

July 25. Julian and I are off for Roxbury Stop in Shandaken to fish for rainbow trout; do not catch any. In P.M. proceed to Roxbury; reach the old home at 6 P.M. Find every thing fresh and green, no drought yet. All well; haying well along.

29. The days pass pleasantly. J. works in hay field in afternoon above the barn on Curtis's old place. I sit in the shade on the borders of the wood and look down upon the busy scene in the hay field; the past 4 days very warm; have begun the slaughter of the wood chucks.

Aug 1. We stay here till this morning when we take early train

for W. P. Ed drives me down. We have killed 85 wood chucks. Boys finish haying Aug 1st. On the 2nd Curtis and I and Julian and Johnny go over to Edens. All well. Hiram a little disgruntled. Catch a few trout. A fine shower on Thursday night. Return to R. on Saturday. Sunday very cool and bright. Gained 7 lbs in 2 weeks.

19. Cool and bright and dry as a bone. The worst drought since 1876. No rain to wet the ground since June 13. A purgatory of dryness; fear the loss of the grape crop. Moores Early nearly ripe. The clouds are like smoke, no energy to the storm impulse. Little dog showers again and again.

Cloud after cloud lifts up its leg and dribbles out a few drops. The last light shower was on Aug 3d. In the South they are deluged.

-- I doubt if Walter Pater had style in the best sense. He had great policy and finish of expression but these things are not style. He had no simplicity; he did not obey the injunction, as true in art as religion, "Take no heed where with ye shall be clothed." He did take heed; he makes us aware of the fact that he took heed; we are conscious of his style because he was conscious of it; the style is not fused and hidden in the matter.

-- it is too much a matter of externals. But I have only read some of his "Appreciations". May be the other books would impress me differently.

Perfect workmanship, is one thing, style, as the great writers had it, is quite another. It may go with faulty workmanship -- it is the use of words in a vital and fresh way so as to give the impression of a new and original force and personality. When a mans writing is as distinct as his face or character and could not be mistaken for anothers -- he has the main element of style.

-- [~~crossed out: It~~] I got one glimpse of my youth while at the old home. While standing out in the new barn with Curtis I turned and looked through the great open door out into the sunlit meadow and hill, and like a flash the old days came back. How many times in youth had I seen just that effect. It was about the season when Curtis and I used to thresh out some of the new rye for father to take to mill. In our work [~~crossed out: we~~] our eyes would wander out over this view.
In my wood chuck shooting I lingered much about grandfathers old place

over the hill -- killed 5 or 6 chucks there, two that lived in the cellar of the old house. Think of shooting wild creatures peering out from the ruins of your grandfathers house! I dug out the spring and drank there, the spring where my ancestors slacked their thirst one hundred years ago. Father had played here as a child and here mother [~~crossed out: does~~] did her first washing after her marriage.

A little song sparrow had its nest amid the weeds and briars where stood the old house, and sang so sweetly, but plaintively to my ear -- a bird song amid graves.

12. Overcast, and wind southerly, but I do not expect rain It is too much needed.

Later -- Drizzled half the day but barely made the leaves drop.

14. The ground aches with dryness. It seems as if the old earth must [???] crack open in these parts, tho' East, South west, north, it has rained copiously. Many of the grapes wilting -- shall not have half a crop at the best, not a drop of water has been added to the stock of moisture in the ground since early in June. The light showers since then have only served to check evaporation for a day or an hour.

15 After great effort it rained 15 minutes to-day quite hard -- freshened the grass a little, but did not go through the dust in the vineyard. South of us the rain was heavier.

17. Dry and cool and hard, wind north since the little shower. Dew water in the vineyard yesterday.

18. Southerly winds. Threw water on vineyard to-day through Campbells engine Shall watch the result with interest. It was a great satisfaction at any rate to see the water flow in spite of the weather. I enjoyed a real triumph.

20. Cloudy, a slow drizzle all forenoon; barely made the eaves drop. At 5 1/2 a sharp shower for 12 or 15 minutes. First Wordens to-day.

