

July 1 Hot and dry.

2d

3. Sprinkles of rain from S.W.

4 Cooler. A shower last night, 1/2 inch water.

P.M. Two pretty heavy showers this afternoon Rain enough. Spend the day at home. Pick two crates of rasp this afternoon.

5. Clear and cool, a lovely day.

6. Clear and beautiful and very cool. Almost too cool to sit in

summer house this morning. My sleep has been as good as of old for some weeks now. My life quite uneventful. No thoughts, no company, but little correspondence, no new books and but rare reference to the old ones. Julian my only companion. Begin girdling grape vines yesterday.

8 Great heat.

15 Hot day after a cool streak. heavy shower at 5 1/2 P.M.

16 Grape rot begins.

17 Go to Highland.

18 Begin spraying vines to-day. Too late, no doubt; expect

to lose entire grape crop by black rot.

Hell without and hell within. Black rot on one side of me and a "brawling woman" on the other.

19 Cold and showery; showers light. Rarely see it so cold in July, doubt if it checks the rot.

20 Too cold this morning to sit in the summer house. My hands were cold this morning as I went for milk. Mercury 52.

21st Still cold, 50 degrees Highland this morning. Bright and dry to-day. Rot still at work slowly.

24. A visit from Dr John Johnston of Bolton, England, a modest quiet, interesting man, 36 years old, born at Annan; went to school in the Academy where Carlyle once taught. A canny young Scotchman. Like him first rate, not much of a talker, a great lover of Whitman whom he had just visited. Mrs B. would not sit at the table with us, nor hardly be civil to Johnston. The devil in her was especially active. He had a pictures of his father and mother, and of his wife. Goes to Canada to-day to visit relatives and then home.

25. Rain sets in and continues all day slowly.

26. Rains again to-day till noon. About 2 inches of water since Thursday night. The grape rot is happy. Expect to see it sweep the vineyards now.

27. Sunday, still, muggy, hot.

31 Go to Sherwoods and spend the day. Very hot, in the nineties. Shower at night.

August 1st Hot and wet.

2d Hot and muggy.

3d Hot, wind S.W. much humidity.

4. Hot and oppressive, wind S.W. Expect every day to see grape rot start anew.

6. Hot and muggy. Improving in afternoon. A delicious day in the woods.

8 The funeral day of old Mr. Sterling, my Scotch neighbor and friend; died suddenly two days ago; got drunk and never got sober. Born in Rutherglen near Glasgow 80 years ago; lived long in G. and worked at his trade of carpentering; worked in the Arcade. Came to this country 30 years ago and settled back here in the woods when his wife died 10 years ago. Came from

a great city to a rocky solitude, and was apparently content. A racy, canny Scotchman, with good deal of dignity of character at times. His one failing a passion for strong drink, which got the better of him at times. I was always glad to meet him and shall miss him much.

16. Our first shipment of grapes last night. Cool and dry.

21. Shipped Moors Early to-day.

24. Heavy showers the past week at night. To-day cold, over cast, autumnal. Yesterday likewise. Frosts in N.W. Girdled Champions all off, and part of rest.

27 Heavy down pour last night, heaviest of the summer; ground full of water this morning. This P.M. bright and warm. Began shipping warden grapes to-day. Cut 280 lbs. Moors E. and champion all off. Cut one crate of Delawares also.

Sept 7. Sunday; Very busy all past week getting off the grapes weather favorable till yesterday afternoon when we had a tremendous down pour which washed the side hill badly -- a thunder shower without any thunder -- the heaviest of the season. Del. and Wordens about all off; Concords about half. Prices high. Best peaches 4 dollars



- Sept 13 A wet warm week; rain 3 or 4 days, a disgusting rain and mist. Finished Wordens and Del. first of the week.
- 17 A clear fine day after nearly ten days of rain. One of the wettest Sept. so far I remember in a long time. Rains very heavy and protracted all over the country. In H. in afternoon.
21. Still fair, and getting cool and fall like, about the last of the Concords off yesterday.
- The bee does not gather his honey from the flowers; it is mainly his product; What he gathers from flowers is

sweet water -- diluted grape sugar. Out of this she makes [~~crossed out: his~~] her honey by a kind of digestion and assimilation. It is not honey till the bee is added -- something special and peculiar to itself. It is precisely so with the poet. He gets only the raw material of his poetry from Nature -- himself must be added, his spiritual and emotional quality before it becomes poetry. Indeed it is so with true literature of any kind. 'Tis what the man himself adds to his facts or truths or teaching that makes it literature.

