger that any will dog his steps,  
and endeavor to supplant him. He may claim  
and undermine the whole valley even, both the  
cultivated and the uncultivated portions, his  
whole life long in peace, for no one will ever  
dispute his claim. They will not mind his

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cradles or his toms. He is not confined to a  
claim twelve feet square, as at Ballarat, but  
aay mine anywhere, and wash the whole wide  
world in his tom.  
  
Howitt says of the man who found the great  
nugget which weighed twenty-eight pounds, at  
the Bendigo diggings in Australia: “He soon  
began to drinks got a horse, and rode all about,  
generally at full gallop, and, when he met peo-  
ple, called out to inquire if they knew who he  
was, and then kindly informed them that he  
was ‘the bloody wretch that had found the nng-  
get.’ At last he rode full speed against a tree,  
and nearly knocked his brains out.” 1 think,  
however, there was no danger of that, for he  
had already knocked his brains out against the  
nugget. Howitt adds, “He is a hopelessly  
rained man.” But he is a type of the class.  
‘They are all fast men. Hear some of the  
names of the places where they dig: “Jackass  
Flat,” —“Sheep’s-Head Gully,” — “Murder-  
er’s Bar,” ete. Is there no satire in these  
names? Let them earry their ill-gotten wealth  
where they will, I am thinking it will still be  
“Jackass Flat,” if not “Murderer’s Bar,”  
where they live.  
  
The last resource of our energy has been the  
robbing of graveyards on the Isthmus of Darien,  
an enterprise which appears to be but in its

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infancy; for, according to late accounts, an act  
has passed its second reading in the legislature  
of New Granada, regulating this kind of min-  
ing; and a correspondent of the “Tribune”  
writes: “In the dry season, when the weather  
will permit of the country being properly pros-  
pected, no doubt other rich guacas [that is,  
graveyards] will be found.” ‘To emigrants he  
says: “Do not come before December; take the  
Isthmus route in preference to the Boca del  
‘Toro one; bring no useless baggage, and do  
not cumber yourself with a tent; but a good  
pair of blankets will be necessary; a pick,  
shovel, and axe of good material willbe almost  
all that is required:” advice which might have  
been taken from the “Burker’s Guide.” And  
he concludes with this Tine in Italics and small  
‘capitals: “Jf you are doing well at home, SAY  
rarer,” which may fairly be interpreted to  
mean, “If you are getting a good living by rob-  
bing graveyards at home, stay there.”  
  
But why go to California for a text? She  
is the child of New England, bred at her own  
school and church.  
  
It is remarkable that among all the preachers  
there are s0 few moral teachers. The prophets  
are employed in excusing the ways of men,  
Most reverend seniors, the illuminati of the  
age, tell me, with a gracious, reminiscent smile,

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betwixt an aspiration and a shudder, not to be  
too tender about these things, —to lump all  
that, that is, make a lump of gold of it. ‘The  
highest advice I have heard on these subjects  
was groveling. The burden of it was, —It is  
not worth your while to undertake to reform  
‘the world in this particular. Do not ask how  
your bread is buttered; it will make you sick, if  
you do,—and the like. A man had better  
starve at once than lose his innocence in the  
process of getting his bread. If within the  
sophisticated man there is not an unsophisti-  
cated one, then he is but one of the Devil’s  
angels. As we grow old, we live more coarsely,  
we relax a little in our disciplines, and, to some  
extent, cease to obey our finest instinets. But  
we should be fastidious to the extreme of sanity,  
disregarding the gibes of those who are more  
unfortunate than ourselves.  
  
In our science and philosophy, even, there  
is commonly no true and absolute account of  
things. ‘Tho spirit of sect and bigotry bas  
planted its hoof amid the stars. You have only  
to discuss the problem, whether the stars are  
iibabited or not, in order to discover it. Why  
must we daub the heavens as well as the earth?  
It was an unfortunate discovery that Dr. Kane  
was a Mason, and that Sir John Franklin was  
another. But it was a more cruel suggestion

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that possibly that was the reason why the former  
went in search of the latter. There is not a  
popular magazine in this country that would  
dare to print a child’s thought on important  
subjects without comment. It must be submit-  
ted to the D. D.’s. I would it wore the chicka-  
doe-dees.  
  
‘You come from attending the funeral of man-  
kind to attend to a natural phenomenon. A.  
little thought is sexton to all the world,  
  
T hardly know an intellectual man, even, who  
is so broad and truly liberal that you can think  
aloud in his society. Most with whom you en-  
deavor to talk soon come to a stand against  
some institution in which they appear to hold  
stock, —that is, some particular, not universal,  
way of viewing things. They will continually  
thrust their own low roof, with its narrow sky-  
light, between yon and the sky, when it is the  
unobstructed heavens you would view. Get out  
of the way with your cobwebs, wash your win-  
dows, I say! Tn some lycoums they tell me  
that they have voted to exclude the subject of  
religion. But how do I know what their reli-  
gion is, and when I am near to or far from it?  
T have walked into such an arena and done my  
dest to make a clean breast of what religion I  
have experienced, and the audience never sus-  
pected what Iwas about. ‘The lecture was as

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harmless as moonshine to them. Whereas, if  
Thad read to them the biography of the great-  
est scamps in history, they might have thought  
that I had written the lives of the deacons of  
their church, Ordinarily, the inquiry is,  
‘Where did you come from? or, Where are you  
going? ‘That was a more pertinent question  
which I overheard one of my auditors put to  
another once, — ‘What does he lecture for?”  
Tt made me quake in my shoes.  
  
To speak impartially, the best men that T  
know are not serene, a world in themselves.  
For the most part, they dwell in forms, and  
flatter and study effect only more finely than  
the rest. We select granite for the underpin-  
ning of our houses and barns; we build fences  
of stone; but we do not ourselves rest on an  
underpinning of granitic truth, the lowest  
primitive rock. Our sills are rotten. What  
stuff is the man made of who is not coexistent  
in onr thought with the purest and subtilest  
truth? I often aceuse my finest acquaintances  
of an immense frivolity; for, while there are  
manners and compliments we do not meet, we  
do not teach one another the lessons of honesty  
and sincerity that the brutes do, or of steadi-  
ness and solidity that the rocks do. The fault  
is commonly mutual, howevers for we do not  
habitually demand any more of each other.

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 273  
  
That excitement about Kossuth, consider  
how characteristic, but superficial, it was! —  
only another kind of polities or dancing. Men  
were making speeches to him all over the coun-  
try, but each expressed only the thought, or the  
want of thought, of the multitude. No man  
stood on truth. ‘They were merely banded to-  
gether, as usual one leaning on another, and all  
together on nothing; as the Hindoos made the  
world rest on an elephant, the elephant on a  
tortoise, and the tortoise on a serpent, and had  
nothing to put under the serpent. For all fruit  
of that stir we have the Kossuth hat.  
  
Just so hollow and ineffectual, for the most  
part, is our ondinary conversation. Surface  
meets surface. When our life ceases to be in-  
ward and private, conversation degenerates into  
mere gossip. We rarely meet a man who ean  
tell us any news which he has not read in a  
newspaper, or been told by his neighbor; and,  
for the most part, the only difference between  
us and our fellow is that he has seen the news-  
‘paper, or been out to tea, and we have not. In  
proportion as our inward life fails, we go more  
constantly and desperately to the post-office.  
‘You may depend on it, that the poor fellow who  
walks away with the greatest number of letters  
proud of his extensive correspondence has not  
heard from himself this long while.

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I do not know but it is too much to read one  
newspaper a week. I have tried it recently,  
and for so long it seems to me that I have not  
welt in my native region. ‘The sun, tho  
clonds, the snow, the trees say not so much to  
me. Yon cannot serve two masters, It re-  
quires more than a day’s devotion to know and  
to possess the wealth of a day.  
  
‘We may well be ashamed to tell what things  
we have read or heard in our day. T do not  
know why my news should be so trivial, —eon-  
sidering what one’s dreams and expectations  
are, why the developments should be so paltry.  
‘The news we hear, for the most part, is not  
news to our genius. It is the stalest repetition,  
‘You are often tempted to ask why such stress  
is laid on a particular experience which you  
have had, — that, after twenty-five years, you  
should meet Hobbins, Registrar of Deeds,  
again on the sidewalk. Have you not budged  
an inch, then? Such is the daily news. Its  
facts appear to float in the atmosphere, insignifi-  
cant as the sponiles of fungi, and impinge on  
some neglected thallus, or surface of our minds,  
which affords a basis for them, and hence a  
parasitic growth. We should wash ourselves  
clean of such news. Of what consequence,  
though our planet explode, if there is no char-  
acter involved in the explosion? In health we

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 975  
  
have not the least curiosity about such events,  
‘We do not live for idle amusement. T would.  
not run round a comer to see the world blow up.  
  
All summer, and far into the autumn, per-  
chance, you unconsciously went hy the newspa-  
pers and the news, and now you find it was  
because the morning and the evening were full  
of news to you. Your walks were full of inci-  
dents, You attended, not to the affairs of  
Enrope, but to your own affairs in Massachu-  
setts fields. If you chance to live and move  
and have your being in that thin stratum in  
which the events that make the news transpire,  
—thinner than the paper on which it is printed,  
—then these things will fill the world for yous  
but if you soar above or dive below that plane,  
‘you cannot remember nor be reminded of them.  
Really to see the sum rise or go down every day,  
so to relate ourselves to a uhiversal fact, would  
preserve us sane forever. Nations! What aro  
nations? Tartars, and Huns, and Chinamen!  
Like inseets, they swarm. The historian strives  
in vain to mako them memorable. It is for  
want of aman that there are so many men. It  
is individuals that populate the world, Any  
man thinking may say with the Spirit of  
Lodin, —  
  
“Took down from my height on nations,  
‘And they become asia before me; —

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216 LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE  
  
Calm is my dwelling in the cond  
  
Pleasant aro the great fields of my rest”  
  
   
  
Pray, let us live without being drawn by  
dogs, Esquimaux-fasbion, tearing over hill and  
dale, and biting each other’s cars.  
  
Not without a slight shudder at the danger, T  
often perceive how near I had come to admit-  
ting into my mind the details of some trivial  
affair, —the news of the street; and I am as-  
tonished to observe how willing men are to  
lumber their minds with such rubbish, —to  
permit idle rumors and incidents of the most  
insignificant kind to intrude on ground which  
should be sacred to thought. Shall the mind  
be a publie arena, where the affairs of the  
street and the gossip of the tea-table chiefly are  
discussed? Or shall it be a quarter of heaven  
itself, —an hypethral temple, consecrated to  
the service of the gods? I find it so difficult to  
dispose of the fow facts which to me are signifi-  
cant, that I hesitate to burden my attention with  
those which are insignificant, which only a  
divine mind could illustrate. Such is, for the  
most part, the news in newspapers and conver-  
sation. It is important to preserve the mind’s  
chastity in this respect. Think of admitting  
tho details of a single case of the eriminal eourt  
into our thoughts, to stalk profancly through  
their very sanctum sanctorum for an hour, ay,

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE — 217  
  
for many hours! to make a very bar-room of  
the mind’s inmost apartment, as if for so long  
the dust of the street had occupied us, —the  
very street itself, with all its travel, its bustle,  
and filth, had passed through our thoughts’  
shrine! Would it not be an intellectual and  
moral suicide? When I have been compelled  
to sit spectator and auditor in a court room for  
some hours, and have seen my neighbors, who  
were not compelled, stealing in from time to  
time, and tiptoeing about with washed hands  
and faces, it has appeared to my mind's eye,  
that, when they took off their hats, their ears  
suddenly expanded into vast hoppers for sound,  
between which even their narrow heads were  
crowded. Like the vanes of windmills, they  
caught the broad but shallow stream of sound,  
which, after a few titillating gyrations in their  
coggy brains, passed out the other side. Twon-  
dered if, when they got home, they were as  
‘careful to wash their ears as before their hands  
and faces. Tt has seemed to me, at such a  
time, that the auditors and the witnesses, the  
jury and the counsel, the judge and the crimi-  
nal at the bar, —if I may presume him guilty  
efore he is convicted, —were all equally erimi-  
nal, and a thunderbolt might be expected to  
descend and consume them all together.  
  
By all kinds of traps and signboards, threat-

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ening the extreme penalty of the divine law, ex-  
elude such trespassers from the only ground  
which can be sacred to you. It is so hard to  
forget what it is worse than useless to remem-  
ber! If I am to be a thoroughfare, I prefer  
that it be of the mountain-brooks, the Parnas.  
sian streams, and not the town-sewers. ‘There  
is inspiration, that gossip which comes to the  
car of the attentive mind from the courts of  
heaven, ‘There is the profane and stale revela-  
tion of the bar-room and the police court. ‘The  
same ear is fitted to receive both communica  
tions. Only the character of the hearer deter-  
mines to which it shall be open, and to which  
closed. I believe that the mind ean be perma  
nently profaned by the habit of attending to  
trivial things, so that all our thoughts shall be  
tinged with triviality. Our very intellect shall,  
be macadamized, as it were, —its foundation  
broken into fragments for the wheels of travel  
to roll over; and if you would know what will  
make the most durable pavement, surpassing  
rolled stones, spruce blocks, and asphaltum,  
you have only to look into some of our minds  
whieh have been subjected to this treatment 50  
Jong.  
  