21 Cool, clear, north winds

23. The hellish drought continues -- a sky of brass and a sun of copper. No clouds in the sky for 3 days. In the South they are deluged and have been for weeks -- Six inches of rain yesterday in some places in Ala. and 3 inches in Miss. -- This is my theory of the cause of the hard times -- We are in the high tide of the industrial age. The energies of mankind every where in civilized countries have been for a long time bent upon the production of things and the accumulation of wealth, and augmented by science and machinery, the productive power of every man has been

Sincerely Yours
John Burroughs

increased the fad, while his consumption power has not been much increased. It is all production and no destruction. In former times a large part of the energies of mankind were directed into [crossed out: to] war or destructive channels. Hence in our time we have reached a plethoric or congested state, over-production in all departments. A general European war would make better times at once. Why? Because it would divest vast tides of energy and wealth into destructive channels, and make an outlet for our congested manufactories and agriculture

25. Hot, yesterday and to-day about 90. Southerly winds, but no rain. How the tree and vines stand it is a mystery. Well getting very low; will soon fail.

26. Sunday, Cooler, from the north; threatened rain last night, but not a drop fell. Smoky sky, red sun, strong north wind, and dryer than ever.

30 -- Dry and smoky all the week and hot; at times up to 92. Minnie Saxton came to-day, a rare vision of youth and beauty; turns the heads of all the men she meets. Shipping grapes at the rate of one to 1 1/2 tons per day. Delawares very fine. Only the black grapes seem

to have suffered from drought.

31. Hot and dry as hell. Lowne and Booth to-day.

Sept. 1 Strange days -- the sun a great burnished copper globe. No character to the clouds yet only disorganized vapor, fires all over the country

2d Mr Ingram came last night at 10 -- [~~crossed out: a curious~~] with his big hat he is a curious character caricature of Walt, tries to look like him; an innocent old man, born in Liverpool 68 years ago. Has seen much of life and is a real philanthropist; has reached the garrulous age; lovable, but a great bore.

7. Another week of smoke, heat and drought. The woods

look like middle of october so many of the trees are brown and sear sere; leaves falling from all the trees, a kind of torrid winter. All my maples look as if scorched by flame, red at the top. Never saw the like before; the hickory seems to suffer most, and the elms least. Peach trees half dropped half their leaves. People burning up in Minnesota by the hundred; whole villages swept away. The drought extends as far west as nebraska. Nearly 3 months here without rain. Only a little water left in the well, half a bucket at a time. Grapes nearly all off. 18 tons 700. Dust 6 inches deep in vineyards.

9 Some rain yesterday -- the heaviest for 3 months, over 1/2 inch. Hot to-day, 88 degrees on the house. The woods over the river look here and there as if a fire had run through them and seared the leaves of the trees. I see wooded hills nearly all brown. The leaves are falling here by the study as in October, only they are scorched and killed -- not ripened. Heavy rains in the west in the burning districts.

10 Hot, 92 degrees. A sudden squall at 5 P.M. much wind and light rain.

13. Julian and I take Early train for Snyder Hollow; reach the camp at 11 a.m. Day warm and bright. Camp in the old spot. Stream very low, but

water cold and delicious as ever. After dinner I make the beds while J. takes his gun and hunts. No game. Woods very sweet and quiet.

14. A good shower last night. Bright to-day and warm. I loiter about and absorb the wildness and sweetness. J. hunts. More rain at night.

15. This afternoon we go up the vally to foot of slide, follow the stream till it disappears. Large cold springs very plentiful. A delicious day in the woods.

In the morning Julian starts a fox, his first. While at supper in Evening Dr Moore appears. We make him up a shake down of straw

Day very warm.

16. Very hot and muggy. We spend the day loitering about.

17. Heavy rain last night. To-day we tackle the W[~~h~~]ittenberg[~~h~~]: a hard climb; reach summit about about 11 1/2: J's first remark is, "I could stay a month here," Grand view. After lunch Dr Moore leaves us to catch train at Phoenicia at 4.10. We come down later in afternoon, and broil our one partridge for supper.

18. Go up to the "giant Rocks" the "Colonel" leads us. In P.M. break camp and reach home on Baldwin. What pictures and fragrant memories we bring with us!

19. Rain at last from N.E. may be the equinoctial. Probably an inch of rain so far. (11 a.m.)

The first day we were at Larkins he was cleaning up buckwheat in the old time way -- using the wind as his fanning mill. Then in the afternoon he with a boy was threshing rye. I took a hand in. What memories it called up! The flail came as easy to me as if I had but just put it by -- instead 40 years ago. Just about this time of year Curtis and I used to thresh of the first rye for father to take a grist to mill for new rye bread. How it all came back!

20 -- Rain proved very heavy -- a steady pour for 24 hours -- about 5 inches of water and yet the drains and springs are not affected -- The thirsty soil took it readily, and would take as much more.

Summer warmth to-day with S.W. winds. Sunshine. Rainfall in N.Y. 5 1/2 inches. Storm came up from Georgia.