Sept 24. Start for N.Y. to-day for 10 days vacation. Pass a few hours in N.Y. with Gilder, then to Johnsons at Bay Shore at 3 P.M. Day fine.

25 and 26 At J's have a pleasant time. Eat and sleep like a boy. Meet a Mrs Mapes who was saved from death last winter by skillful surgery, a bad case of pneumonia, both lungs invaded. When they saw and she felt she was dying they pumped oxygen into her lungs -- only a small space at the top not congested. She said her feelings were, "Oh do let me die, do not prolong my agony. I am dying, nothing can save me, leave me in peace" Then

tumors formed upon her lungs and they opened her through the back, put in pipes and drew the pus[crossed out: s] and water off, and thus faught the disease and conquered. For many weeks afterward she was out of her mind, ideed a maniac from the [crossed out: use] effects of the morphine administered. Gradually she came to herself and is now quite well again.

27 Go to Camden to-day to see Walt. Find him eating his dinner and eating like a well man and looking like one. Am quite shocked at the chaos amid which he lives and which seems to grow worse from year to year. Never saw anything like it in my life. It

fairly stuns one. The table at which he sat was piled up with books and papers and letters as long as they would lay on apperently pitched on with a fork. The dishes holding his dinner were pushed into this mass, how I do not know. All about him the chairs and other tables were piled full and the floor was covered nearly knee deep, an avalanche of litter, dust over all. Another Such room perhaps the world does not hold. It is so terrible that one feels as if he may have to be judged as a poet by that room. The effect was depressing. He is better than for 3 years past except his locomotion and hearing, which are failing. I sit and talk

till Horace Traubel appears at 5, when I go home with him to tea, and then to Harneds for the night.

28 A bright Sunday. See Walt again at 11, in the lower room, where more order reigns and where in his big chair by the window he looks as of old.

At 5 he comes to dinner at Harneds and we have a fine time. He eats and talks as of old. At 7 he is wheeled home in his chair and I walk by his side and take my leave of him. Then to Church (Unitarian) and listen to a bloodless sermon and nearly fall asleep. How we love the concrete, the real, in poetry, in literature, in art. Indeed

will have it. No wonder then, the people want it in religion. Something tangible and real that takes hold of their concrete natures. Hence the vitality and power of the old creeds. It is not moonshine, however false. It seems real. Such airy nothings as the Unitarians offer can never take hold of the people, or of me either. The old theology outrages one, the new starves one.

29. Bright day. Back to N.Y.

Oct. 1st Lovely day.

2d ditto.

3 Rode all day through Mass. From Boston to Po'keepsie

Am truly astonished at the look of this famous state; not till I struck our own state in Dutchess Co. did I see a good farming country. It seems to me that less than 25 per cent of the land I saw from the car window was under cultivation, or was worth cultivating. A flat country all grown up to bushes and scrubby pines. Only when we struck the towns was there signs of thrift and prosperity. What a contrast Dutches Co presented! here one spread of fine farms and homesteads. In the Connecticut valley about Northampton is a vast area of beautiful prairie land and that is all I saw till I reached N.Y.



4 Lovely day. At home again.

5 Fine day: get track of a bee tree back in the woods.

8 Cool day of sun and shadow after two days of rain. No frost yet. The white throats are here.

15. A bright lovely day. Go out home in the morning. How deep and strange my feelings as I catch sight of my native hills from the train. I had never before seen it under just such conditions; none of my family there, and the farm mine. Take dinner with sister Abigail and then PM walk up to the old place. George thrashing buckwheat. [crossed out: ???] Walk over the hill and down to Tylers. Spend the night with George. Find he is doing well

and can pay the rent. He and Maria have worked like slaves and have done all that could be done. I conclude to let the farm to him for another year.

16 Walk over to Tom Smiths. A bright day with signs of approaching rain. In after noon go over to Curtis'es and spend the night. Have great pleasure in seeing him again. In the morning early he awoke me by calling "John" to his son up stairs. I answered automatically as in the old days when he called me as a boy to get up to milk. A pouring rain all night.