Té we have thus desecrated ourselves, —as  
who has not? —the remedy will be by wariness  
and devotion to reconseerate ourselves, and

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 219  
  
make once more a fane of the mind. We  
should treat our minds, that is, ourselves, as  
imnocent and ingenuons children, whose guardi-  
‘ans we are, and be careful what objects and  
what subjects we thrust on their attention,  
Read not the Times. Read the Eternities,  
Conventionalities are at length as bad as im-  
purities. Even the facts of science may dust  
the mind by their dryness, unless they are in a  
sense effaced each morning, or rather rendered  
fertile by the dews of fresh and living truth.  
Knowledge does not come to us by details, but  
in flashes of light from heaven. Yes, every  
‘thought that passes through the mind helps to  
wear and tear it, and to deepen the ruts, which,  
as in the streets of Pompeii, evince how much  
it has been used. How many things there are  
concerning which we might well deliberate  
whether we had better know them, —had better  
let their peddling-carts be driven, even at the  
slowest trot or walk, over that bridge of glori-  
ous span by which we trust to pass at last from  
the farthest brink of time to the nearest. shore  
of eternity! Have we no culture, no refine-  
ment, — but skill only to live coarsely and serve  
the Devil? —to acquire a little worldly wealth,  
or fame, or liberty, and make 2 false show with  
it, as if we were all husk and shell, with no  
tender and living kernel to us? Shall our in-

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stitutions be like those chestnut-burs which  
contain abortive nuts, perfect only to prick the  
fingers?  
  
America is said to be the arena on which the  
battle of freedom is to be fought; but surely it  
cannot be freedom in a merely political sense  
that is meant. Even if we grant that the  
American has freed himself from a political ty-  
rant, he is still the slave of an economical and  
moral tyrant. Now that the republie— the res-  
publica —has been settled, it is time to look  
after the res-privata, — the private state, —to  
see, as the Roman senate charged its consuls,  
“ne quid res-peivata detrimenti caperet,” that  
the private state receive no detriment.  
  
Do we call this the land of the free? What  
is it to be free from King George and continue  
the slaves of King Prejudice? What is it to  
be born free and not to live free? What is the  
value of any political freedom, but as a means  
to moral freedom? Is it a freedom to be slaves,  
or a freedom to be free, of which we boast?  
‘We are a nation of politicians, concerned about  
the outmost defenses only of freedom. It is  
our children’s children who may perchance be  
really free. We tax ourselves unjustly. There  
is a part of us which is not represented. Tt is  
taxation without representation. We quarter  
troops, we quarter fools and cattle of all sorts

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 281  
  
upon ourselves. We quarter our gross bodies  
on our poor souls, till the former eat up all the  
latter's substance.  
  
‘With respect to a true culture and manhood,  
we are essentially provincial still, not metropoli-  
tam, —mere Jonathans. We are provincial,  
‘because we do not find at home our standards;  
because we do not worship truth, but the reflec  
tion of truth; because we are warped and nar-  
rowed by an exclusive devotion to trade and  
‘commerce and manufactures and agriculture and  
the like, which are but means, and not the end.  
  
So is the English Parliament provincial.  
‘Mere country - bumpkins, they betray them-  
selves, when any more important question arises  
for them to settle, the Irish question, for in-  
stance, —the English question why did I not  
say? Their natures are subdued to what they  
work in. Their “good breeding” respects only.  
secondary objects. ‘The finest manners in the  
world are awkwardness and fatuity when con-  
trasted with a finer intelligence. They appear  
‘but as the fashions of past days, —mere court-  
Tiness, knee-buekles and small-clothes, ot of  
date. It is the vice, but not the excellence of  
manners, that they are continually being de-  
serted by the character; they are cast-off clothes  
or shells, claiming the respect which belonged  
to the living creature. You are presented with

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the shells instead of the meat, and it is no ex-  
‘use generally, that, in the ease of some fishes,  
the shells are of more worth than the meat.  
‘The man who thrusts his manners upon me  
does as if he were to insist on introducing me  
to his cabinet of curiosities, when I wished to  
see himself, It was not in this sense that the  
poet Decker called Christ “the first true gentle-  
man that ever breathed.” I repeat that in this  
sense the most splendid court in Christendom is  
provineial, having authority to consult about  
‘Transalpine interests only, and not the affairs  
of Rome. A pretor or proconsul would suffice  
to settle the questions which absorb the atten-  
tion of the English Parliament and the Ameri-  
can Congress.  
  
Government and legislation! these I thought  
were respectable professions. We have heard  
of heaven-born Numas, Lyeurguses, and Solons,  
in the history of the world, whose names at  
least may stand for ideal legislators; but think  
of legislating to regulate the breeding of slaves,  
or the exportation of tobacco! What have di-  
‘vine legislators to do with the exportation or  
the importation of tobacco? what humane ones  
with the breeding of slaves? Suppose you were  
to submit the question to any son of God, —  
and has He no children in the nineteenth een-  
tury? is it a family which is extinct? — in what

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 288  
  
condition would you get it again? What shall  
a State like Virginia say for itself at the last  
day, in which these have been the principal, the  
staple productions? What ground is there for  
patriotism in such a State? I derive my facts  
from statistical tables which the States them-  
selves have published,  
  
‘A commerce that whitens every sea in quest  
of nuts and raisins, and makes slaves of its sail-  
ors for this purpose! I saw, the other day, a  
vessel which had been wrecked, and many lives  
lost, and her cargo of rags, juniper-bersies,  
and bitter almonds were strewn along the shore.  
It seemed hardly worth the while to tempt the  
dangers of the sea between Leghorn and New  
York for the sake of a cargo of juniper-berries  
and bitter almonds. America sending to the  
Old World for her bitters! Is not the sea-  
brine, is not shipwreck, bitter enough to make  
the cup of life go down here? Yet such, to a  
great extent, is our boasted commerce; and  
there are those who style themselves statesmen  
amd philosophers who are so blind as to think  
that progress and civilization depend on pre-  
cisely this kind of interchange and acti  
the activity of flies about a molasses-hogshead.  
Very well, observes one, if men were oysters.  
And very well, answer I, if men were mosqui-  
toes,

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Lieutenant Herndon, whom our Government.  
sent to explore the Amazon, and, it is said, to  
extend the area of slavery, observed that there  
was wanting there “an industrious and active  
population, who know what the comforts of life  
are, and who have artificial wants to draw ont  
tho great resources of the country.” But what  
are the “artificial wants” to be encouraged?  
Not the love of luxuries, like the tobacco and  
slaves of, I believe, his native Virginia, nor  
the ice and granite and other material wealth  
of our native New England; nor are ‘the great  
resources of a country” that fertility or barren-  
ness of soil which produces these. ‘The chief  
want, in every State that I have been into, was  
ahigh and earnest purpose in its inhabitants.  
‘This alone draws out “the great resources” of  
Nature, and at last taxes her beyond her re-  
sources; for man naturally dies out of her.  
‘When we want culture more than potatoes, and  
iMumination more than sugar-plums, then the  
great resources of a world are taxed and drawn  
out, and the result, or staple production, is, not  
slaves, nor operatives, but men,— those rare  
fruits called heroes, saints, poets, philosophers,  
and redeemers.  
  
In short, as a snow-drift is formed where  
there is a Tull in the wind, so, one would say,  
where there is a lull of truth, an institution

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springs up. But the truth blows right on over  
it, nevertheless, and at length blows it down.  
  
‘What is called polities is comparatively som  
thing so superficial and inhuman, that, prac  
cally I have never fairly recognized that it con-  
cerns me at all. The newspapers, I peresive,  
devote some of their columns specially to poli-  
ties or government without charge; and this,  
‘one would say, is all that saves it; but as I  
Tove literature and to some extent the truth  
also, I never read those columns at any rate.  
I do not wish to blunt my sense of right so  
much, I have not got to answer for having  
read asingle President’s Message, A strange  
age of the world this, when empires, kingdoms,  
and republics come a-begging to a private  
man’s door, and utter their complaints at  
elbow! I cannot take up a newspaper but I  
find that some wretched government or other,  
hard pushed, and on its last logs, is intereed-  
ing with me, the reader, to vote for it, —more  
importunate than an Italian beggar; and if I  
have a mind to look at its certificate, made,  
perchance, by some benevolent merchant's clerk,  
or the skipper that brought it over, for it can-  
not speak a word of English itself, I shall prob-  
ably read of the eruption of some Vesuvius,  
or the overflowing of some Po, true or forged,  
which brought it into this condition. I do not

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hesitate, in such a case, to suggest work, or  
the almshouse; or why not keep its castle in  
silence, as I do commonly? The poor Presi-  
dent, what with preserving his popularity and  
doing his duty, is completely bewildered. The  
newspapers are the ruling power. Any other  
government is reduced to a few marines at Fort  
Independence. If a man neglects to read the  
Daily ‘Times, government will go down on its  
Imes to him, for this is the only treason in  
these days.  
  
‘Those things which now most engage the  
attention of men, as polities and the daily rou-  
tine, are, it is true, vital functions of human  
society, but should be unconseiously performed,  
Jike the corresponding funetions of the physical  
body. ‘They are infra-human, a kind of vege-  
tation, T sometimes awake to a half-conscious-  
ness of them going on about me, as a man may  
become eonseious of some of the processes of  
digestion in a morbid state, and so have the  
dyspepsia, as it is called. It is as if a thinker  
submitted himself to be rasped by the great giz-  
zard of creation. Polities is, as it were, the  
gizzard of society, full of grit and gravel, and  
the two political parties are its two opposite  
halves, —sometimes split into quarters, it may  
be, which grind on each other. Not only indi-  
viduals, but states, have thus a confirmed dys-

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LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE 287  
  
pepsia, which expresses itself, you ean imagine  
‘by what sort of eloquence, ‘Thus our life is  
not altogether a forgetting, but also, alas! to a  
great extent, a remembering, of that which we  
should never have been conseious of, certainly  
not in our waking hours. Why should we not  
meet, not always as dyspepties, to tell our bad  
dreams, but sometimes as eupeptics, to con-  
gratulate each other on the ever-glorious morn-  
ing? I do not make an exorbitant’ demand,  
surely.

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THE PROMETHEUS BOUND OF  
ESCHYLUS  
  
PERSONS OF THE DRAMA  
  
Kratos and Bra (Strength and Force).  
Haraaisros (Valean).  
  
Prosusrios.  
  
Cuones or Oceas Nvserns,  
  
Ocrawvs.  
  
To, Dauglter of Inaclus.  
  
Hess,  
  
Knaros and Bra, Huenaisros, Phowernecs.  
  
Kr. We are come to the far-bounding plain  
  
of earth,  
  
‘To the Scythian way, to the unapproached soli-  
tude.  
  
Hophaistus? orders mnst have thy attention,  
  
Which the Father has enjoined on thee, this  
bold one  
  
‘To the high-hanging rocks to bind  
  
In indissoluble fetters of adamantine bonds.  
  
For thy flower, the splendor of fire useful in all  
arts,  
  
Stealing, he bestowed on mortals; and for such  
  
A crime ’t is fit he should give satisfaction to  
the gods;

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF HSCHYLUS 289  
  
‘That he may learn the tyranny of Zeus  
To love, and cease from his man-loving ways.  
Heph, Kratos and Bia, your charge from:  
  
Zeus  
  
“Already has its end, and nothing further in the  
ways  
  
But I cannot endure to bind  
  
‘A kindred god by foree to a bleak precipice, —  
  
Yet absolutely there ’s necessity that I have  
courage for these things;  
  
For it is hard the Father’s words to banish.  
  
High-plotting son of the right-counseling  
‘Themis,  
  
‘Unwilling thee unwilling in brazen fetters hard  
to be loosed  
  
‘am about to nail to this inhuman hill,  
  
Where neither voice [you'll hear], nor form of  
any mortal  
  
See, but, scorched by the sun’s clear fame,  
  
Will change your eolor’s bloom; and to you glad.  
  
The various-robed night will eonceal the light,  
  
‘And sun disperse the morning frost again  
  
And always the burden of the present ill  
  
‘Will wear yous for he that will relieve you has  
not yet been born.  
  
