

Aug 9th Reach home to-day at 2 P.M. Very hot 94 degrees a regular Turkish-bath atmosphere. Find things all right.

A heavy shower at night with wonderful [~~crossed out: and~~] continuous and prolonged electric displays. A very carnival of electric gods. Barns and houses struck all over the country, but apparently ten barns to one house.

10 Still fearfully hot, above 90. Go to P. and get photo taken for magazine. Rain in afternoon and evening.

14 Sunday. Rain every [~~crossed out: day~~] afternoon

since Tuesday, but not heavy. Grape rot starting up a little. Mrs B and Julian came Thursday night.

The ~~[crossed out: gr]~~ germ of the grape-rot seems to have lost its vigor in a measure. The first attack of such things is usually the most severe. The first bite of the venomous snake is most deadly. I notice that the first thunder-storm after a dry spell is most severe; the next days storm is apt to be lighter. First love is most violent.

-- Real and true culture can only come through the humanities. A man ~~[crossed out: be]~~ may be learned in the sciences and

still be uncultivated -- coarse, obtuse, materialistic. Soul only can reach soul. Literature alone can reach and enrich and humanize the soul. The mere facts of natural science are like the inorganic elements.

Aug. 16 Bright, lovely August days, yesterday and to-day getting warm. Ship first champions to-night. Begin gathering Bartlet pears.

Estimate grape crop at nearly 30 tons (turned out to be 36) Pretty well these days, but rather vacant. Beguile some of the time with Piere Loti's "Into Morocco." Very graphic -- just enough of everything.

Pride of style in writing is just as bad as pride of style in dress or equipage. The best style is the absence of style, or of all conscious style. You must not think or know how well-dressed the man or woman is. Lotis style does not court your attention at all. It is a mirror.

20. Warm and dry the past week -- the perfection of grape weather. Mercury up to 85 and 88. Cooler to-day, grape-rot not making any head way. Shipped Moors Early the 19th.

26. Just as we began to praise the weather and say how fine, how seasonable, it took a turn and the rains began again. Rained nearly all day yesterday, sometimes heavy, and nearly all night, and now

the wind has shifted to the N.E. and a cold rain is falling. The weather gods are the most exasperating of all the gods. Nine times out of ten they will turn a blessing into a curse. They are nearly always on a debauch. They will push the dry weather till we are parched and burt up, and the rain till it becomes a deluge. Finished the Champions to-day in the rain, and many vines of the M.E.

P.M. Rain very heavy; sets all the drains running and the grapes cracking. Well full. I mutter my anathemas, but the sulky divinities only raise the gates of the [crossed out: g] clouds higher.

27. Cut the first Delawares to-day.

31 Last day of summer. Murky and rainy in the morning, clearing in afternoon; a fine warm sunset. 1 1/2 tons of grapes to-day. Our neighbor Mr. Gordon died yesterday, a fine chivalrous old Switzer. Peace to his soul.

(Sept.)

11 The war of the grapes has been hotly pushed the past ten days. Weather cool and bright and dry. Nights very cool suggesting frost; grapes ripened rather slowly; shipped 11 tons past week; never more favorable weather to work; looks as if my crop might bring me 3000 dollars

Dear old Whittier died a few days ago -- more of a real country man than any the rest of the our poets. Curtis too

has passed -- the soul of gentleness and grance, and I may add, of honor

Dripping foggy mornings. my mother was born 84 years ago to day.

No rain for ten days or more Hope to finish the grapes this week.

20. Remarkably cool delightful weather so far this month -- almost perfect. A heavy rain last Wednesday stopped our grape cutting 3 hours. That is all. One could work without sweating, or be still without chill. On Saturday the 17th, the bottom went out of the grape market -- leaving me with 2 or 3 tons of Concords on the vines. These we are sending off slowly and getting low prices. For the first time in nearly a month I can sit at my ease and look up at the serene sky.

have lost near 10 lbs in flesh during this grape campaign, but am well and stronger than one year ago. Eat and sleep well. Grapes over 31 tons; will probably bring me 3200 dollars.