17 Go out to Edens on noon train. Bright and fair. A pleasant visit to Edens. Hiram is there and it seems like old times. How different

from my last visit there!

18 Bright day. I climb the mountain in search of basswood trees for crates. Wander about in the still woods on the damp newly fallen leaves, listening to the drumming of the partridges and selecting the tall trees. Eden goes fox hunting, and Hiram goes to the neighbors. Ed. chops wood. Seeing my people again, and my native hills satisfies a longing that has been very keen all summer.

Eden seems to be doing well on his farm and I think may keep it.

19 Rain and rain. Return home in afternoon.

24. Cold rain all day from the north, a cyclone sweeping the coast. No frost yet to kill tomatoes. Much rain. Work at hauling soil in vineyard and digging out rocks and stones.

Nov 10. A fine month so far, no rain to speak of and little frost. Getting quite dry. Only once before this season have ten days elapsed without rain. At work all this month grubbing up trees and rock back of the barn. Health good and life fairly enjoyable. Domestic skies quite bright.

Election Day (the 4th) a fair day, partly overcast. The result of the elections a hard blow to

Republicans and high tariff men, suits me, who, three years ago cried halt to the tariff bucks.

14 A lovely day, genuine indian summer. At work with Sherwood laying a gutter along the road in the vineyard.

15 Overcast; thick, still, threatening rain, still at work on the gutter.

16 Lovely day. More Indian summer. Julian and I wak over to the steam shovel. Signs of storm at sundown.

17. Thick and murky. Rain began in morning, now at 11 a.m. raining hard.

18 Fair agian. Rain not severe.

19, 20, 21, and 22d all fair days and mild.

23 Sunday. Our first snow squall this morning. The great flakes came down thick and fast for nearly an hour. Now at 10 A.M. sky nearly clear, sun shining, and snow melting. It was only a light white wash Finished clearing up the woods back of the barn yesterday. Grapes all trimmed and laid down.

27. Thanksgiving. Bright; dry, hard cold, freezing nearly all day. A domestic tornado. A long dry spell, the first of the season. Looks to me now like a cold winter.

28 Clear, cold, still; not a cloud. Work at the gutter in vineyard with Sherwood

30 Mild, clear in afternoon, hazy. An Indian summer look. Ice on the ponds yesterday  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch. No rain yet.

Dec 1. Clear, dry and cold, wind in North.

7. A week of quite snug winter weather; mercury down to 8 degrees on Tuesday the 2d. Some snow and hail and rain. The ground now covered with a thin coat of amil. The stones covered with ice. No ice in river yet.

14 Another rather snug winters week. Much ice on the river said to be 7 or 8 inches on the ponds. No little boat this week. no snow, no rain. Worked nearly

all the week on lot back of barn

-- Is it science or is it democracy, or the time spirit, that has caused the world to become more and more secular, less and less religious for the past 200 years? With all our Christianity, the ancient communities, Egypt, Greece, Rome, were much more religious than we are, that is their lives, both individual and natural, faced much more toward the unseen supernatural powers. The gods played the leading part in their histories; they really play no part at all in ours. Religious motives, fears, hopes etc. entered largely into every act, national and individual. At Plataea, both the Greeks and Persians refrained for 10 days from making



the attack because the oracles and other victims were unfavorable. The armies had their diviners, upon whose word the action hinged. No expedition was undertaken without consulting the oracles, and no action fought without [crossed out: ???] offering sacrifices. Indeed life in the ancient nations was a drama in which the gods always played the leading parts. What havoc was played with the Greeks at Syracuse because of an eclipse of the sun or moon. Religion bore no relation to morality with the ancient races; the most shocking and revolting crimes were committed in the name of the gods; the gods themselves were often immoral. But ours is a religion of morality. Indeed morality is becoming

more and more, religion as such, less and less.

-- My first reading in Schopenhauer lately -- "The Wisdom of Life" and wisdom there is in the book and penetration. The style is clear simple and direct, not at all heavy and cumbersome, like most German writing

His pessimism crops out here and there, as in this sentence. "There are more things in the world productive of pain than of pleasure" He says the meaning of Philistine is a man with no mental needs -- he is not a son of the muses. He says all the wit there is in the world is useless to him who has none. He says when modesty was made a virtue it was very advantageous to the fools. Fame is something to be won; honor something not something to be lost. Fame never

can be lost, but honor once gone is gone forever. The dishonorable act can never be recalled.