Such fruits you've reaped from your man-lov-  
ing ways,  
  
For a god, not shrinking from the wrath of  
gods,

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290 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ascHYLUS  
  
‘You have bestowed honors on mortals more than  
just,  
For which this pleasureless rock you I! sentinel,  
Standing erect, sleepless, not bending a knees  
And many sighs and lamentations to no purpose  
‘Will you utters for the mind of Zeus is hand to  
be changed;  
And he is wholly ruggod who may newly rule.  
Kr. Well, why dost thou delay and pity in  
vain?  
‘Why not hate the god most hostile to gods,  
‘Who has betrayed thy prize to mortals?  
Heph. The affinity indeed is appalling, and  
the familiarity.  
Kr. I agree, but to disobey the Father's  
words  
How is it possible? Fear you not this more?  
Heph. Ay, you are always without pity, and  
full of confidence.  
Kr. For ’tis no remedy to bewail this one;  
Cherish not vainly troubles which avail naught.  
Heph. © much hated handicraft!  
Kr. Why hatest it? for in simple truth, for  
these misfortunes  
Which are present now Art ’s not to blame.  
Heph. Yet I would ’t had fallen to another's  
Tot.  
Kr. All things were done but to rule the gods,  
For none is free but Zeus.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF &SCHYLUS 291  
  
Heph. T know it, and have naught to say  
against these things.  
Ky. Will you not haste then to put the  
bonds about him,  
‘That the Father may not observe you loitering?  
Heph. Already at hand the shackles you may  
see.  
Kr. Taking them, about his hands with firm  
strength  
Strike with the hammer, and nail him to the  
rocks.  
  
Heph. "is done, and not in vain this work.  
Kr. Strike harder, tighten, nowhere relax,  
For he is skillful to find out ways e’en from the  
  
impracticable.  
Heph. Ay, but this arm is fixed inextricably.  
Kr. And this now clasp securely, that  
He may learn he is a duller schemer than is  
Zeus.  
Heph. Except him would none justly blame  
me.  
Kr. Now with an adamantine wedge’s stub-  
born fang  
‘Through the breasts nail strongly.  
Heph. Mas! alas! Prometheus, I groan for  
thy afflictions,  
Kr. And do you hesitate? for Zeus’ enemies  
Do you groan? Beware lest one day you your-  
self will pity.

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292 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF RSCHYLUS  
  
Heph. You seo a spectacle hard for eyes to  
behold.  
Kr. 1 see him meeting his deserts;  
But round his sides put straps.  
Hepk. To do this is necessity, insist not much.  
Kr. Surely I will insist and unge beside;  
Go downward, and the thighs surround with  
foree.  
Heph. Already it is done, the work, with no  
long labor.  
Ky. Strongly now drive the fetters, through  
and through,  
For the critic of the works is difficult.  
Heph. Like your form your tongue speaks.  
Kr. Be thou softened, but for my stubborn-  
ness  
Of temper and harshness reproach me not.  
Heph. Lot us withdraw, for he has a net  
about his limbs.  
Ky. There now insult, and the shares of gods  
Plundering on ephemerals bestow; what thee  
Can mortals in these ills relieve?  
Falsely thee the divinities Prometheus  
Call; for you yourself need one foreseeing  
In what manner you will eseape this fortune.  
  
   
  
Promxracs, alone.  
  
O divine ether, and ye swift-winged winds,  
Fountains of rivers, and countless smilings

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF &SCHYLUS 298  
  
Of the ocean waves, and earth, mother of all,  
  
And thow all-seeing orb of the sun I call.  
  
Behold me what a god I suffer at the hands of  
gods.  
  
See by what outrages  
  
‘Tormented the myriad-yeared  
  
‘Time T shall endure; such the new  
  
Ruler of the blessed has contrived for me,  
  
Unseemly bonds.  
  
‘Alas! alas! the present and the coming  
  
‘Woe I groan; where ever of these sufferings  
  
‘Must an end appear.  
  
But what say I? T know beforehand all,  
  
Exactly what will be, nor to me strange  
  
‘Will any evil come. ‘The destined fate  
  
As easily as possible it behooves to bear, know-  
ing  
  
Necessity’s is a resistless strength.  
  
But neither to be silent nor unsilent about this  
  
Lot is possible for me; for a gift to mortals  
  
Giving, I wretched have been yoked to these  
necessities;  
  
Within a hollow reed by stealth T camry off  
fire's  
  
Stolen source, which seemed the teacher  
  
Of all art to mortals, and a great resource.  
  
For such crimes penalty T pay,  
  
Under the sky, riveted in chains,  
  
Ah! ab! alas! alas!

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204 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS  
  
‘What echo, what odor has flown to me obscure,  
  
OF god, or mortal, or else mingled, —  
  
Came it to this terminal hill  
  
A witness of my sufferings, or wishing what?  
  
Behold bound me an unhappy god,  
  
‘The enemy of Zeus, fallen under  
  
The ill will of all the gods, as many as  
  
Enter into the hall of Zeus,  
  
Through too great love of mortals.  
  
Alas! alas! what fluttering do I hear  
  
Of birds near? for the air rustles  
  
‘With the soft rippling of wings.  
  
Everything to me is fearful which creeps this  
way.  
  
Prownrarcs ond Cuore.  
  
Ch. Fear nothing; for friendly this band  
  
Of wings with swift contention  
  
Drew to this hill, hardly  
  
Persuading the paternal mind.  
  
‘The swift-carrying breezes sent me;  
  
For the echo of beaten steel pierced the recesses  
  
Of the caves, and struck out from me reserved  
  
modesty;  
  
And I rushed unsandaled in a winged chariot.  
Pr. Alas! alas! alas! alas!  
  
Offspring of the fruitful Tethys,  
  
And of him rolling around all  
  
‘Tho earth with sleepless stream children,

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF SCHYLUS 295  
  
Of Father Oceans behold, look on mes  
By what bonds embraced  
On this clift’s topmost rocks  
T shall maintain unenvied watch.  
Ch. I see, Prometheus; but to my eyes a  
fearful  
Mist has come surcharged  
With tears, looking upon thy body  
Shrunk to the rocks  
By these mischiefs of adamantine bonds;  
Indeed, new helmsmen rule Olympus;  
‘And with new laws Zeus strengthens himself,  
annulling the old,  
And the before great now makes unknown.  
Pr, Would that under earth, and below  
Hades,  
Receptacle of dead, to impassable  
‘Tartarus he had sent me, to bonds indissola-  
ble  
Cruelly condueting, that neither god  
Nor any other had rejoiced at this.  
But now the sport of winds, unhappy one,  
A source of pleasure to my foes T suffer.  
Ch. Who so havd-hearted  
Of the gods, to whom these things are pleas-  
ant?  
‘Who does not sympathize with thy  
Misfortunes, excepting Zeus? for he in wrath  
always

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296 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF HSCHYLUS  
  
Fixing his stubborn mind,  
“Affliets the heavenly races  
Nor will he cease, until his heart is sated;  
Or with some palm some one may take the  
power hard to be taken.  
Pr. Surely yet, though in strong  
Fetters I am now maltreated,  
‘The ruler of the blessed will have need of me,  
‘To show the new conspiracy by which  
He 's robbed of seeptre and of honors,  
And not at all me with persuasion’s honey-  
tongued  
Charms will he appease, nor ever,  
Shrinking from his firm threats, will T  
Declare this, till from eruel  
Bonds he may release, and to do justice  
For this outrage be willing.  
Oh. You are bold; and to bitter  
‘Woes do nothing yield,  
But too freely speak.  
But my mind piereing fear disturbs;  
For I’m concerned about thy fortunes,  
‘Where at length arriving you may see  
An end to these afflictions. For manners  
Insecessible, and a heart hard to be dissuaded  
has the son of Kronos.  
Pr. Timow, that — Zeus is stern and having  
Justice to himself. But after all  
Gentle-minded

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ASCHYLUS 297  
  
He will one day be, when thus he’s erushed,  
And his stubborn wrath allaying,  
Into agreement with me and friendliness  
Earnest to me earnest he at length will come.  
Ch. The whole account disclose and tell us  
plainly,  
Tn what crime taking you Zous  
  
   
  
‘Thus disgracefully and bitterly insults;  
Inform us, if you are nowise hurt by the re-  
cital.  
Pr. Painful indeed it is to me to tell these  
things,  
And a pain to be silent, and every way unfor-  
tunate.  
  
‘When first the divinities began their strife,  
  
And discord ’mong themselves arose,  
  
Some wishing to east Kronos from his seat,  
  
That Zeus might reign, forsooth, others the  
contrary  
  
Striving, that Zous might never rule the gods;  
  
‘Then I, the best advising, to persuade  
  
‘The Titans, sons of Uranus and Chthon,  
  
Unable was; but crafty stratagems  
  
Despising with rude minds,  
  
‘They thought without trouble to rule by forces  
  
But to me my mother not once only, Themis,  
  
And Grea, of many names one form,  
  
How the future should be accomplished had  
foretold,

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298 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF 2:SCHYLUS  
  
‘That not by power nor by strength  
  
Would it be necessary, but by eraft the victors  
should prevail.  
  
Such J in words expounding,  
  
‘They deigned not to regard at all.  
  
‘The best course therefore of those occurring  
then  
  
Appeared to be, taking my mother to mo,  
  
Of my own accord to side with Zeus glad to re-  
ceive mes  
  
And by my counsels Tartarus’ black-pitted  
  
Depths conceals the ancient Kronos,  
  
With his allies. In such things by me  
  
‘The tyrant of the gods having been helped,  
  
With base rewards like these repays mes  
  
For there is somehow in kingship  
  
‘This disease, not to trust its friends.  
  
‘What then you ask, for what cause  
  
He afflicts me, this will I now explain,  
  
‘As soon as on his father’s throne  
  
He sat, he straightway to the gods distributes  
honors,  
  
Some to one and to another some, and arranged  
  
‘The government; but of unhappy mortals ac-  
count:  
  
Had none; but blotting out the race  
  
Entize, wished to ereate another new.  
  
And these things none opposed but I,  
  
But I adventureds I rescued mortals

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ESCHYLUS 299  
  
From going destroyed to Hades.  
  
Therefore indeed with such afflictions am I  
bent,  
  
To suffer grievous, and piteous to behold,  
  
Aud, holding mortals up to pity, myself am  
not  
  
Thought worthy to obtain it; but without pity  
  
Am I thus corrected, a spectacle inglorious to  
Lous.  
  
Ch. Of iron heart and made of stone,  
Whoe’er, Prometheus, with thy sufferings  
Does not grieve; for I should not have wished  
  
to see  
‘These things, and having seen them I am  
grieved at heart.  
  
Pr. Indeed to friends I'm piteous to behold.  
  
Ch. Did you in no respect go beyond this?  
  
Pr. True, mortals I made cease foreseeing  
  
fate.  
  
Ch. Having found what remedy for this all?  
  
Pr, Blind hopes in them I made to dwell.  
  
Oh. A great advantage this you gave to  
  
men.  
  
Pr, Beside these, too, I bestowed on them  
  
fire.  
  
Ch. And have mortals flamy fire?  
  
Pr. From which indeed they will learn many  
  
arts,  
  
Ch. Upon such charges then does Zeus

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300 PROMETIEVS BOUND OF A:SCHYLUS  
  
‘Maltreat you, and nowhere relax from ills?  
Is there no term of suffering lying before thee?  
Pr. Nay, none at. all, but when to him it  
may seem good.  
Ch. And how will it seem good? What  
hope? See you not that  
You have erred? But how you ’ve erred, for  
  
me to tell  
  
Not pleasant, and to you a pain, But these  
things  
  
Let us omit, and seek you some release from  
sufferings.  
  
Pr. Easy, whoever out of trouble holds his  
Foot, to admonish and remind those faring  
Il. But all these things T knew;  
Willing, willing I erred, I°I1 not deny;  
Mortals assisting I myself found trouble.  
Not indeed with penalties like these thought T  
That I should pine on lofty rocks,  
Gaining this drear unneighbored hill.  
Bat bewail not my present woes,  
But alighting, the fortunes creeping on  
Hloar ye, that ye may learn all to the end.  
Obey me, obey, sympathize  
‘With him now suffering. ‘Thus indeed afftiction,  
Wandering round, sits now by one, then by an-  
  
other.  
  
Ch. Not to unwilling ears do you urge  
  
This, Prometheus.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS 301  
  
And now with light foot the swift-rushing  
Seat leaving, and the pure ether,  
  
Path of birds, to this peaked  
  
Ground I comes for thy misfortunes  
  
I wish fully to hear.  
  
‘Promerwecs, Cuouvs, and Ocraxes,  
  
Oc. T come to the end of a long way  
  
‘Traveling to thee, Prometheus,  
  
By my will without bits diveoting  
  
‘This wing-swift bird;  
  
For at thy fortunes know I grieve.  
  
And, T think, affinity thus  
  
Impels me, but apart from birth,  
  
‘There's not to whom a higher rank  
  
I would assign than thee.  
  
And you will know these things as true, and not  
in vain  
  
To flatter with the tongue is in me. Come,  
therefore,  
  
Show how it is necessary to assist yous  
  
For never will you say, than Ocean  
  
There ’s a firmer friend to thee.  
  
Pr, Alas! what now? And you then of my  
  
sufferings  
  
Come spectator? How didst thou dare, leaving  
  
‘The stream which bears thy name, and rock-  
roofed  
  
Caves self-built, to the iron-mother

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3802 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF 2SCHYLUS  
  
Farth to go? To behold my fate  
  
Hast come, and to compassionate my ills?  
  
Behold a spectacle, this, the friend of Zeus,  
  
Having with him stablished his tyranny,  
  
With what affictions by himself I’m bent.  
  
Oc. I see, Prometheus, and would admonish  
  
Thee the best, although of varied craft.  
  