29. Bright, dry, lovely September days continue. Never saw a finer month for all kinds of work. No frost yet. Still cutting Concords.

To the fair at P. yesterday.

On Saturday the 24, went up Snyder Hollow with Gilder and Rodman. The charm of the valley as great as ever.

Oct. 2 The remarkably bright dry exhilarating weather continues. Pretty cool; frost near here last night. Our last shipment of grapes to-day



Oct 3. Start for Centreport to-day to visit Herber Gilchrist. A bright fine day. Do not tarry in N.Y. take a 4 P.M. train and reach C. at 6. Gilchrist drives me to his hermitage through the dusk over the sandy, gravelly roads. When we reach the beach on the bay we walk a short distance. The horse is little and lame and the road heavy with sand. G. stops at a farm house for eggs. At last we reach his house one mile or more beyond Centreport near the bay -- an old farm house in a little trough of the shore, shut in by low woods -- a picturesque spot, but very secluded and lonely. Here this young Englishman lives all alone, year in and year out, cooks his own food and keeps his

own house -- and works at his picture. We sat up till midnight by an open fire and talked and talked. I slept in a small low chamber up stairs. Next day the 4th we went across the bay 4 miles to the Robinsons -- big, fine house, large grounds, great farm, etc. 5 young women -- 2 of them visitors from N.Y. We walk and talk in the twilight, then home to a bright fire and to supper. We stay the night, and have a long drive with the young ladies next day. Weather cold and windy with squalls of hail and rain. Our boat drifts in the night and drags her anchor. We find her on the other shore. In P.M. we row back to Gilchrists, the young

watching us and waving farewells.

In the morning we make clam fritters for breakfast. Windy and cold. G's picture of Cleopatra does not impress me -- fear greatly it is a failure. We talk much of Tennyson whose death is near. G. knew him well. Said he was much less gentle and guarded in speech than Walt Whitman; would say rather blunt rude things before ladies G. said such men as Whitman and Tennyson strike us as poets and artists all through; they are born such while such a man as Browning strikes us as only a poet at times or in part. The lives of W. and T. were the lives

of poets pure and simple, the lives of children -- unwordly, and unconventional. They were not men of current society or of current affairs at all. G. feels that Whitman was a great artist from the start, but regrets a crude, uncultured streak in him at times. How G. can stand this solitude is a mystery to me. Came from London to try to find himself in this humble secluded place. Probably a marked re-action against overpopulated England which Englishmen so often show -- Nature trying to remedy her own excesses.

I leave on the 1.57 P.M. train G. drives me to the station with his little mare. When the road is

[crossed out: hard we] heavy we run along on foot.

Go to Bridgeport at night to see Smith and Emma. Reach the house at 7. E. is sitting in the kitchen by the table sewing. Is surprised but glad to see me. Smith comes in by and by and is equally surprised and pleased. It is good to see them again after 3 years; the old time feeling comes back. Next day we leave at 1.57. Miss the train in N.Y. and do not reach home till Sunday at 10 A.M. Weather still fine and warm.

12 Golden October days continue. I spend the days looking into Tennyson and musing on various matters, a mellow poetic spirit, like that of the dead poet seems to pervade the air. All the woods and groves stand in the richest autumn livery.

-- Is there more reverie than contemplation in Tennyson, and is he to that extent weakening and dissipating? Does he sap the will? Longing, retrospection, regret -- these largely make the atmosphere of his poems.

An infant crying in the night

An infant crying for the light

And with no language but a cry.

He was the poet of the old world, not of the new -- of a rich deep, ripe, refined civilization -- not of a new, fermenting, democratic, era and land like America. We enjoy him, but he is not of us. He is not always manly. He is much less as a personality than Whitman -- much more as a polished conventional orthodox poet. It is rarely that he gives one the impression of mass, of power, or makes you partaker in the universal brotherhood of man. Ripe and mellow always, but tonic and uplifting rarely.