Vulgarity, he says, is will without intellect; ordinary people take an interest in things only so far as they excite their will, that is their interest is a purely personal one. Card-playing is a mere tickling of the will. But a man of intellect is capable of taking an interest in things in the way of mere knowledge, with no admixture of will; nay such an interest is a necessity to him. The philistine has will, but not intellect.

I myself am deficient in will; my wife deficient in intellect -- "Old Jack Sprat could eat no fat", etc. Between us both there is no peace in the household

The book is upon happiness, and the conclusion of the whole matter is that a man is happy only by reason of what he is in and of himself. He hates Heg[~~crossed out:le~~]el, and says this of Goethe: "It is a great [~~crossed out: mistake to~~] [??] of folly to sacrifice the inner for the outer man, to give the whole or the greater part of ones quiet leisure and independence for splendor, rank, pomp, titles and honor. This is what Goethe did. My good luck drew me quite in the other direction."

Dec. 20 The tenth anniversary of Mother's death, the day clear, still, cold, good sleighing, 6 or 7 inches of heavy snow three days ago on a hard frozen icy ground; river nearly closed, or closed above and below with a large open space in front of us.

Mercury down to 4 degrees this morning.

I sit in my study and try to write again on Analogy, my old theme of 20 years ago. Julian on the hard snow with his sleigh. Mrs. B. busy and cross in the house.

21 It is interesting to note how man perpetually makes God in his own image. As man becomes more and more humanitarian he makes God more and more humanitarian. God grows benevolent as man grows benevolent. He is no longer the implacable governor and ruler of the universe, he is our heavenly Father, more ready to tender forgiveness than we are to ask it. I do not know whether or not God made man, but it is certain that man made God.

26. A big snow storm from N.E. began early this morning. Looks like old times and feels like it. Can hardly see the ice houses. Snowed yesterday in Va. and Ohio valley. Mercury down to 10 degrees.

27. About one foot of snow. Mild and partly clear to day.

31. Cold rugged winter weather. Mercury fluctuates from 4 [crossed out: above] to 15 above. J. and I had our first skate on the river yesterday. Overcast and threatening snow.

-- How many of the notions of mankind are like those of the farmer who assures you that his spring is warm in winter and cold in summer

so far as his sensations are concerned and therefore to all intents and purposes it is warm in winter and cold in summer. He has not learned that his senses are relative; that the temperature of the outward medium in which we live and move influences our judgement in such matters. The age in which one lives makes a thing seem hot or seem cold, seem good or seem bad, a [??] heresy or one eye is the [??] opinion of the next. The truth does not vary, but our perceptions of it but our perceptions of it vary greatly.

1891

January 1st Still, cloudy, inclined to be foggy, mercury 20 degrees. A little snow last night and yesterday. Health good these days, better than last year. Very few of my peculiar symptoms. Digestion better than for a long time. Can even eat mince pie. Mind vigorous, yet no new thoughts or impulses.

2 Warmer, rain and fog, same as one year ago. Now at 3 P.M. cannot see river for fog. But signs of breaking. Mercury 40 degrees.

-- Compare such criticism as Lowell's and Stedman's with Matthew Arnold's and you see what their deficiencies are: They lead nowhere, they have no



system, science. There are no currents of thought in them setting towards certain definite points. They really throw no light on the book or author they discuss; the question are left just where they were before. No organization, no survey of the man from one clearly defined stand point. Perhaps some hint may be given by saying that their criticisms are analytical and never synthetical, they give us no wholes. They are never creative. They never lead us to a window, but at most to a crack or crevice. In some of Lowells shorter paper, as the one on "Emerson as a Lecturer" and on "Thoreau", the results are more synthetical. But there is little evolution, little growth in either L. or S.

1891

5 Snow all night and nearly all day from the north, a local storm; pretty cold Looks like the height of winter I sit all day in my study and labor and do not even bring forth a mouse. Indeed, a mouse would be very encouraging. Trying to read Martineau's "Basis of Authority in Religion," a ponderous tone, very tiresome. M. is a deep thinker and a strong effective writer, but he is tiresome, a fatal fault.