Know thyself, and fit thy manners  
  
New; for new also the king among the gods.  
  
For if thus rude and whetted words  
  
‘Thou wilt hurl out, quickly may Zeus, though  
sitting  
  
Far above, hear thee, so that thy present wrath  
  
Of troubles child’s play will seom to be.  
  
But, O wretched one, dismiss the indignation  
which thou hast,  
  
And seek deliverance from these woes.  
  
Like an old man, perhaps, I seem to thee to say  
these things;  
  
Such, however, are the wages  
  
Of the too lofty speaking tongue, Prometheus;  
  
But thou art not yet humble, nor dost yield to  
ills,  
  
And beside the present wish to receive others  
still.  
  
But thou wouldst not, with my counsel,  
  
Against the pricks extend your limbs, seeing  
that  
  
A stern monarch irresponsible reigns.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ZSCHYLUS 308  
  
And now I go, and will endeavor,  
  
If Lean, to release thee from these sufferings.  
  
But be thou quiet, nor too rudely speak.  
  
Know’st thou not well, with thy superior wis-  
dom, that  
  
On a vain tongue punishment is inflicted?  
  
Pr. Teongratulate theo that thou art without  
  
blame,  
  
Having shared and dared all with me;  
  
And now leave off, and let it not concern thee.  
  
For altogether thou wilt not persuade him, for  
he ’s not easily persuaded,  
  
But take heed yourself lest you be injured by  
the way.  
Oc. Far better thou art to advise those near  
‘Than thyself; by deed and not by word I judge.  
But me hastening by no means mayest thou de-  
tain,  
  
For I boast, I boast, this favor will Zeus  
  
Grant me, from these sufferings to release thee.  
  
Pr. So far I praise thee, and will never  
  
ccoase  
  
For zeal you nothing lack, But  
  
Strive not; for in vain, naught helping  
  
Me, thou It strive, if aught to strive you wish.  
  
But be thou quiet, holding thyself aloof,  
  
For I would not, though I’m unfortunate, that  
on this account  
  
Evils should come to many.

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804 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF aSCHYLUS  
  
Oc. Surely not, for me too the fortunes of  
  
thy brother  
  
Athas grieve, who towards the evening-places  
  
Stands, the pillar of heaven and earth  
  
Upon his shoulders bearing, a load not easy to  
be borne.  
  
And the earth-born inhabitant of the Cilician  
  
Caves seeing, I pitied, the savage monster  
  
With a hundred heads, by foree o'ereome,  
  
‘Typhon impetuous, who stood "gainst all the  
gods,  
  
With frightful jaws hissing ont slaughter;  
  
And from his eyes flashed a gorgonian light,  
  
Utterly to destroy by force the sovereignty of  
Zeus;  
  
But there came to him Zeus’ sleepless bolt,  
  
Descending thunder, breathing flame,  
  
Which struck him out from lofty  
  
Boastings, For struck to his very heart,  
  
His strength was scorched and thundered out.  
  
“And now a useless and extended careass  
  
Lies he near a narrow passage of the sea,  
  
Pressed down under the roots of Hina,  
  
“And on the topmost summit seated, Hephaistus  
  
Hammers the ignited mass, whence will burst  
out at length  
  
Rivers of fire, devouring with wild jaws  
  
Fair-fruited Sicily’s smooth fields;  
  
Such rage will Typhon make boil over

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS 305  
  
With hot discharges of insatiable fire-breathing  
tempest,  
‘Though by the bolt of Zeus burnt to a coal.  
Pr. Thou art not inexperienced, nor dost  
want  
‘My counsel; secure thyself as thou know’st  
how;  
‘And I against the present fortune will bear up,  
Until the thought of Zeus may cease from  
wrath,  
Oc. Know’st thou not this, Prometheus, that  
Words are healers of distempered wrath?  
Pr. Ti any seasonably soothe the heart,  
And swelling passion eheck not rudely.  
Oc. In the consulting and the daring  
‘What harm seest thou existing? ‘Teach me.  
Pr, Trouble superfluous, and light-minded  
folly.  
Oc. Be this my ail then, since it is  
‘Most profitable, being wise, not to seem wise.  
Pr, This will seem to be my error.  
Oe. Plainly homeward thy words remand  
Pr. Aye, let not grief for me into hostility  
cast thee.  
Qe, ‘To the new occupant of the all-powerful  
seats?  
Pr. Beware lest ever his heart be angered.  
Oc, Thy fate, Prometheus, is my teacher.

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306 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS  
  
Pr. Go thou, depart; preserve the present  
mind.  
Oc. To me rushing this word you utter.  
For the smooth path of the air sweeps with his  
wings  
‘The four-legged bird; and gladly would  
In the stalls at home bend a knee.  
  
Paowenmos end Cuonos,  
  
Ch. T mourn for thee thy ruinous  
Fate, Prometheus,  
  
And tear-distilling from my tender  
Eyes a stream has wet  
  
My cheeks with flowing springs;  
For these, unenvied, Zeus  
  
By his own laws enforeing,  
  
Hanghty above the gods  
  
‘That were displays his sceptre.  
  
And every region now  
  
‘With groans resounds,  
  
‘Mourning the illustrious  
  
And ancient honor  
  
Of thee and of thy kindred;  
  
‘As many mortals as the habitable seat  
Of sacred Asia pasture,  
  
With thy lamentable  
  
‘Woes have sympathy;  
  
And of the Colchian land, virgin  
Inhabitants, in fight undaunted,

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ZSCHYLUS 807  
  
‘And Seythia’s multitude, who the last  
  
Place of earth, about  
  
Meotis lake possess,  
  
And Arabia’s martial flower,  
  
‘And who the high-hang citadels  
  
Of Cancasus inhabit near,  
  
A hostile army, raging  
  
With sharp-prowed spears.  
  
Only one other god before, in sufferings  
  
Subdued by injuries  
  
Of adamantine bonds, I’ve seen, Titanian  
  
Atlas, who always with superior strength  
  
‘The huge and heavenly globe  
  
On his back bears;  
  
‘And with a roar the sea waves  
  
Dashing, groans the deep,  
  
‘And the dark depth of Hades murmurs under-  
neath  
  
‘The earth, and fountains of pure-running rivers  
  
Heave a pitying sigh.  
  
Pr, Think not, indeed, through weakness or  
  
through pride  
  
That T am silent; for with the consefousness  
gnaw my heart,  
  
Seeing myself thus basely used.  
  
And yet to these new gods their shares  
  
Who else than I wholly distributed ?  
  
But of these things I am silent; for I should  
tell you

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808 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF £SCHYLUS  
  
‘What you know; the sufferings of mortals too  
  
‘You've heard, how I made intelligent  
  
‘And possessed of sense them ignorant before.  
  
But I will speak, not bearing any grudge to men,  
  
But showing in what I gave the good intention;  
  
At first, indeed, seeing they saw in vain,  
  
And hearing heard not; but like the forms  
  
Of dreams, for that long time, rashly con-  
founded  
  
All, nor brick-woven dwellings  
  
Knew they, placed in the sun, nor wood-works  
  
But digging down they dwelt, like puny  
  
Ants, in sunless nooks of eaves.  
  
And there was naught to them, neither of win-  
ter sign,  
  
Nor of flower-giving spring, nor fruitful  
  
Summer, that was sure; but without knowledge  
  
Did they all, till I taught them the risings  
  
Of the stars, and goings down, hard to deter-  
mine.  
  
And numbers, chief of inventions,  
  
I found out for them, and the assemblages of  
letters,  
  
And memory, Muse-mother, doer of all things;  
  
‘And first I joined in pairs wild animals  
  
Obedient to the yoke; and that they might be  
  
Alternate workers with the bodies of men  
  
In the severest toils, I harnessed the rein-loving  
horses

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF HSCHYLUS 809  
  
To the car, the ornament of over-wealthy lux-  
wy.  
  
‘And none else than T invented the sea-wander-  
ing  
  
Flaxen-winged vehicles of sailors.  
  
Such inventions I wretched having found out  
  
For men, myself have not the ingenuity by  
which  
  
From the now present ill I may eseape.  
  
Ch. You suffer unseemly ill; deranged in  
  
mind  
  
‘You err; and as some bad physician, falling  
  
Sick you are dejected, and eannot find  
  
By what remedies you may be healed.  
  
Pr. Hearing the rest from me more will you  
wonder  
  
What arts and what expedients I planned.  
  
That which was greatest, if any might fall  
sick,  
  
‘There was alleviation none, neither to eat,  
  
Nor to anoint, nor drink, but for the want  
  
Of medicines they were reduced to skeletons,  
till to them  
  
I showed the mingling of mild remedies,  
  
By which all ails they drive away.  
  
And many modes of prophecy I settled,  
  
And distinguished first of dreams what a real  
  
Vision is required to be, and omens hard to be  
determined

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810 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS  
  
T made known to them; and tokens by the way,  
  
And flight of erooked-taloned birds I accurately  
  
Defined, which lucky are,  
  
And unlucky, and what mode of life  
  
Have each, and to one another what  
  
Hostilities, attachments, and assomblingss  
  
‘The entrails’ smoothness, and what color hav-  
ing  
  
‘They would be to the divinities acceptables  
  
Of the gall and liver the various symmetry,  
  
And the limbs concealed in fat; and the  
Jong  
  
Flank buming, to an art hard to be guessed  
  
I showed the way to mortals; and flammeous  
signs  
  
Explained, before obscure.  
  
Such indeed these; and under ground  
  
Concealed the helps to men,  
  
Brass, iron, silver, gold, who  
  
Would afirm that he diseovered before me?  
  
None, I well know, not wishing in vain to  
boast.  
  
But learn all in one word,  
  
All arts to mortals, from Prometheus.  
  
Ch. Assist not mortals now unseasonably,  
  
And neglect yourself unfortunate; for I  
  
Am of good hope that, from these bonds  
  
Released, you will yet have no less power than  
Zeus.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS 311  
  
Pr, Never thus has Fate the Accomplisher  
Deereed to fulfill these things, but by a myriad  
ills  
And woes subdued, thus bonds I flee;  
For arts far weaker than necessity.  
Ch. Who then is helmsman of necessity ?  
Pr. The Fates three-formed, and the remem-  
bering Furies,  
Oh. ‘Than these then is Zeus weaker?  
Pr. Ay, he could not escape what has been  
fated.  
Ch. But what to Zeus is fated, except always  
to rule?  
Pr. This thou wilt not learn; seek not to  
now.  
Ch. Surely some awful thing it is which you  
withhold.  
Pr. Remember other words, for this by no  
means  
Is it time to tell, but to be concealed.  
As much as possible; for keeping this do I  
Escape unseemly bonds and woes.  
Ch. Never may the all-ruling  
Zeus put into my mind  
Force antagonist to him.  
Nor let me cease drawing near  
‘The gods with holy sacrifices  
Of slain oxen, by Father Ocean’s  
Ceasoless passage,

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812 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF &SCHYLUS  
  
Nor offend with words,  
  
But in me this remain  
  
And ne'er be melted out.  
  
°T is something sweet with bold  
  
Hopes the long life to  
  
Extend, in bright  
  
Cheorfulness the cherishing spirit.  
  
But I shudder, thee beholding  
  
By a myriad sufferings tormented. . .  
  
For not fearing Zeus,  
  
Tn thy private mind thou dost regard.  
  
Mortals too much, Prometheus.  
  
Come, though a thankless  
  
Favor, friend, say where is any strength,  
  
From ephemerals any help? Saw you not  
  
‘The powerless inefficiency,  
  
Dream-like, in which the blind . . .  
  
Race of mortals are entangled?  
  
Never counsels of mortals  
  
‘May transgress the harmony of Zeus.  
  
Tlearned these things looking on  
  
‘Thy destructive fate, Prometheus.  
  
For different to me did this strain come,  
  
‘And that which round thy baths  
  
And couch I hymned,  
  
‘With the design of marriage, when my father’s  
child  
  
With bridal gifts persuading, thou didst lead  
  
Hesione the partner of thy bed.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ASCHYLUS 313  
  
Pnomeruevs, Cuoncs, and To.  
  
Zo. What earth, what race, what being shall  
I say is this,  
  
I see in bridles of rock  
  
Exposed? By what erime’s  
  
‘Penalty dost thou perish? Show, to what part  
  
Of earth T miserable have wandered.  
  
‘Ah! ah! alas! alas!  
  
Again some fly doth sting me wretched,  
  
Image of earth-born Argus, cover it earths  
  
I fear the myriad-eyed herdsman beholdings  
  
For he goes having a treacherous eye,  
  
Whom not e’en dead the earth conceals.  
  
But me, wretched from the Infernals passing,  
  
He pursues, and drives fasting along the sea~  
side  
  
Sand, while low resounds a wax-compacted reed,  
  
Uitering sleep-giving law; alas! alas! O gods!  
  
‘Where, gods! where lead me far-wandering  
courses?  
  
Tn what sin, O son of Kronos,  
  
In what sin ever having taken,  
  
‘To these afflictions hast thou yoked me? alas!  
alas!  
  
With fly-driven fear a wretched  
  
Frenzied one dost thus afflict?  
  