16. Bright and lovely weather still. The days like music. A gentle rain again last night, as one week ago -- a rain out of the west, very slow, timid and

still, as if afraid of waking the sleepers, or of hastening the fall of the fast loosening leaves.

This P.M Julian and I walk to Sunset Rock and [crossed out: have] feast our eyes on the wide view; then back by Brookmans new road through the woods. Reach home with our pockets full of large chestnuts. Katy-dids still rasping and sawing the night hours. No frost to hurt our tomato vines yet.

20 Again the maple in front of my window glows like a sunset cloud; it fills the room with a soft golden light. The autumn tints usually rich everywhere, owing I suppose to the dry, sunshiny weather; weeks and weeks of almost unbroken sunshine.



Little frost yet. The katy-dids and tree crickets still heard; birds holding their fall reunions all about. Tit-larks flying south, uttering their shuffling, lispings notes and calls.

Health good these days and life fairly sweet. Beginning to nibble at my pen again.

22. Lovely days continue. How the breezes shake down the gold from the maples.

30. Fine dry weather continues No severe frosts yet. Miss Burt came last night. A woman of rare sense and intelligence; think she is destined to work a revolution in methods of teaching children.

Nov 1st Mild and hazy. Meet Abigail at R. and go with her to N.Y. Her eyes

very bad, tho' mending slowly. She is much broken up and has suffered a great deal -- has not the heart to make the trip alone. She takes train for Bridgeport at 5. Take the boat up the river to P.

3d A slow mild rain last night and this morning, but now, P.M. it is fair and warm: bees humming and birds singing.

5 Light rains, followed by a cold snap, the coldest yet.

-- All great poets are teachers. It is one test of the great poet; What does he teach us? He helps us to master life, to understand life. Arnold is right when he says poetry is a criticism of life. Tennyson was a teacher so was Whitman. Was Lowell, Whittier, Longfellow? Poe and Swinburne certainly not. How much of life

does the poet illuminate? Does he throw any light on the questions that vex men's souls? Not solve them because they are insoluble, but help reconcile us to them, help win us to the planet? The great poet reflects back to us the spirit of the times in which we [~~crossed out: life~~] live, we understand the age and ourselves better through him. We see America and democracy in Whitman as we could never see them without him. We see the ripe, mellow civilization of aristocratic England in Tennyson as in no other poet, Whittier and Longfellow help us understand New England. Our younger poets do not seem to me significant; they are not large enough to be representative. Stoddard, Stedman, Taylor, Lanier -- were all men of fine gifts, but they have no tenacity of life as poets. Their poetry cannot compete with or hold its own with the men of

larger vision and stronger grip

The mass of the literature of any age, and of ours especially, is the literature of ~~pas~~ ~~s]time~~; it helps fill up the hour and that is all the demand we make upon it. Our poetry is the poetry of ~~pas~~ ~~s]time~~. Taylor, Lanier and the rest, wrote the poetry of ~~pas~~ ~~s]time~~. Unless a mans outlook upon the world is wide and commanding, he can do nothing in literature that will last or really help.

Yet it is curious that the great poet or writer leaves the world just where he found it. We say he ~~done~~ did this and that, he cleared up this question and let floods of light in there and there; and yet it is all to be done over again by the new man

-- How the world seems to go to pieces as we grow old. The world in which we were born and live does go to pieces, like a cloud in the summer sky. The families we knew are broken up; the parents die, the children die or are scattered, old partnerships are dissolved by death or disaster. The face of society is all changed: we do not see the new world that is slowly organizing and taking the place of the old, the world as our children will know it and which will in turn go to pieces to them. The clouds in the sky are scarcely more changeable and flitting than the face and elements of life, always and never the same.