6 Bright day after the snow and a little warmer. Again after three years I see before my window a plain of snow where the sparkling river used to be. Two men are now crossing. How their figures stand out in the vivid sunlight on the spotless surface!

Jan 10 Clear and cold; down to zero this morning, 6 below over by station. Snow deep, winter full-grown and robust; not much wind yet.

Bad head-ache last night; worst for a year. Took up yesterday Renans Life of Jesus.

What would be ones feelings if he were to come back to life 100 years hence, a world filled with strangers. How would his own country seem to him all filled with strangers, all the questions, all the leading men, new to him; his own farm ~~[crossed out: and]~~ or house occupied by strangers who had never heard his name.

12 Big thunder shower last night bet. 11 and 12. Thundered and lightened and rain poured for over an hour just as in summer. Rained most of the day yesterday. River all covered with water this morning. Wells and springs full.

-- "Who knows whether the final term of progress, in the millions of ages will not bring back the absolute consciousness of the universe, and in that consciousness the awakening of all who have lived. A sleep of a million years is no longer than a sleep of an hour." Renan.

It is said that Mongol physicians never ask their patients any questions about their [crossed out: disease] ailments lest they appear to show ignorance in their profession. They feel the pulse in both wrists at the same time.

January 16

"By our extreme scrupulousness", says Renan, "in the employment of the means of conviction, by an absolute sincerity and our disinterested love of the pure idea~~[crossed out: I]~~, we all, who have devoted our lives to science, have founded a new ideal of morality."

-- "The great man, or the one hard, religious all things from his things; or the other he masters his trial." Renan.

Finished Renan's Life of Jesus to-day. I do not find the figure of Jesus as he is portrayed in these pages very impressive. The book ~~[crossed out: is full of]~~ abounds in noble sentiments and fine thoughts, but there is something lacking, something which a more profound and serious nature would have supplied. He does not speak the word which explains the enigma of Christianity, tho' he often raises the hope ~~[crossed out: ???]~~ and expectation that he will speak it. This comes near it "The essential work of Jesus was

the creation around him of a circle of disciples in whom he inspired a boundless attachment, and in whose breast he implanted the germ of his doctrine. his moral type and the impression which he had produced was all that remained of him."

Of course the letters of Paul and the synoptic Gospels made Christianity, but what made Paul and how came the [crossed out: ???] Gospels to be written. What was there in this obscure Galilean that caused these things to be said and written about him? They were not said and written of Philo, or Jesus the son of Sirach, or of John the Baptist, or of Appollonius of Tyre, or of St Paul, or of Socrates. Why were these things written of Jesus of Nazareth? He must have been an extraordinary person to begin with; he produced an

unique impression. Then the legend of the resurrection [~~crossed out: done~~] did the rest. Without this Christianity would never have been heard of. How did this legend begin. Here is the miracle, the mystery of Christianity. St Paul took this up and gave the rationale of the matter and thus furnished the doctrine feet to travel on. But back of all is still the personality of Jesus. He must have assumed a tone of authority and an air of mystery that were very impressive. As Renan says, "The faith, the enthusiasm, the constancy of the first Christian generation [~~crossed out: s~~] is explained only by supposing at the beginning of the whole movement a man of colossal proportions."

January 17. Snug, uniform winter weather, [crossed out: but] about right every way. No severe cold after the thunder shower of Sunday night.

Read the exploit of a Brooklyn man in killing a bull moose in Maine. With his guides, all armed with Winchester rifles, he followed the trail of the moose through 2 feet of snow for six days. They started him from a moose yard near the top of a mountain. As soon as the animal found itself pursued it led right off and hoped to outwalk its enemies. But they had snow shoes and he did not; they had food and he did not. On the 5th day he began to show signs of fatigue, by resting often. He also tried to get around



behind his pursuers and let them pass on. On the morning of the 6th day he had made up his mind to travel no further, but to face his enemies and have it out with them. As he heard them approach he rose up from his couch of snow, his [crossed out: main] mane erect, his look determined, and confronted them about 50 yards distant. Poor creature, how my heart went out to him brought to bay there in the snow of those Maine woods. He did not know how unequal the contest was. One thing I devoutly wished, that he too could have been armed with a Winchester rifle and knew how to use it. But before he could use such weapons as he had, two bullets cut him down. And the man brags of his exploit!