‘With fire burn, or with earth cover, or  
  
‘To sea monsters give for food, nor

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814 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ASCHYLUS  
  
Envy me my prayers, king.  
  
Enongh much-wandered wanderings  
Have exercised me, nor can I learn where  
I shall eseape from sufferings.  
  
Oh. Hear’st thoi the address of the eow-  
  
homed virgin?  
  
Pr, And how not hear the fly-whirled virgin,  
Daughter of Inachus, who Zeus’ heart warmed  
With love, and now the courses over long,  
  
By Here hated, forcedly performs?  
  
Zo, Whence utterest thou my father’s name?  
‘Tell me, miserable, who thou art,  
  
‘That to me, O suffering one, me born to suffer,  
  
‘Thus true things dost address?  
  
‘The god-sent ail thou ’st named,  
  
Which wastes me stinging  
  
With maddening goads, alas! alas!  
  
‘With foodless and unseemly leaps  
  
Rushing headlong, I came,  
  
By wrathful plots subdued.  
  
‘Who of the wretched, who, alas! alas! suffers  
like me?  
  
But to mo clearly show  
  
What me awaits to suffer,  
  
‘What not necessary; what remedy of ill,  
  
Teach, if indeed thou know’'st; speak out,  
  
‘Tell the ill-wandering vingin.  
  
Pr, ll clearly tell thee all you wish to  
  
learn,

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF 4:SCHYLUS 315  
  
Not weaving in enigmas, but in simple speech,  
As it is just to open the mouth to friends.  
‘Thou seest the giver of fire to men, Prometheus.  
Jo. O thou who didst appear a common help  
to mortals,  
‘Wretched Prometheus, to atone for what do  
you endure this?  
Pr. I have scaree ceased my sufferings  
Jamenting,  
Jo, Would you not grant this favor to me?  
Pr. Say what you ask; for you'd learn all  
from me.  
Jo. Say who has bound thee to the cliff.  
Pr. The will indeed of Zeus, Hephaistus’  
hand.  
Jo. And penalty for what crimes dost thou  
pay?  
Pr. Thus much only ean I show theo.  
Jo. But beside this, declare what time will be  
To me unfortunate the limit of my wandering.  
Pr, Not to learn is better for thee than to  
Jearn these things.  
Jo. Conceal not from me what Tam to suf  
fer.  
Pr. Indeed, I grudge thee not this favor.  
  
Jo. Why, then, dost thou delay to tell the  
whole?  
  
Pr. There's no unwi  
to vex thy mind.  
  
   
  
ingness, but I hesitate

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3816 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF 2SCHYLUS  
  
To. Care not for me more than is pleasant to  
me.  
Pr. Since you are earnest, it behooves to  
speaks hear then.  
Ch. Not yet indeed; but. share of pleasure  
also give to me.  
First we ‘Il learn the malady of this ono,  
Herself relating her destructive fortunes,  
And the remainder of her trials let her learn  
from thee.  
Pr. \*Vis thy part, To, to do these a favor,  
As well for every other xeason, and as they are  
sisters of thy father.  
Since to weep and to lament misfortunes,  
‘There where one will get a tear  
From those attending, is worthy the delay.  
Jo. L know not that I need distrust you,  
But in plain speech you shall Jean  
All that you ask for; and yet ee telling I  
lament  
‘The god-sent tempest, and dissolution  
Of my form — whence to me miserable it came.  
For always visions in the night, moving about  
‘My virgin chambers, enticed me  
With smooth words: “O greatly happy virgin,  
‘Why be a virgin long? is permitted to obtain  
‘The greatest marriage. For Zous with love's  
dart  
Has been warmed by thee, and wishes to unite

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS 317  
  
In love; but do thou, O child, spurn not the  
couch  
  
Of Zeus, but go out to Lerna’s deep  
  
Morass, and stables of thy father’s herds,  
  
‘That the divine eye may cease from desire.”  
  
‘With such dreams every night  
  
‘Was I unfortunate distressed, till T dared tell  
  
‘My father of the night-wandering visions.  
  
And he to Pytho and Dodona frequent  
  
Prophets sent, that he might learn what it was  
necessary  
  
He should say or do, to do agreeably to the  
gods.  
  
And they came bringing ambiguous  
  
Oracles, darkly and indistinctly uttered.  
  
But finally a plain report came to Inachus,  
  
Clearly enjoining him and telling  
  
Out of my home and country to expel me,  
  
Discharged to wander to the earth’s Inst bounds;  
  
And if he was not willing, from Zeus would  
‘come  
  
A fiery thunderbolt, which would annihilate all  
his race.  
  
Induced by such predictions of the Loxian,  
  
Against his will he drove me out,  
  
‘And shut me from the houses; but Zeus’ rein  
  
Compelled him by force to do these things.  
  
Immediately my form and mind were  
  
Changed, and horned, as you behold, stung

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818 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ASCHYLUS  
  
By a sharp-mouthed fly, with frantic leaping  
Rushed I to Cenchrea’s palatable stream,  
And Lerna’s sources but a herdsman born-of-  
earth  
Of violent temper, Argus, accompanied, with  
numerous  
‘Eyes my steps observing.  
But unexpectedly a sudden fate  
Robbed him of life; and I, fly-stung,  
By lash divine am driven from land to land.  
You hear what has been done; and if you have  
to say aught,  
‘What's left of labors, speak; nor pitying me  
Comfort with false words; for an ill  
‘The worst of all, I say, are made-up words.  
Ch, Ab! ah! enough, alas!  
No’er, ne'er did I presume such eruel words  
‘Would reach my ears, nor thus unsightly  
And intolerable hurts, sufferings, fears with a  
two-edged  
Goad would chill my soul;  
Alas! alas! fate! fate!  
I shudder, seeing the state of Io.  
Pr. Beforehand sigh’st thou, and art full of  
fears,  
Hold till the rest also thou learn’st.  
Ch. Tell, teach; for to the sick ’tis sweet  
‘To know the remaining pain beforehand clearly.  
Pr. Your former wish ye got from me

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ZSCHYLUS 319  
  
With ease; for first ye asked to lea from  
her  
  
Relating her own trials;  
  
‘The rest now hear, what sufferings “tis neces-  
sary  
  
‘This young woman should endure from Here.  
  
But do thou, offspring of Inachus, my words  
  
Cast in thy mind, that thou may’st learn the  
‘boundaries of the way.  
  
First, indeed, hence towards the rising of the  
  
Turing thyself, travel uncultivated lands,  
  
‘And to the Scythian nomads thou wilt come,  
who woven roofs  
  
On high inhabit, on well-wheeled carts,  
  
With far-casting bows equipped ;  
  
Whom go not near, but to the sea-resounding  
cliffs  
  
Bending thy fect, pass from the region,  
  
On the left hand the iron-working  
  
Chalybes inhabit, whom thou must needs be-  
ware,  
  
For they are rade and inaccessible to strangers.  
  
‘And thou wilt come to the Hybristes river, not  
ill named,  
  
Which pass not, for not easy is’t to pass,  
  
Before you get to Caucasus itself, highest  
  
Of mountains, where the stream spurts out its  
tide

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820 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ZSCHYLUS  
  
From the very temples; and passing over  
  
‘The star-neighbored summits, “tis necessary to  
g0  
  
‘The southern way, where thou wilt come to the  
man-hating  
  
Army of the Amazons, who Themiseyra one day  
  
Will inhabit, by the Thermedon, where’s  
  
Salmydessia, rongh jaw of the sea,  
  
Inhospitable to sailors, step-mother of ships;  
  
‘They will conduct thee on thy way, and very  
cheerfully.  
  
And to the Cimmerian isthmus thou wilt come,  
  
Just on the narrow portals of a lake, which  
leaving  
  
It behooves thee with stout heart to pass the  
Movotie straits;  
  
And there will be to mortals ever a great fame  
  
Of thy passage, and Bosphorus from thy name  
  
°T will be called. And leaving Europe’s plain  
  
‘The continent of Asia thou wilt reach. —Seem-  
eth to thee, forsooth,  
  
‘The tyrant of the gods in everything to be  
  
‘Thus violent? For he a god, with this mortal  
  
Wishing to unite, drove her to these wanderings.  
  
A bitter wooer didst thou find, O virgin,  
  
For thy marriage. For the words you now  
have heard  
  
‘Think not yet to be the prelude.  
  
Jo. Ah! me! me! alas! alas!

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF HSCHYLUS 821  
  
Pr, Again dost shrick and heave a sigh?  
What  
Wilt thon do when the remaining ills thou  
Jearn’st?  
Ch. And hast thou any further suffering to  
tell her?  
Pr, Ay, a tompestuons sea of baleful woe.  
Jo. What profit, then, for me to live, and  
not in haste  
‘To cast myself from this rough rock,  
‘That rushing down upon the plain T may be re-  
leased  
From every trouble? For better once for all  
to die,  
‘Than all my days to suffer evilly.  
Pr. Unhappily my trials would’st thou hear,  
‘To whom to die has not been fated;  
For this would be release from sufferings;  
But now there is no end of ills lying  
Before me, until Zeus falls from sovereignty.  
To. And is Zeus ever to fall from power?  
Pr. Thou would’st be pleased, I think, to  
see this accident,  
Jo. How should I not, who suffer ill from  
Zeus?  
Pr. That these things then are so, be thow  
assured.  
To. By what one will the tyrant’s power be  
robbed ?

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822 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS  
  
Pr. Himself, by his own senseless counsels,  
  
Jo. In what way show, if there ’s no harm.  
  
Pr. He will make such a marriage as one  
day he 'll repent.  
  
To. Of god or mortal? Tf to be spoken, tell.  
  
Pr. What matters which? For these things  
are not to be told.  
  
Jo. By 2 wife will he be driven from the  
throne?  
  
Pr. Ay, she will bring forth a son superior  
to his father.  
  
Zo, Is there no refuge for him from this fate?  
  
Pr. None, surely, till I may be released  
from bonds.  
  
Jo. Who then is to release thee, Zeus unwill-  
  
ing?  
  
‘He must be some one of thy descend-  
  
ants.  
  
Jo. Wow sayest thou—that my child will  
deliver thee from ills?  
  
Pr. Third of thy race after ten other births.  
  
Io. This oracle is not yet easy to be guessed.  
  
Pr. But do not seek to understand thy suf-  
ferings.  
  
To. First: proffering gain to me, do not then  
withhold it.  
  
Pr. 1'll grant thee one of two relations.  
  
Jo. What two propose, and give to me my  
choice.  
  
Pr.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF £SCHYLUS 823  
  
Pr. I gives choose whether thy remaining  
troubles  
I shall tell thee clearly, or him that will release  
Ch. Consent to do her the one favor,  
‘Me the other, nor deem us undeserving of thy  
words;  
‘To her indeed tell what remains of wandering,  
And to me, who will release; for I desire this.  
Pr. Since ye are earnest, I will not resist  
To tell the whole, as much as ye ask for.  
To thee first, To, vexatious wandering I will  
tell,  
‘Which engrave on the remembering tablets of  
the mind.  
‘When thou hast passed the flood boundary of  
continents,  
‘Towards the flaming orient sun-traveled . . .  
Passing through the tumult of the sea, until  
‘you each  
‘The Gorgonian plains of Cisthene, where  
‘The Phoreides dwell, old virgins,  
‘Three, swan-shaped, having a. common eye,  
One-toothed, whom neither the sun looks on  
With his beams, nor nightly moon ever.  
And near, their winged sisters three,  
Dragon-scaled Gorgons, odious to men,  
‘Whom no mortal beholding will have breath;  
Such danger do I tell thee.

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824 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF £SCHYLUS  
  
But hear another odious sights  
  
Beware the gryphons, sharp-mouthed  
  
Dogs of Zens, which bark not, and the one-eyed  
Aximaspian  
  
Host, going on horseback, who dwell about  
  
‘The golden-flowing flood of Pluto's channel;  
  
‘These go not near. But to a distant land  
  
Thou’lt come, a dusky race, who near the  
fountains  
  
OF the sun inhabit, where is the Althiopian  
river.  
  
Creep down the banks of this, until thou com’st  
  
‘To a descent, where from Byblinian mounts  
  
‘Tho Nile sends down its sacred palatable stream.  
  
‘This will conduct thee to the triangled land  
  
Nilean, where, To, "tis decreed  
  
‘Thou and thy progeny shall form the distant  
colony.  
  
If aught of this is unintelligible to thee, and  
hard to be found out,  
  
Repeat thy questions, and learn clearly;  
  
For more leisure than I want is granted me.  
  
Oh. If to her aught remaining or omitted  
  
‘Thou hast to tell of her pernicious wandering,  
  
Speak; but if thou hast said all, give us  
  
‘The favor which we ask, for surely thou remem-  
ber’st.  
  
Pr, The whole term of her traveling has sho  
  
heard.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF BSCHYLUS 825  
  
But that she may Imow that not in vain she  
hears me,  
  
I'll tell what before coming hither she endured,  
  
Giving this as proof of my relations.  
  
‘The great multitude of words I will omit,  
  
And proceed unto the very limit of thy wander-  
ings.  
  