Never saw the Earth drink up 5 inches of water so easily. Some wells still dry. The whole look of the woods is changed. Dry leaves dropped off.

-- The main thing which distinguishes real literature is that in it the writer puts his mind directly to yours -- gives you a fresh and intimate sense of reality. You touch something real and alive. Whereas in the great mass of print there is a veil or screen between

you and the writer, something artificial, some machinery or apparatus, lifeless verbiage. You do not clasp a warm, naked hand, but a gloved hand. The difference comes to me some-times under the image of an open fire -- the real literature is like that, while mere print is the register or radiator.

25. The first feeling of fall last night and to-day -- cool almost to the point of frost, the katy-dids silent, the tree crickets tolling feebly here and there. I hear a water fowl go by to-night, calling every half-minute, probably a goose. Since the rain the grass starts as in spring: it has had a long rest. Thoughts of home and of the old days and the old faces strong upon me to-night.

29. Warm again, summer heat. Katy-dids as vocal as ever. Days very lovely; fields as green as May. Swarm of robins; a very prolific year with them. The locusts and cicadas in May and June gave them a great send-off; rich food everywhere, then a summer free from storms and tempests; not a nest wrecked or injured; hence the ten-fold increase.

Grape-vines look very healthy.

30 The last of the September days. Partly over cast with clouds from the last, much wind part of the day. In P.M. go to the woods and sit long and long -- see only a gray squirrel.

Oct 1st Nearly clear and warmer

If we come to Whitman in critical frame of mind merely, in a frame of mind begotten by books and not by life, as a professor and judge, both critic and subject will fare poorly. Because in W.N. the professional poet is not uppermost, it is not the literary adept, got up for the occasion that you meet first, but the real man as he lives and breathes, and as he walks the street where you first face a figure divested of artificial and conventional vestments, symbol-ized by the coatless portrait of the poet in the first Edition of the Leaves. Your sense of real things, your grip of nature and life are the first to be challenged. If you are looking for a poet instead of a man, you will probably be repelled at once. The poetry is there of course, but it must be come at by a kind of indirection a kind of sacrifice of [crossed out: the] our

critical pride and equipment. We must take this man on his own terms or not at all. We must divest ourselves of our theories and cannons. We must seek him as a man and not as a poet. (See poem beginning "Whoever you are holding me now in hand" p. 99) Hence the difficulties the professional critics have had with Whitman, the difficulties the minor poets have had with him (In the mind of the minor poet the sense of poetry as a craft, as something wrought etc. is stronger than his sense of life and reality. He values the shadow more than the reality) Third and fourth rate critics and poets almost in-variable reject him. Men outside of literature accept him, and the greatest natures inside of literature. We find the poet in him and through the man -- in and through his human attributes and

powers. The conventional poets all get themselves up for the occasion. [~~crossed out: As the first in the~~] Their language and posture is largely professional like that of the lawyer or the priest. They feign and make believe a great deal. They speak through their forms as the sea-captain fisherman through his trumpet. Not so with W.W. at all. You may like the poets very much and not like him at all. He is one step nearer you, nearer reality than Tennyson. The usual literary veils and illusions are not in him. It is as if a living man touched you on the shoulder and walked by your side.

Yet if L. of G. is not good literature, good poetry, that ends it.

2d Warm and pleasant. Start for Hartford to-day to visit Warner; reach there at 4 1/2. W. meets me at the station and we are soon at his house, a charming place surrounded by noble trees, with long vistas. Like W. very much, a man to love -- gentle, mellow, human, with droll surprises in his talk as in his writings. Reminds me of Myron Benton. Wish I could see him daily. His house full of books and inviting chairs and nooks -- the ideal scholars house, pictures too and curious -- a house like the man

4 Go down to Bridgeport to see Smith and Emma. Stay till Saturday morning -- very glad

to see them both again. Brings up old times. Dessa and Eva there.

6th Go to N.Y. to look for girl, then home at night.

9th Just heard of the death of Holmes -- no news of warning sickness had reached me. Even his cheer and vivacity have at last yielded -- the last star of that remarkable constellation of N.E. authors. I owe him entertainment and more or less stimulus, but probably no deep service. A brilliant talker in letters, gifted with both wit and humor and the poetic temperament -- an open fire to warm your hands by. He had the gift that makes literature -- something direct and immediate -- his mind touched yours. [~~crossed out: A remark~~] One of the best of the discursive writers.