-- I love wild virgin nature, but I am repelled by unkept nature, by nature that has relapsed from cultivation, or that is only half

cultivated and gone to weeds and bushes. Hence the English landscape satisfies so much more than [crossed out: the] our own; it is a more perfect product; it is perfectly cultivated and ours is only half so. The raw, the crude -- they always repel in Nature as in life.

-- Concrete idealism is a good term to express much there is in Emerson and writers of that ilk.

6th As I was out by the barn this morning I heard a continuous pattering sound above me, and on looking saw it was the leaves falling from the mulberry tree. The leaves of this tree do not seem to mature and ripen like others, but hang on [crossed out: ???] and keep green till the frost cuts them when they let go. Last nights freeze was making them let go. It was perfectly still, and the heavy leaves

Came down quickly like great green snow flakes. Not a second elapsed that several falling leaves were not in the air. I thought it was like the tree of life from which death is constantly cutting down the leaves. Sometimes one leaf in falling would loosen others, and they still others, till a handful would come rushing down. The upper branches were affected most.

8. Light rain last night from the S.W. Cleared off this morning and the day became a marvel of beauty. Bees out of the hive, crows cawing high in the air. Some friends come up from P. Eat their lunch here in my study, and in the afternoon we walk up to Esopus. I vote for Cleveland and then we go to Indian rock, and from thence to a near field where we search for Indian rock, and from thence to a near

field where we search for Indian relics. Booth and Lown have eyes for these things; they almost smell them. To my surprise I find 4 broken arrow heads; the others find several also, and a sinker-stone, pounding stones a broken pestle etc. A delightful walk

13. Some rain and snow since my last date and more cloud; fair again to-day and mild.

-- Renan says a man fashioned according to the discipline of science is on the whole a better man than the instinctive man of the ages of faith. He may be less sublime but he is also less ridiculous.

-- A walk through the woods this P.M. to Sunset Rock and back; insects dancing here and there in the sun, saw a rabbit, a partridge, and heard a



squirrel, and had many long sad thoughts. Got back after sundown.

-- I notice that boots and shoes standing alone, always have a sad look, never a smiling or joyous one. The wrinkles about the instep seem to cause it.

-- "Chimeras", says Renan, referring to the popular religion "have succeeded in obtaining from the good gorilla an astonishing moral effort." These chimeras -- the church and its creeds -- are probably entirely provisional; they help hold the race up till it can stand without them; it is the chair by which the child learns to walk. We have discovered that virtue, that right living, has a scientific basis. When this knowledge becomes general, the work of the church is done. At least, its supernaturalism can be laid upon the shelf. We are helped from within then and not stayed from without.

All men know Nature -- they do not know God -- he seems afar off and unreal may be a "Chimera". When we find that Nature says, live rightly, be temperate, be chaste, be brotherly, etc. we shall heed the voice. The Church has of course discredited Nature in the interest of this not Nature -- it has deferred the fruits of righteousness to some future sphere and when men have lost faith in that they have lost faith in virtue One was as arbitrary as the other, both were un natural and unreasonable. When we come fully to understand and value the world about us, we shall not need any other. But will mankind ever come to see and appreciate the God in the ground under foot? Doubtful.

-- Righteousness is the word of religion, rightness, the word of science. What is the difference?

-- How imposing and authoritative this verdict of the people seems -- almost supernatural -- a voice from out the depths. How the politicians heed it and trim accordingly or bow their heads in reverence. We do not realize that it is only the voice of Tom, Dick, and Harry right around us, whose private individual opinions we have very little respect for. If you multiply a foolish man's opinion by one million or by ten millions, is it any the less the opinion of foolishness? This is probably the way Carlyle would have viewed the matter. There is a fallacy in that statement. When the opinions of an ordinary man become ~~s] wide spread~~ and become ~~s] the opinion of large masses over a large extent of territory~~, it is very significant. It is like the voice of Nature; it is a matter of fate. Every era or age has its master currents of opinion and thought. The master current in the political field just now is in favor of less restrictions on commerce and against trusts and monopolies.