‘When then you came to the Molossian ground,  
  
And near the high-ridged Dodona, where  
  
Oracle and seat is of Thesprotian Zeus,  
  
And prodigy ineredible, the speaking oaks,  
  
By whom you clearly, and naught enigmati-  
cally,  
  
‘Were called the illustrious wife of Zous  
  
About to be, if aught of these things soothes  
thee;  
  
‘Thence, driven by the fly, you came  
  
‘The seaside way to the great gulf of Rhea,  
  
From which by courses retrograde you are now  
tempest-tossed. é  
  
But for time to come the sea gulf,  
  
Clearly know, will be called Ionian,  
  
‘Memorial of thy passage to all mortals,  
  
Proofs to thee are these of my intelligence,  
  
‘That it sees somewhat more than the apparent.  
  
But the rest to you and her in common I will tell,  
  
Having come upon the very track of former  
words.  
  
‘There is a city Canopus, last of the land,

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826 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS  
  
By Nile’s very mouth and bank;  
  
‘There at length Zeus makes thee sane,  
  
Stroking with gentle hand, and touching only.  
  
And, named from Zeus’ begetting,  
  
‘Thou wilt bear dark Epaphus, who will reap  
  
As much land as broad-flowing Nile doth waters  
  
And fifth from him, a band of fifty children  
  
‘Again to Argos shall unwilling come,  
  
Of female sex, avoiding kindred marriage  
  
Of their cousins: but they, with minds inflamed,  
  
Hawks by doves not far left behind,  
  
Will come pursuing marriages  
  
Not to be pursued, but heaven will take ven-  
geance on their bodies;  
  
For them Pelasgia shall receive by Mars  
  
Subdued with woman’s hand with night-watch-  
ing boldness.  
  
For each wife shall take her husband's life,  
  
Staining a two-edged dagger in his throat.  
  
Such ’gains my foes may Cypris come. —  
  
But one of the daughters shall love soften  
  
Not to slay her bedfellow, but she will waver  
  
In her minds and one of two things will prefer,  
  
‘To hear herself called timid, rather than stained  
with bloods  
  
She shall in Argos bear a royal race. —  
  
Of a long speech is need this clearly to discuss.  
  
From this seed, however, shall be born a  
bravo,

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF £SCHYLUS 827  
  
Famed for his bow, who will release me  
  
From these sufferings. Such oracle my ancient  
  
Mother told me, Titanian Themis;  
  
But how and by what means, this needs Jong  
speech  
  
‘To tell, and nothing, learning, wilt thou gain.  
  
Jo. Ah me! ah wretched me!  
  
Spasms again and brain-strack  
  
Madness burn me within, and a fly’s dart  
  
Stings me —not wrought by fire.  
  
‘My heart with fear knocks at my breast,  
  
‘And my eyes whisl round and round,  
  
And from my course I’m borne by madness’  
  
Furious breath, unable to control my tongues  
  
While confused words dash idly  
  
\*Gainst the waves of horrid woe.  
  
Ch. Wise, wise indeed was he,  
  
Who first in mind  
  
This weighed, and with the tongue expressed,  
  
‘To mary according to one’s degree is best by  
far;  
  
Nor, being a laborer with the hands,  
  
‘To woo those who are by wealth corrupted,  
  
Nor, those by birth made great.  
  
Never, never me  
  
Fates...  
  
May you behold the sharer of Zeus’ couch.  
  
Nor may I be brought near to any husband  
among those from heaven,

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828 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS  
  
For I fear, seeing the virginhood of To,  
  
‘Not content with man, through marriage vexed  
  
‘With these distressful wanderings by Here,  
  
But for myself, since an equal marriage is with-  
out fear,  
  
T am not concerned lest the love of the almighty  
  
Gods cast its inevitable eye on mo.  
  
Without war indeed this war, producing  
  
‘Troubles; nor do I know what would become of  
  
For I seo not how I should escape the subtlety  
of Zeus.  
  
Pr. Surely shall Zeus, though haughty now,  
  
Yet be humble, such marriage  
  
He prepares to make, which from sovereignty  
  
And the throne will cast him down obscure;  
and Father Kronos?  
  
Curse will then be all fulfilled,  
  
Which falling from the ancient seats he impre-  
cated,  
  
And refuge from such ills none of the gods  
  
But I can show him clearly.  
  
I know these things, and in what manner, Now  
therefore  
  
Being bold, let him sit trusting to lofty  
  
Sounds, and brandishing with both hands his  
fire-breathing weapon,  
  
For naught will these avail him, not  
  
‘To fall disgracefully intolerable falls;

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF £SCHYLUS 829  
  
Such wrestler does he now prepare,  
  
Himself against himself, a prodigy most. hard  
to be withstood;  
  
‘Who, indeed, will invent a better flame than  
lightning,  
  
And a loud sound surpassing thunder;  
  
“And shiver the trident, Neptune’s weapon,  
  
‘The marine earth-shaking ail.  
  
Stumbling upon this ill he’ll learn  
  
How different to govern and to serve.  
  
Ch. Ay, as you hope you vent this against  
  
Zeus.  
  
Pr. What will be done, and also what I  
hope, I say.  
  
Ch. And are we to expect that any will rule  
Zeus?  
  
Pr, Even than these more grievous ills he "I  
have.  
  
Ch. How fear’st thou not, hurling such  
words?  
  
Pr. What should I fear, to whom to die has  
not been fated ?  
  
Oh. But suffering more grievous still than  
this he may inflict.  
  
Pr, Then let him do its all is expected by  
me.  
  
Oh. ‘Those reverencing Adrastia are wise.  
  
Pr. Revere, pray, flatter each successive  
ruler,

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880 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ASCHYLUS  
  
‘Me less than nothing Zeus concerns.  
Let him do, let him prevail this short time  
  
As he will, for long he will not rule the gods, —  
But I see here, indeed, Zeus’ runner,  
  
‘The new tyrant’s drudge;  
  
Doubtless he brings some new message.  
  
Paosnenanes, Cxonos, ond mrs,  
Her. To thee, the sophist, the bitterly bitter,  
‘The sinner against gods, the giver of honors  
‘To ephemerals, the thief of fire, I speak;  
The Father commands thee to tell the marriage  
‘Which you boast, by which he falls from powers  
And that too not enigmatically,  
But each particular declare; nor cause me  
Double journeys, Prometheus; for thou see’st  
that  
Zeus is not appeased by such.  
Pr, Solemn-mouthed and full of wisdom  
Is thy speech, as of the servant of the gods.  
Ye newly rule, and think forsooth  
‘To dwell in griefless citadels; have T not seen  
‘Two tyrants fallen from these?  
‘And third I shall behold him ruling now,  
Basest and speediest. Do I seem to thee  
‘To fear and shrink from the new gods?  
Nay, much and wholly I fall short of this.  
‘The way thou cam’st go through the dust  
agains

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS 8831  
  
For thou wilt learn nanght which thou ask’st of  
me,  
Her. Ay, by such insolence before  
You brought yourself into these woes.  
Pr. Plainly know, I would not change  
My ill fortune for thy servitude,  
For better, I think, to serve this rock  
‘Than be the faithful messenger of Father Zeus.  
‘Thus to insult the insulting it is Ht.  
Her. ‘Thou seom’st to enjoy thy present:  
state.  
Pr. Lenjoy? Enjoying thus my enemies  
Would I see; and thee ’mong them I count.  
Her. Dost thou blame me for aught of thy  
misfortunes?  
Pr. Tn plain words, all gods I hate,  
As many as well treated wrong me unjustly.  
Her. Vhear thee raving, no slight ail.  
Pr. Ay, I should ail, if ail one’s foes to  
hate,  
Her. Té prosperous, thou couldst not be  
borne.  
Pr. Ah me!  
Her. This word Zeus does not know.  
Pr. But time growing old teaches all things.  
Her. And still thon know’st not yet how to  
be prudent.  
Pr. For I should not converse with thee a  
servant.

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882 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF £SCHYLUS  
  
Her, Thou seem’st to say naught which the  
Father wishes.  
Pr. And yet his debtor I'd requite the  
  
favor.  
  
Her, Thou mock’st me verily as if I were a  
child.  
  
Pr, And art thou not a child, and simpler  
still than this,  
  
If thou expeotest to learn aught from me?  
‘There is not outrage nor expedient, by which  
Zeus will induce me to declare these things,  
Before he loose these grievous bonds.  
Let there be hurled then flaming fire,  
‘And the white-winged snows, and thunders  
Of the earth, let him confound and mingle all.  
For none of these will bend me till I tell  
By whom 'tis necessary he should fall from  
sovereignty.  
Her. Consider now if these things seem help-  
ful.  
Pr, Long since these were considered and  
resolved.  
Her. Venture, O vain one, venture, at  
length,  
In view of present sufferings to be wise.  
Pr. In vain you vex me, as a wave, exhort-  
ing.  
Ne’er let it come into thy mind that I, fearing  
‘Zeus’ anger, shall become woman-minded,

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF ESCHYLUS 833  
  
And beg him, greatly hated,  
  
‘With womanish upturnings of the hands,  
  
‘To loose me from these bonds. Iam far from  
it.  
  
Her, Though saying much I seem in vain to  
  
speak;  
  
For thou art nothing softened nor appeased  
  
By prayers; but champing at the bitlike a new  
yoked  
  
Colt, thou stragglest and contend’st against  
the reins.  
  
But thou art violent with feoble wisdom.  
  
For stubbornness to him who is not wise,  
  
Tiself alone, is less than nothing strong.  
  
But consider, if thou art not persuaded by my  
words,  
  
‘What storm and triple surge of ills  
  
Will come upon thee not to be avoided for first  
this rugged  
  
Cliff with thunder and lightning flame  
  
‘The Father ll vend, and hide  
  
‘Thy body, and a strong arm will bury thee.  
  
‘When thon hast spent a long length of time,  
  
‘Thou wilt: come back to light; and Zeus’  
  
‘Winged dog, a bloodthirsty eagle, ravenously.  
  
Shall tear the great rag of thy body,  
  
Creeping an uninvited guest all day,  
  
And banquet on thy liver black by eat  
  
Of such suffering expect not any end,

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834 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS  
  
Before some god appear  
Succeeding to thy labors, and wish to go to xay-  
less  
  
Hades, and the dark depths of Tartarus.  
‘Therefore deliberate; since this is not made  
Boasting, but in earnest spoken;  
For to speak falsely does not know the mouth  
Of Zeus, but every word he does. So  
Look about thee, and consider, nor ever think  
Obstinacy better than prudence,  
  
Ch. To us indeed Hermes appears to say not  
  
unseasonable things,  
  
For he direets thee, leaving off  
Self-will, to seck prudent counsel.  
Obey; for it is base to err, for a wise man,  
  
Pr, To me foreknowing these messages  
‘He has uttered, but for a foe to suffer ill  
From foes is naught unseemly.  
‘Therefore \*gainst me let there be hurled  
Fire’s double-pointed curl, and air  
Be provoked with thunder, and a tumult  
Of wild winds; and earth from its foundations  
‘Let a wind rock, and its very roots,  
‘And with a rough suxge mingle  
‘The sea waves with the passages  
Of the heavenly stars, and to black  
‘Tartarus let him quite cast down my  
Body, by necessity’s strong eddies,  
Yet after all he will not kill me.

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PROMETHEUS BOUND OF £SCHYLUS 835  
  
Her. Such words and counsels you may hear  
From the brain-struck.  
For what lacks, he of being mad?  
‘And if prosperous, what doos he cease from  
madness?  
Do you, therefore, who sympathize  
‘With this one’s suffering,  
From these places quick withdraw somewhere,  
Lest the harsh bellowing thunder  
Stupefy your minds.  
Ch. Say something else, and exhort me  
To some purpose; for surely  
‘Thon hast intolerably abused this word.  
How direct me to perform a baseness?  
I wish to suffer with him whate'er is necessary,  
For I have learned to hate betrayers;  
Nor is the pest  
Which I abominate more than this.  
Her. Remember then what I foretell  
Nor by ealamity pursued  
Blame fortune, nor e’er say  
‘That Zeus into unforeseen  
il has east you; surely not, but yourselves  
You yourselves; for kmowing,  
And not suddenly nor clandestinely,  
‘You ‘ll be entangled through your folly  
In an impassable net of woe.  
Pr. Surely indeed, and no more in word,  
Earth is shaken;

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886 PROMETHEUS BOUND OF #SCHYLUS  
  
And a hoarse sound of thunder  
  
Bellows near; and wreaths of lightning  
Flash out fiercely blazing, and whirlwinds dust  
Whirl up; and leap the blasts  
  
Of all winds, ’gainst one another  
Blowing in opposite array ;  
  
And air with sea is mingled;  
  
Such impulse against me from Zeus,  
Producing fear, doth plainly come.  
  
O revered Mother, O Ether  
  
Revolving common light to all,  
  
‘You see me, how unjust things I endure!

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
ELYSIUM.  
  
Oxxepta 1 109-150.  
  