18 Snowed till after noon. Hail and some rain all night, and most of the day yesterday. Clearing to night.

-- M. writes well; he is scholarly and thoughtful but he has not the gift of style, no fresh new quality of mind. His work has nothing to distinguish it from the great mass of scholarly production now turned out on all sides. I do not know [crossed out: as] that Woodberry's or T.S. Perry's has either. The only pickle that will keep these things is just what the schools and the books and professors cannot help you to.

Arthur Young in his travels in France in 1787 says, "Who in comon sense would deny a king the amusement of a mistress, provided he did not make a business of his plaything!

Paris at that time had no sidewalks or foot pavements as he calls them. Walking was fatiguing and

dangerous to men and impossible to a well-dressed woman

The bodies of infants used to be put in stays, he says, and are so still in Spain.

20 Myron Benton came to-day at 10 1/2 A.M. Delighted to see him Weather mild.

22. Heavy rain from South pours all day. Much damage and loss of life in some places

23. Bright and warm. Myron leaves to-day. Drives with Mrs B. to P. I go down on noon train to drive back. Ice not very good. Myron and I have had our old talks again. Every moment he was here gave me pleasure How much more life would be

to me if I could often have visits from such men as Myron.

24. Warm and clear. Looks like a breaking of old Wwinters reign.

25. Heavy snow, wet and heavy, breaks down some of my hemlocks. Thaws all day, snow stops by noon.

27. Clear, warm, and [crossed out: hazy] smoky, a fly buzzing on the pane. Is the cold indeed over?

30 Rain last night. Bright and warm this morning. Snow still deep. Ice on river covered with water.

Feb. 1st Still warm and bright.

Feb. 2d Still warm and bright, but cold wave coming. Feel its breath already.

-- When I look up at the stars at night I am so overwhelmed sometimes that I say to myself we can not only conceive of a being that could do that, but we cannot take the first step toward conceiving him. How puny and insignificant seems the God of the churches. Therefore I say he is the most devout man who says there is no god -- the utmost stretch of [crossed out: ho] whose thought cannot make out one feature or attribute of a being who could put those stars up there. The universe

is so stupendous that it crushes any Atlas upon whose shoulders we may place it. There is no God. There is a self existing, self perpetuating universe. This notion of the Heavenly Father who concerns himself about each individual, whence does it come? In life and history there is not the slightest edivence of such a being. The other day out on the plains of Kansas, a poor widow with her three children found the wolf of want at her door. What oould she do? She would destroy herself and family. The eldest boy aged 12, escaped with his throat partly cut and ran to the neighbors and gave the alarm; but before help could return the house was burned

and the woman and her two little children burned with it. Where was the Heavenly Father then? Barely one such case and there are thousands of them, and worse, every year -- dissipates completely all such notions. If you can survive the clashing and warring and waste of the universe, all right; if not, all right. I heard of an idle fellow convicted of some crime whom the Judge sentencedd to three years in the penitentiary. When sentence was pronounced he exclaimed to the judge in the most pleased and satisfied tones, "All right, Judge, all right."

Feb 3. More rain. Cold wave knocked in the head.

"Thus it is in revolutions" says Arthur Young who was travelling in France in the early stages of the French Revolution "thus it is, one rascal writes (some preposterous story) and a hundred thousand fools believe."

5. 5 P.M. A solitary robin just flew over and dived down into my hemlocks by the house. Cold this AM. 7 degrees above.

6. The robins sang this morning in a tree near the school-house mild and thawy.

7 Overcast this P.M. thawing. Ice boats all waiting for a breeze, which will not come.

I look out on the ice and see a little black speck over towards Hyde Park That is Julian going for the 2,40 train. I hear the train coming; the black speck



seems to move faster, but when the train passes it and stops at the station there is a wide strip of ice yet between it and the shore. Then the black speck creeps back.

8 A white world indeed this morning All the trees turned to snow; Even the telegraph wires are long white lines as big as ropes. Snow fall about 6 inches, one of those silent stealthy storms; not a bit of wind or commotion in Nature -- nothing but the falling snow.

14 Rather a pleasant week, but getting colder to-day. No storm since Monday.

15 Sunday; Down to 2 degrees below zero this morning. Bright and clear, and warmer as the day advances. Blue-birds in the air. General Sherman is dead, the 1st of our great generals of the war.