The voice of a multitude is more impressive than the separate voices of the individuals composing the multitude. There is a spirit, an atmosphere in the forest that individual trees hardly hint. Is the social organism a real entity? Is there a general will over or under all the private wills? The country speaks -- how protentious, how commanding! No doubt our imaginations have much to do with it.

16 Heavy rain last night -- the ground full of water again, a cyclone from the south, pretty warm.

17 Lovely mild day, bees out the hive. N.Y. Herald thinks the winter is likely to be more sever than last. We will see.

18. Listened on Wednesday the 16th to the dedication sermon over in the little church by Dr. Reese of Phila. Pretty poor stuff from my point of view, mere rhetoric, and not

very good rhetoric at that, did not lay strong hands upon the hearer at all, ineffective, perfunctory and tiresome to me. The preacher must not let off rockets, he must send bullets directly into the congregation -- he must hit the sense, the reason, the humanity of his hearer. He is not there to make a sermon, he is there to speak to the hearts and minds of the people; -- he must find them. What the preacher said did not strike in at all, it did not take hold, it did not bite. How the heart, the mind, the soul delight in being fairly hit. The sermon was like hard water in which one tries to wash -- it did not take hold. Poor literature is also poor sermonizing. A thing is well said when it fairly hits the mind; it is poorly said when it merely fills the air.

18 The outer skirts of a cyclone sweep us to-day, vicious wind with spiteful dashes of rain as in '89 when Johnston was swept away. Centre of the storm West and N. of us, probably the lakes. It came up from Texas.

19 Clear and bright to-day and a little colder, some frost last night.

20 Go out home to-day. Walk up the hill from depot, surface of the ground frozen and icy in places. Find Curtis's folk well, except Olly who has a felon on her thumb. I am very glad to be there once more. It really seems like home. I stay all the week, weather cold, snow squalls every day and all day. A bleak winter landscape. On Monday we drive

to top of mountain at head of Hard scrabble and cut a "coon-tree". No coons, all left for winter quarters. Wednesday I go over to Edens; find them all well. Eden hunting, Hiram looks well and hearty.

24 Thanksgiving day. Take dinner at Edens and then back to Curtis's. Snow squalls all day. I am quite content to sit by the fire and dream of the old days. Sell Curtis the farm for 10,000 C. seems cheerful and happy, better times with him than he has ever known, actually has a surplus of 350 dollars at the end of the year.

Back home Saturday morning no snow here, dry and cold.

29. First considerable snow last night, 6 or 7 inches wet and heavy. Colder this morning. Winter evidently close by.

Dec 1. Cold, overcast most of the day. Snow melts a little and roads are muddy. Quite indisposed these days.

The question discussed in the last Century "Does the bible contain scientific errors" Seems to me absurd. The bible does not directly or indirectly teach science. But the bible in these matters is no wiser than the times in which it was written. The notions current in those times among the Jews about the relations of man to the system



and the laws of the visible universe were for the most part erroneous they were unscientific, or anti-scientific. These notions crop out in the bible; they do not vitiate the bible in any way, no matter if the sun was thought to move around the earth, if miracles were believed, or demoniac possession was thought common, if the dead could rise, etc. these things do not detract from the value of the bible as a religious book; they rather add to it. Shall we ask are there scientific errors in Homer or Dante or Shakespeare? These poets reflected the knowledge and mis-knowledge of their times Are there poetical errors in Euclid?

-- A long harangue by Mrs B. at dinner about my worthlessness, my inability to keep her in the style she deserves, and surround her by the conveniences she merits and needs. My brains of which I boast, she says, are the unprofitable kind. So many people with far less can buy and sell me any day. But for her, she says, and quotes Mrs Akers in confirmation, I would have been in the poor house long ago. With all my years of study, and all my knowledge, I yet earn so little money, and she has to slave and toil in consequence. (Only the other day I gave her 450 dolalrs) She seems to see no values but money values. Doubtless she had rather I made an almanac that brought money, than the books I have made. It is an old, old story. Blessed are the poor in purse, for they shall relish their dinner.