EQuatty by night always,  
  
And by day, having the sun, the good  
  
Lead a life without labor, not disturbing the  
earth  
  
With violent hands, nor the sea water,  
  
For a scanty living; but honored  
  
By the gods, who take pleasure in fidelity to  
oaths,  
  
‘They spend a tearless existences  
  
While the others suffer unsightly pain,  
  
But as many as endured threefold  
  
Probation, keeping the mind from all  
  
Injustice, go the way of Zeus to Kronos’ tower,  
  
Where the ocean breezes blow around  
  
‘The island of the blessed; and flowers of gold  
shine,  
  
Some on the land from dazzling trees,  
  
And the water nourishes others  
  
‘With garlands of these they crown their hands  
‘and hair,

Page-10505

888 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
According to the just decrees of Rhadamanthus,  
  
‘Whom Father Kronos, the husband of Rhea,  
  
Having the highest throne of all, has ready by  
himself as his assistant judge.  
  
Peleus and Kadmus are regarded among these  
  
And his mother brought Achilles, when she had  
  
Persuaded the heart of Zeus with prayers,  
  
‘Who overthrew Hector, Troy's  
  
Unconquered, unshaken column, and gave Cyo-  
nus  
  
‘To death, and Morning’s Zthiop son.  
  
Ouest ¥. 3499,  
  
Always around virtues labor and expense strive  
toward a work  
  
Covered with danger; but those succeeding  
seem to be wise even to the citizens.  
  
Ouran 1.417.  
Dangerless virtues,  
Neither among men, nor in hollow ships,  
‘Ave honorable; but many remember if a fair  
deed is done,  
  
‘ORIGIN OF RHODES.  
Ovxstria va. 100-120,  
  
Ancient sayings of men relate,  
‘That when Zeus and the Immortals divided  
arth,

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 339  
  
Rhodes was not yet apparent in the deep sea;  
  
But in salt depths the island was hid.  
  
And Helios being absent no one claimed for  
him his lot;  
  
So they left him without any region for his  
share,  
  
‘The pure god. And Zeus was abont to make a  
second drawing of lots  
  
For him warned. But he did not permit him;  
  
For he said that within the white sea he had  
seen a certain land springing up from  
the bottom,  
  
Capable of feeding many men, and suitable for  
flocks.  
  
And straightway He commanded golden-filleted  
Lachesis  
  
‘To stretch forth her hands, and not contradict  
  
The great oath of the gods, but with the son of  
  
Kronos  
  
Assent that, to the bright air being sent by his  
nod,  
  
It should hereafter be his prize. And his  
words were fully performed,  
  
Meeting with truth. ‘The island sprang from  
the watery  
  
Seas and the genial Father of penetrating  
beams,  
  
Ruler of fire-breathing horses, has it.

Page-10507

840 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
Ovrate1a vin. 95, 96.  
  
A man doing fit things  
Forgets Hades.  
  
HERCULES NAMES THE HILL OF KRONOS.  
Onxoeeta x. 50-68,  
  
He named the Hill of Kronos, for before name-  
less,  
  
While CEnomaus ruled, it was moistened with  
much snows  
  
And at this first rite the Fates stood by,  
  
And Time, who alone proves  
  
Unchanging truth.  
  
OLYMPIA AT EVENING.  
  
Oneoeera x. 85-82.  
  
‘With the javelin Phrastor struck the mark;  
‘And Eniceus cast the stone afar,  
  
Whirling his hand, above them all,  
  
And with applause it rushed  
  
‘Through a great tumult;  
  
“And the lovely evening light  
  
Of the fair-faced moon shone on the scene,

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 841  
  
FAME,  
  
Ocxoerea =, 100-117,  
‘When, having done fair things, O Agesidamus,  
‘Without the reward of song, a man may come  
‘To Hades’ rest, vainly aspiring  
  
He obtains with toil some short delight.  
  
But the sweet-voiced lyre  
  
And the sweet flute bestow some favor;  
  
For Zeus’ Pierian daughters  
  
Have wide fame.  
  
TO ASOPICHUS, OF ORCHOMENOS, ON HIS VIC-  
‘TORY IN THE SFADIC COURSE.  
  
Ouxsena aa.  
  
© ye, who inhabit for your lot the seat of the  
Cephisian  
  
Streams, yielding fair steeds, renowned Graces,  
  
Ruling bright Orchomenos,  
  
Protectors of the ancient race of Minyze,  
  
Hear, when T pray.  
  
For with you are all pleasant  
  
‘And sweet things to mortals:  
  
If wise, if fair, if noble,  
  
‘Any man. For neither do the gods,  
  
‘Without the august Graces,  
  
‘Rule the dance,  
  
Nor feasts; but stewards

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842 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
Of all works in heaven,  
  
Having placed their seats  
  
By golden-bowed Pythian Apollo,  
  
‘They reverence the eternal power  
  
Of the Olympian Father.  
  
August Aglaia and song-loving  
  
Enuphrosyne, children of the mightiest god,  
  
Hear now, and Thalia loving song,  
  
Beholding this band, in favorable fortune  
  
Lightly dancing; for in Lydian  
  
‘Manner meditating,  
  
Lome celebrating Asopichus,  
  
Since Minya by thy means is victor at the Olym-  
pic games.  
  
‘Now to Persephone’s  
  
Black-walled house go, Echo,  
  
Bearing to his father the famous news;  
  
‘That seeing Cleodamus thou mayest say,  
  
‘That in renowned Pisa’s vale  
  
His son crowned his young hair  
  
‘With plumes of illustrious contests.  
  
70 THE LYRE.  
Perma 1.811.  
‘Thou extinguishest even the spear-like bolt  
Of everlasting fire. And the eagle sleeps on  
the sceptre of Zeus,  
Drooping his swift wings on either side,  
‘The king of birds.

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 843  
  
Prema 1, 25-28,  
  
‘Whatever things Zeus has not loved  
Are terrified, hearing  
  
‘The voice of the Pierians,  
  
On earth and the immeasurable sea.  
  
Perma 159-101  
  
‘A plain-spoken man brings advantage to every  
government, —  
  
‘Toa monarchy, and when the  
  
Impetnous crowd, and when the wise, rule a city.  
  
Asa whole the third Pythian Ode, to Hiero,  
on his victory in the single-horse race, is one of  
the most memorable. We extract first the ac-  
count of  
ASCULAPIUS.  
Previa mi. 8-100,  
As many therefore as came suffering  
‘From spontaneous ulcers, or wounded  
In their limbs with glittering stecl,  
Or with the far-cast stone,  
Or by the summer’s heat o’ercome in body,  
Or by winter, relieving he saved from  
Various ills; some cherishing  
With soothing strains,  
Others having drunk refreshing draughts, or  
applying

Page-10511

B44 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
Remedies to the limbs, others by cutting off he  
made erect.  
  
But even wisdom is bound by gain,  
  
And gold appearing in the hand persuaded even,  
him, with its bright reward,  
  
‘To bring a man from death  
  
Already overtaken. But the Kronian, smiting  
  
‘With both hands, quickly took away  
  
‘The breath from his breasts;  
  
And the rushing thunderbolt hurled him to  
death.  
  
It is necessary for mortal minds  
  
‘To sock what is reasonable from the divinities,  
  
Knowing what is before the feet, of what des-  
tiny we are.  
  
Do not, my soul, aspire to the life  
  
Of the Tmmortals, but exhaust the practicable  
  
means.  
  
In the conclusion of the ode the poet reminds  
the victor, Hiero, that adversity alternates with  
prosperity in the life of man, as in the instance  
of  
  
PELBUS AND CADMUS.  
Prema m. 145-205,  
  
‘The Immortals distribute to men  
  
With one good two  
Evils, The foolish, therefore,

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 845  
  
Are not able to bear these with grace,  
But the wise, turning the fair outside,  
  
But thee the lot of good fortune follows,  
  
For surely great Destiny  
  
Looks down upon a king ruling the people,  
  
Tf on any man. But a secure life  
  
‘Was not to Peleus, son of Eacus,  
  
Nor to godlike Kadimus,  
  
Who yet are said to have had  
  
‘The greatest happiness  
  
OF mortals, and who heard  
  
‘The song of the golden-filleted Muses,  
  
On the mountain, and in seven-gated Thebes,  
  
‘When the one married fair-eyed Harmonia,  
  
And the other Thetis, the illustrious daughter  
of wiso-counseling Nereus.  
  
And the gods feasted with both;  
  
And they saw the royal children of Kronos.  
  
On golden seats, and received  
  
‘Marriage gifts; and having exchanged  
  
Former toils for the favor of Zeus,  
  
‘They made erect the heart.  
  
But in course of time 3  
  
His threo daughters robbed the one  
  
Of some of his serenity by acuto  
  
Sufferings; when Father Zeus, forsooth, came  
  
To the lovely couch of white-armed Thyone.  
  
And the otber’s ebild, whom only the immortal

Page-10513

846 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
‘Thetis bore in Phthia, losing  
  
His life in war by arrows,  
  
Being consumed by fire excited  
‘The lamentation of the Danaans.  
But if any mortal has in his  
Mind the way of truth,  
  
Tt is necessary to make the best  
Of what befalls from the blessed.  
For various are the blasts  
  
Of high-flying winds.  
  
‘The happiness of men stays not a long time,  
‘Though fast it follows rushing on.  
  
Humble in humble estate, lofty in lofty,  
I will be; and the attending demon  
  
I will always reverence in my mind,  
  
Serving according to my means.  
  
But if Heaven extend to me kind wealth,  
  
T have hope to find lofty fame hereafter.  
Nestor and Lycian Sarpedon —  
  
‘They are the fame of men —  
  
From resounding words which skillful artists  
Sung, we know. :  
  
For virtue through renowned  
  
Song is lasting.  
  
But for few is it easy to obtain.

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR SAT  
  
APOLLO.  
Perma ¥. 81-00,  
  
He bestowed the lyre,  
And he gives the muse to whom he wishes,  
Bringing peaceful serenity to the breast.  
  
MAN.  
  
‘Pysnta vu. 198,  
  
‘The phantom of a shadow are men.  
  
HHIYPSBUS’ DAUGHTER CYRENE.  
Prnma re, 81-14,  
  
He reared the white-armed child Cyrene,  
  
Who loved neither the alternating motion of  
‘the loom,  
  
Nor the superintendence of feasts,  
  
‘With the pleasures of companions;  
  
But, with javelins of steel  
  
‘And the sword contending,  
  
‘To slay wild beasts;  
  
Affording surely much  
  
‘And tranquil peace to her father’s herds;  
  
Spending little sleep  
  
Upon her eyelids,  
  
‘As her sweet hedfellow, creeping on at dawn.

Page-10515

848 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
‘THE HEIGHT OF GLORY.  
Prrma x. 38-48,  
  
Fortunate and celebrated  
  
By the wise is that man  
  
Who, conquering by his hands or virtne  
  
Of his feet, takes the highest prizes  
  
‘Through daring and strength,  
  
And living still sees his youthful son  
  
Deservedly obtaining Pythian crowns.  
  
‘The brazen heaven is not yet accessible to  
him.  
  
‘But whatever glory we  
  
Of mortal race may reach,  
  
He goes beyond, even to the boundaries  
  
Of navigation. But neither in ships, nor going  
‘on foot,  
  
Couldst thou find the wonderful way to the  
contests of the Hyperboreans.  
  
TO ARISTOCLIDES, VICTOR AT THE NEMEAN  
Games.  
  
‘Nera mn. 82-97.  
If, being beautiful,  
  
And doing things like to his form,  
  
‘The child of Aristophanes  
  
‘Went to the height of manliness, no further

Page-10516

TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 349.  
  
Is it easy to go over the untraveled sea,  
Beyond the pillars of Hercules.  
  
‘THE YOUTH OF ACHILLES,  
Nrowea m1. 69-80,  
  
One with native virtues  
  
Greatly prevails; but he who  
  
Possesses acquired talents, an obscure man,  
  
Aspiring to various things, never with fearless  
  
Foot advances, but tries  
  
A myriad virtues with inefficient mind,  
  
Yellow-haired Achilles, meanwhile, remaining  
in the house of Philyra,  
  
Being a boy played  
  
Great deeds; often brandishing  
  
Tron-pointed javelins in his hands,  
  
Swift as the winds, in fight he wrought death to  
savage lions;  
  
And he slew boars, and brought their bodies  
  
Palpitating to Kronian Centaurus,  
  
As soon as six years old. And all the while  
  
‘Antomis and bold Athene admired him,  
  
Slaying stags without dogs or treacherous nets;  
  
For he conquered them on foot.  
  
   
  
Neatea av, 68-70.  
  
‘Whatever virtues sovereign destiny has given me,  
well know that time, creeping on,  
‘Will fulfill what was fated.

Page-10517

3800 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
Nemes v.18.  
  
‘Tho kindred of Pytheas, a victor in the Ne-  
mean games, had wished to procure an ode from  
Pindar for less than three drachme, asserting  
that they could purchase a statne for that sum.  
In the following lines he nobly reproves their  
meanness, and asserts the value of his labors,  
which, unlike those of the statuary, will bear  
‘the fame of the hero to the ends of the earth.  
  