16 Rain this A.M. and in the night. Mercury up to near 40 degrees

-- When a tree is sick, or killed suddenly, it does not drop its leaves. It seems that it requires strength and vitality for a tree to let go its leaves. It is only the alert and growing mind that can let go its old beliefs and views.

18. Three days of rain clearing this morning. The air full of blue-birds this morning. Saw 12 in one flock s I went to the P.O. They were calling merrily from many points. The blue-birds came north on the crest of the warm wave which was very high farther south -- 74 in Washington, about 45 degrees here.

19 Ice boatmen out again to day, and so slow they go that I fancy I can almost hear them curse the laggard wind. Old Boreas! wake up and give them a send off worthy of you. This will pass for a winter of light winds, never remember to have seen a season [~~crossed out: with~~] of such gentle breezes. No big blows at all.

25. Warm, threatening rain. Snow and ice melting very fast. Big floods in the west, air full of blue birds and robins. Sap runs fast. Not much cold weather since my last date.

Walking in the fields on Monday I noted a phenomenon of the snow that I have never seen referred to -- it was the sound made by the sudden settling of large patches of snow as the foot touched it, a crashing, falling sound that shot away from one, as the cracking of the ice darts away when you walk upon it. Very sudden, very peculiar. It would startle my dog and make him stop and look about. Apparently the warmth had thawed the snow from beneath, and the multitude of weeds and grasses held it up. On the least jar down it dropped a fraction of an inch making a curious crashing sound.

The snow was shallow, only 1 or two inches deep. Where there were no weeds or stubble to hold it up, this phenomenon was not witnessed.

26. Mercury up to 50 yesterday; the ground more than half [~~crossed out: bear~~] bare this morning. Cooler to-day.  
-- If the Earth [~~crossed out: was~~] were all covered with water, we [~~crossed out: would~~] should then have sea without limits, a boundless ocean, which yet would not be infinite -- limitless but not infinite. This idea is in Prof. Clifford; lecture on "The Aims and instruments of Scientific Thought."

1891

Mch 1. A bright day. The edge of a cold wave just reaching us.

2d Mercury down to 2 above this morning, and not above 12 all day. Bright and cutting.

3d Cold iwht light snow falling. Read "Liza" by Turgeneiff. A real experience to read a novel by this geat romancer. The taste of his books is always sweet and good to me. No hair splitting here, no tiresome analysis, all is large, simple, fresh. Sad, probably no sadder than life.

4. Snow last night and to-day about 6 or 7 inches. Real winter agian. The rents and holes in the ice nearly all closed.

5th To P. to-day in cutter, wife and I. thaws some in middle of day. Cold wave at night.

6. In cutter over to Rifton to look after cart. Bright and warm, but good sleighing. A pleasant ride.

7. Bright and cool; not quite warm enough for a sap-day.

9 Slow rain becoming heavy by spells at night.

10 Bright day, spring like, good sap day. Snow getting thin.

11 Lovely spring day; clear, still, and warm. Best sap-day yet. Bad head-ache, sat in my chair till 1 am.

Prof Lintner, the entomologist, reports this interesting fact, Twenty years ago a scale insect was carelessly brought from Australia

on some plant. It soon spread rapidly to various shrubs and trees, particularly to the orange tree. It spread so rapidly in the orange groves and orchards that many trees were killed and whole orchards abandoned. Every remedy was tried upon it but in vain. Then Prof Riley bethought him that the insect must have some natural enemy in Australia. Two of his assistants went there and brought back 12000 specimens of parasites, out of these 2 proved the ones they were looking for. They soon checked the scale insect, and finally nearly exterminated it, and the orange culture revived again. This seems to have happened in California. Pests of all kinds seem to be on the increase, but so far mans wit keeps ahead.



12 Presto! what a change. The river a great smooth mirror this morning. The ice slipped away in the night as quickly as the Arab. He began to move a little yesterday afternoon. First sparrow song this morning. How delicious.

To my delight and surprise heard over by the station my little sparrow of last year, he with the long silver loop of sound. What would I not give to know just where he passed the winter; and what adventures by flood and field he has had since last fall. But here he is, safe and sound. Of course it is the same bird. I have never before heard a sparrow with that song.

Mild and overcast to-day.