Dec. 5 Go to N.Y. to-day with wife. Spend the week in the city much of the time with Miss Burt. Visit Berkley School and hear the boys read from my books etc. On the night of the 8th attend a literary reunion in Brooklyn; hear Marion Crawford read. A strong fine voice, but no life or flexibility in it or him, dull, tiresome. Meet Miss Wilkins -- not pretty, eyes too small, but has an original, home-made look, a little creature. Back home on Saturday the 10th.

11th Back to N.Y. again to-day. At Stedmans in the evening. To Boston on Tuesday, the 13th with Miss Burt and Mrs Ben Ali

Haggin. A pretty black eyed widow, said to be very rich. Spend the week in Boston am interviewed and dined and put through generously, twice on my feet trying to speak before gatherings of teachers etc. Meet Bradford Torrey; a fine souled fellow -- [~~crossed out: ???~~] suggests a bird, with his bright eyes and shy ways and sensitiveness. Meet E.E. Hale, a fine face -- next to Whitman's among modern faces -- ought to be a great man back of it. Call on Prof. Norton at Cambridge, a fine man and gentleman.

Back home via N.Y. on Sunday, the 18th. Weather cold and wet by streaks.

24. A cold wave since the 22d Down to 10 this morning, with high wind. Much ice in the river. No snow on ground. Little boat stops on 22d. Sleep ruined last night by Mrs. B's tongue. No work to-day.
25. Cold, 20 degrees, overcast; light flurry of snow all day. Do a little writing and much moping.
26. Cold, clear, mercury 18 all day. A light white wash of snow on the dry hard ground.
27. Below zero this morning, clear and still. River closed and men at work staking out ice ponds.

It is like checking the fire by putting on fresh fuel; it checks it for a moment, but suppose you keep it up?

27. P.M. A tramp back to Sutcliffs pond this P.M Julian and I, and a skate on the pond. Saw where an otter had come up out of a hole on the bank and ran and dragged himself over the snow. Every few rods he evidently dragged himself along on his belly, as one may sometimes see a dog do. His track was as large as a shepard dogs. At the head of the pond he had gone into the open water where it ran rapidly. Farther up we saw his track

again on the large pool below the old mill. Is it to dry his wet fur that he drags himself like a dog here and there? Muskrats tracks common, and in the woods coming back lots of fox tracks and partridge tracks.

28 Still clear and cold, 10 degrees this A.M.

That which distinguishes the true literary artist from the mere thinker, says the French critic Scherer, is a vigorous sensuousness, the concrete and immediate impression of things. He elsewhere speaks of that simple and natural realism without which art cannot exist.

29 Still dry and cold, down to 5 degrees this morning

30 clear and cold: roads dusty, mercury 10 degrees this morning.

-- The vital literature is not made by the study of literature but by the study of things, or of life.

Dec 31. Down to 10 again this morning; ice 6 inches on River and as smooth as glass all in front of us. Go skating in afternoon -- still overcast, mild, a perfect day for skating. Air hollow -- storm approaching.

The last day of '92. A lucky year for me, brought me both pleasure and profit.

-- It is all the more pathetic and difficult to deal with because all her faults are virtues perverted or pushed too far. Her terrible cleanliness, her ceaseless war upon dust and dirt, what a virtue lies



back of it! Her thrift, wearing out herself and others to save her things, what a virtue perverted is here. Her brutal frankness springs from a trait we all admire -- truthfulness, sincerity. But when she calls you a liar without provocation or because you differ from her, it is too much of a good thing. She hate deception to the point of discarding all the little disguises and half tones of life -- there is nothing but the bare ugly prose left, no charm no illusion, no romance. [crossed out: She] The spirit in which she condemns evil is worse than the evil itself. She always fires on a flag of truce. "Want to parley and apologize, do you! I thought you would eat your own words, but you shall eat them red-hot!" She is so bent on the Monday's washing that she begins Sunday night.