No image-maker am I, who being still make  
statues  
  
Standing on the same base. But on every  
  
‘Merchant-ship and in every boat, sweet song,  
  
Go from gina to announce that Lampo’s son,  
  
Mighty Pytheas,  
  
Has conquered the paneratian crown at the Ne-  
mean games.  
  
THE DIVINE IN MAN.  
  
Neotea vi 118,  
  
One the race of men and of god:  
And from one mother  
  
We all breathe,  
  
But quite different power  
Divides us, so that the one is nothing,  
But the brazen heaven remains always

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 851  
  
‘A secure abode. Yet in some respect we are  
related,  
  
Either in mighty mind or form, to the Inmor-  
tals;  
  
Although not knowing  
  
‘To what resting-place,  
  
By day or night, Fate has written that we shall  
run,  
  
THE TREATMENT OF AJAX.  
Nawea vn, 44-51,  
  
Tn secret votes the Danaans aided Ulysses;  
  
And Ajax, deptived of golden arms, struggled  
with death,  
  
Surely, wounds of another kind they wrought  
  
Tn the warm flesh of their foes, waging war  
  
‘With the man-defending spear.  
  
‘THE VALUE OF FRIENDS.  
Newman van. 68-75,  
  
‘Virtue increases, being sustained by wise men  
and just,  
  
As when a tree shoots up with gentle dews into  
the liquid air.  
  
‘There are various uses of friendly men;  
  
But chiefest in labors; and even pleasure  
  
Requires to place some pledge before the eyes.

Page-10519

852 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
DEATH OF AMPHIARAUS.  
Neowwa 1x. 41-66,  
  
Once they led to seven-guted Thebes an army  
of men, not according  
  
To the lucky Aight of birds. Nor did the Kro-  
nian,  
  
Brandishing his lightning, impel to march  
  
From home insane, but to abstain from the way.  
  
But to apparent destruction  
  
‘The host made haste to go, with brazen arms  
  
And horse equipments, and on the banks  
  
Of Ismenus, defending sweet return,  
  
‘Their white-Aowered bodies fattened fire,  
  
For seven pyres devoured young-limbed.  
  
‘Men. But to Amphiarans  
  
Zeus rent the deep-bosomed earth  
  
With his mighty thunderbolt,  
  
And buried him with his horses,  
  
Ere, being strack in the back  
  
By the spear of Periclymenus, his warlike  
  
Spirit was disgraced.  
  
For in demonic fears  
  
Flee even the sons of gods.  
  
CASTOR AND POLLUX.  
  
Neorra x. 159-171,  
Pollux, son of Zeus, shared his immortality  
with his brother Castor, son of Tyndarus, and

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 858  
  
while one was in heaven, the other remained in  
the infernal regions, and they alternately lived  
and died every day, or, as some say, every six  
months. While Castor lies mortally wounded  
by Idas, Pollux prays to Zeus, either to restore  
his brother to life, or permit him to die with  
him, to which the god answers, —  
  
. Nevertheless, I give thee  
  
Thy choice of these: if, indeed, fleeing  
  
Death and odious age,  
  
‘You wish to dwell on Olympus,  
  
With Athene and black-speared Mars,  
  
‘Thou hast this lots  
  
But if thou thinkest to fight  
  
For thy brother, and share  
  
All things with him,  
  
Half the time thou mayest breathe, being be-  
  
neath the earth,  
  
And half in the golden halls of heaven,  
  
‘The god thus having spoken, he did not  
  
Entertain a double wish in his mind.  
  
And he released first the eye, and then the  
  
voice,  
  
Of brazen-mitred Castor.

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854 TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR  
  
Tom.  
Isrmusa 1 65-71.  
  
One reward of labors is sweet to one man, one  
to another, —  
  
To the shepherd, and the plougher, and the  
Dird-catcher,  
  
And whom the sea nourishes.  
  
But every one is tasked to ward off  
  
Grievous famine from the stomach,  
  
THE VENALITY OF THE MUSE.  
Isrroeik m 9-18  
  
Then the Muse was not  
  
Fond of gain, nor a laboring woman;  
  
Nor were the sweet-sounding,  
  
Soothing strains  
  
Of Terpsichore sold,  
  
With silvered front.  
  
But now she directs to observe the saying  
  
Of the Argive, coming very near the truth,  
  
‘Who eried, “Money, money, man,”  
  
Being bereft of property and friends.  
  
HERCULES’ PRAYER CONCERNING “AJAX, SON  
OF TELAMON.  
  
Tenia vi. 62-73,  
  
“If ever, O Father Zeus, thou hast heard  
‘My supplication with willing mind,

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 855  
  
Now I beseech thee, with prophetic  
  
Prayer, grant a bold son from Eribea  
  
To this man, my fated guests  
  
Rugged in body  
  
As the hide of this wild beast  
  
Which now surrounds me, which, first of all  
  
‘My contests, I slew once in Nemeas and let his  
mind agree.”  
  
‘To him thus having spoken, Heaven sent  
  
A great eagle, king of birds,  
  
‘And sweet joy thrilled him inwardly.  
  
‘THE FREEDOM OF GREECE.  
  
First at Artemisium  
‘The children of the Athenians laid the shining  
Foundation of freedom,  
And at Salamis and Myeale,  
And in Platwa, making it firm  
As adamant.  
  
FROM STRADO.  
Arouo.  
Having risen he went  
Over land and sea,  
And stood over the vast summits of mountains,  
  
And threaded the recesses, penetrating to the  
foundations of the groves.

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856 TRANSLATIONS PROM PINDAR  
  
FROM PLUTARCH,  
  
Heaven being willing, even on an osier thou  
mayest sail.  
  
[Thus rhymed by the old translator of Plutarch:  
  
“Were it tho will of heaven, an osier bough  
  
‘Were vessel safe enough the seas to plough.”]  
  
FROM SEXTUS EMPIRICUS.  
  
Honors and crowns of the tempest-footed  
Horses delight one  
  
Others live in golden chambers;  
  
‘And some even are pleased traversing securely  
The swelling of the sea in a swift ship.  
  
FROM STOBEUS.  
  
This I will say to thee:  
  
The lot of fair and pleasant things  
  
It behooves to show in public to all the peoples  
  
But if any adverse calamity sent from heaven  
befall  
  
Men, this it becomes to bury in darkness.  
  
Pindar said of the physiologists, that they  
“plucked the unripe fruit of wisdom.”  
  
Pindar said that “hopes were the dreams of  
those awake.”

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TRANSLATIONS FROM PINDAR 857  
  
FROM CLEMENS OF ALEXANDRIA.  
  
‘To Heaven it is possible from black  
  
Night to make arise unspotted light,  
  
And with cloud-blackening darkness to obscure  
‘The pure splendor of day.  
  
First, indeed, the Fates brought the wise-coun-  
seling  
  
Uranian Themis, with golden horses,  
  
By the fountains of Ocean to the awful ascent  
  
Of Olympus, along the shining way,  
  
‘To be the first spouse of Zeus the Deliverer.  
  
And she bore the golden-flleted, fair-wristed  
  
Hours, preservers of good things.  
  
   
  
Equally tremble before God  
And a man dear to God.  
  
FROM ZLIUS ARISTIDES.  
  
Pindar used such exaggerations [in praise of  
poetry] as to say that even the gods themselves,  
when at his marriage Zeus asked if they wanted  
anything, “asked him to make certain gods for  
them who should celebrate these great. works  
and all his ereation with speech and song.”

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POEMS  
  
INSPIRATION  
  
Ip with light head erect T sing,  
  
‘Though all the Muses lend their force,  
‘From my poor love of anything,  
  
‘The verse is weak and shallow as its source.  
  
But if with bended neck I grope,  
  
Listening behind me for my wit,  
  
With faith superior to hope,  
  
More anxious to keep back than forward it;  
  
‘Making my soul accomplice there  
  
Unto the flame my heart hath lit,  
  
Then will the verse forever wear, —  
  
‘Time cannot bend the line which God has writ,  
  
T hearing get, who had but ears,  
  
And sight, who had but eyes before;  
  
T moments live, who lived but years,  
  
And truth discern, who knew but learning’s  
lore.

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POEMS 359  
  
‘Now chiefly is my natal hour,  
  
And only now my prime of lifes  
  
Of manhood’s strength it is the flower,  
  
"Tis peace’s end, and war's beginning strife.  
  
1k comes in summer's broadest noon,  
  
By a gray wall, or some chance place,  
Unseasoning time, insulting June,  
  
And vexing day with its presuming face,  
  
I will not doubt the love untold,  
  
Which not my worth nor want hath bought,  
Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,  
And to this evening hath me brought.  
  
PILGRIMS  
  
“Have you not seen,  
In ancient times,  
Pilgrims pass by  
‘Toward other climes,  
With shining faces,  
Youthful and strong,  
‘Mounting this hill  
With speech and with song?”  
  
“Ab, my good sir,  
know not those ways:

Page-10527

360  
  
POEMS  
  
Little my knowledge,  
‘Tho’ many my days.  
When I have slumbered,  
T have heard sounds  
  
‘As of travelers passing  
These my grounds.  
  
“oD was a sweet amusie  
Waited them by,  
Teoula not tell  
If afar off or nigh.  
Unless I dreamed it,  
This was of yor  
I never told it  
To mortal before,  
Never remembered  
But in my dreams  
‘What to me waking  
A miracle seems.”  
  
   
  
TO A STRAY FOWL  
  
Poor bird! destined to lead thy life  
  
Far in the adventurous west,  
  
And here to be debarred to-night  
  
From thy aceustomed nests  
  
‘Must thou fall back upon old instinct now,  
  
a  
  
   
  
nigh extinet under man’s fickle care?  
  
Did Heaven bestow its quenchless inner light,

Page-10528

POEMS 361  
  
So long ago, for thy small want to-night?  
  
Why stand’st upon thy toes to erow so late?  
  
‘The moon is deaf to thy low feathered fates  
  
Or dost thou think so to possess the night,  
  
And people the drear dark with thy brave  
sprite?  
  
And now with anxious eye thon look’st about,  
  
While the relentless shade draws on its veil,  
  
For some sure shelter from approaching dews,  
  
And the insidious steps of nightly foes.  
  
I fear imprisonment has dulled thy wit,  
  
Or ingrained servitude extinguished it.  
  
But no; dim memory of the days of yore,  
  
By Brahmapootra and the Jumna’s shore,  
  
‘Where thy proud race flew swiftly o’er the  
heath,  
  
And sought its food the jungle’s shade heneath,  
  
Has taught thy wings to seck yon friendly  
trees,  
  
As erst by Indus? banks and far Ganges.  
  
   
   
  
THE BLACK KNIGHT  
  
Br sure your fate  
  
Doth keep apart its state,  
  
Not linked with any band,  
  
Even the nobles of the land;  
  
In tented fields with eloth of gold  
No place doth hold

Page-10529

362 POEMS  
  
But is more chivalrous than they are,  
And sigheth for a nobler wars  
  
‘A finer strain its trumpet sings,  
  
‘A brighter gleam its armor flings.  
‘The life that I aspire to live  
  
No man proposeth mes  
  
Only the promise of my heart  
  
Wears its emblazonry.  
  
THE MOON  
  
‘Time wears her not 5 she doth his chavit guide;  
Mortality below her ot is placed.  
Raueo.  
  
‘Tar full-orbed moon with unchanged ray  
‘Mounts up the eastern sky,  
  
Not doomed to these short nights for aye,  
‘But shining steadily.  
  
She does not wane, but my fortune,  
Which her rays do not bless;  
  
‘My wayward path declineth soon,  
But she shines not the less.  
  
And if she faintly glimmers here,  
And paléd is her light,  
  
Yet alway in her proper sphere  
Sho’s mistress of the night.

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POEMS 363  
  
OMNIPRESENCE  
  
‘Wuo equaleth the coward’s haste,  
And still inspires the faintest heart;  
  
‘Whose lofty fame is not disgraced,  
‘Though it assume the lowest part.  
  
INSPIRATION  
  
Ir thon wilt but stand by my ear,  
  
‘When through the field thy anthem’s rung,  
‘When that is done I will not fear  
  
But the same power will abet my tongue.  
  
PRAYER  
  
Great God! I ask thee for no meaner pelf  
  
Than that I may not disappoint myself  
  
‘That in my conduct I may soar as high  
  
As I ean now discern with this clear eyo;  
  
‘And next in value, which thy kindness lends,  
  
‘That I may greatly disappoint my friends,  
  
Howo’er they think or hope it that may be,  
  
‘They may not dream how thou ’st distinguished  
mes  
  
‘That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,  
  
And my life practice more than my tongue  
saith;

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364 POEMS  
  
‘That my low conduct may not show,  
Nor my relenting lines,  
  
‘That I thy purpose did not know,  
Or overrated thy designs.  
  
‘MISSION  
  
I’ve searched my faculties around,  
  
‘To learn why life to me was lent:  
  
I will attond the faintest sound,  
  
And then declare to man what God hath meant.  
  
DELAY  
  
No generous action ean delay  
Or thwart our higher, steadier aims;  
  
But if sincere and true are they,  
  
It will arouse our sight, and nerve our frames.

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