Rain in afternoon

13. Rain and fog. The red shouldered starling yesterday and to-day.

14 Clear, windy, and a cold wave, typical March day. The ice all swept from the river and packed along the eastern shore, up and down as far as one can see a white border of ice, apparently unable to move at all, pinned to the shore. Ground more than half bare.

Since December I have written the following pieces:

3 for Youths Companion paid 120 dollars

1 McClure's Syndicate 40

1 on Wild Flowers for St. Nicholas 50

1 for Independent 15

1 A Hard Nut 15

1 C. Union, 'Pop. Errors and Delusions' paid 20

1 Analogy 50

1 Points of View 20

1 [crossed out: Logic and Sentiment]

1 Eloquence and Poetry 25

Finished, The Spell of the Past 50

405 dollars

17 Clear and sharp, a day like cut-glass; hardly a film in the sky, below freezing all day in the shade; too cold for sap. Helped "Zeke" haul the lumber for the crates over from the depot in the afternoon. Highland burned up last night. Yesterday (Monday) fair and cool.

18 Warmer, good sap day. Go to P and stop in H. to see the ruins of the fire. Roads dry much of the way.

19. Overcast. Wind from East. Burn brush all day. Enjoy it much. Saw first phoebe bird, silent.

20. Still overcast with East wind. Storm approaching. Burn brush again. "Zeke" and Acker putting ashes on grapes and raspberries. Temperature at freezing.

23d Monday. The fifth day of east wind; light rains. Warm and spring like to-day. Mercury up to 60 degrees. Meadow-lark and high hole to-day. Oh, how good their calls sound coming up from the fields. To-night the first peepers. Oh how good they sound too. Overcast with a glimpse of the sun a few times. Hauling stone and moving earth from under the shed.

24. Overcast, mild, still. Bees out. Elting Krum buried to-day from the little church, a young man without blame, consumption, age 26.

25. Bright lovely day. Go to Highland to the Rogers auction. Road very bad in places. Saw crocuses in bloom

26 Bright, dazzling, with keen cutting wind from the north; froze in middle of day fear snow. Ice all gone some days and boats again running.

Sterling here helping about the crates. Turtle dove to-day

Mch 29. A week of dry cold north wind, no rain or snow in this section. Ground getting dry. The last snow bank gone, except in the woods. A terrible rumpus in the house again, all about nothing, simply nothing. The spontaneous combustion of Mrs B's temper.

30 A marvellous day, all sun and sky, north wind, ground nearly ready for the plow. A day to burn up the rubbish, for the spring purification by fire. Mrs B. still on the rampage. We have tongue three a day, and for lunch too. A few night ago she called me a villain and a rascal, and I have left her be[crossed out:a]d, and ought to leave her board also. Never was such a temper in a woman before

31. Cool, overcast in afternoon getting dry. Clucking frogs began two or three days ago. [crossed out: Toads] Mr Toad is on the road. Mrs B. on the rampage. I left the table this morning when half through breakfast, not to return till there is a change. I can live in the woods on a crust if need be.

April 1st A white wash of snow last night, all gone now at 10 A.M. Promises to be a fair day, tho' a chilly air. Mrs B. left yesterday not yet back. Where is she?

3 My 54th birth day. Eight inches of snow fell last night, nearly all gone to-night. Worked most of the day in the horse stable with DuBois. A terrible row in the house over poor Mrs Fletchers letters. A sad and gloomy day to me

Saw an angle worm this morning crawling on the top of the snow. It was then snowing quite hard, the snow wet and heavy. Health good, or would be if I could be allowed to eat my food in peace.

4 Squally day. Snow on the ground in many places The peepers do not stop for the snow.  
Hepaticas to-day gathered by the boys near H.

6. The farms on the Fishkill mts. still white with snow. Hepaticas in the woods here. Ground nearly dry again. Chilly winds and frost at night.  
A shrike in the Hibbard orchard I observed him for nearly half

an hour. I have rarely seen a bird sit so long in one place. It was the loggerhead -- dull and ashen gray with black wings. He squealed and warbled and called and whistled and was silent. He allowed me to approach within 20 or 25 feet of him and stand and observe him. He regarded me as he might a cow or horse. Even my dog, "Dan" was attracted by his medley of notes. I recognized but one familiar note, or notes, certain one of the cat-bird I left him in the tree and came away. His head followed very significantly a little bird that flew over him.