9th Some rain last night; cooler this morning, katy-dids yet vocal last night, only a little hoarse.

10 Heavy rain from the north. A cyclone coming up the coast The second big rain of the season -- began in the small hours of the morning, 3 or 4 inches. Still the drains do not run.

-- In China when the father dies the oldest son scatters fictitious paper money as spirit-toll at the various road side temples. This is like our own fictions about the dead -- fictions out of which we try to draw some consolation against the sting of death.

13 Slow rain nearly all day cool, the fields very green.

-- Never a morning does Julian start off for school but I [~~crossed out: was~~] long to go with him, to be his mate and equal, to share his enthusiasms, his anticipations, his games his fun. Oh, to see life through his eyes again. How young the world is to him, how untried, how enticing. How he enjoys his holidays! On his last holiday, as he sat eating his breakfast he said, "how glad I am it is this morning and not tonight" The whole day with all its possibilities was before him. When he came back at night after his long tramp, without any game, he was still excited and happy over what he might have seen or might have got, had there not been an if in the way, ah, the happy boy!

18. Lovely October day, clear strong light, crisp air; all the woods tinged with gold. Julian holiday; he goes hunting as usual, eager happy. Kills 3 ducks or mock ducks and a little diver.

In P.M. I walk to the woods by the falls. [???] a little below for three days.

20. "The day in unaturally long sleep over the wide warm fields," a day all gold, [crossed out c] tranquil, warm, brooding, a ripe day, like golden fruit on the mid-october bough. The maples glow like great lamps by the roadside.

Five women from Albany all teacers in St Agnes School came down and we walk in the woods. All good "fellows".

26. The fifth day of cloud with slow rain during [crossed out: for] one day. Wind N.E. I begin to long for the sun. Traubel and Dr Plate came yesterday for a few hours, met them in P. Julian near up at off at 4 a.m. yesterday in the rain, up the river after ducks. The poor boy returned without a feather. But he had the excitement of the chase. The yellow leaves lie on the ground under the trees like fallen sunshine.

27. A day of gold after the long cloud period.

28 Another day of gold, still clear, delightful. Sunday. I walk to the woods. Katy-dids still rasping here and there

29. New book, Riverby, came to-day. Doubtless the last of my out-door series. I look it over [~~crossed out: it~~] with a sigh. For a quarter of a century I have been writing these books -- living them first and then writing them out. What serene joy I have had in gathering this honey, and now I begin to feel that is about over with me. My interest, my curiosity is (are) getting blunted.

31. The last of the October days raining heavy from the south warm as May -- clearing in afternoon.

Nov 1. Bright pleasant day. Julian and I drive up to the binnewaters after ducks. Do not see one. Get back before noon.

2 Clear and mild. Walk to Sunset rock.

3d Heavy rain in morning for 4 hours from S.W. warm clear in P.M. Girls from Albany here to paint my picture. Walk to S.S. rock in P.M.

5. Rain, rain. Start for Lawrenceville, NJ. Speak there at night to boys; not very well satisfied with myself -- do not speak easily and freely tho, the boys seemed deeply interested. Cold at night.

6 In N.Y. Cold and windy. Snow farther north. A great revolution in politics, A Republican flood tide, Tammany and Hilliam dead at last.

7 Home to-day.

8. A young winter. Snowed all day from N.E. 4 or 5 inches

Apple trees yet green. A cold nasty day. Julian goes up river ducking and returns at 1 1/2 P.M. nearly frozen; wet and chilled to the bones.

9. Still overcast and cold; more storm threatened. Fox sparrows and Canada sparrows about my study.

10. Snowing again this morning, great camel-backed flakes come straight down; river like glass, snow lies like feathers. A nasty piece of weather.

16 A week of fairly good weather; no storm. To day like indian Summer mental skies somewhat clouded Don't seem to be able to stand the strain of much writing.

[crossed out: 20] 19 A cold wave. Mercury down to 15 this morning.

22d Chilly weater, but not foul. Fog this morning; night boats now at 11 a.m. hurrying by, Baldwin and Troy boats just passing. How they hurry! Day brightening.

27. Cold fine weather; nearly clean to-day. The 42d anniversary of my little sister Evaline.

"How can a man learn to know himself" ingenious Goethe, "Never by reflections only by action," This is half truth. He can only learn his fervor of action by action, and his fervor of thought by thinking. He can only learn whether or not he has fervor to command, to lead, to be a legislator an orator etc by trying. Has he

courage, self-control, self-denial, fortitude etc. In life alone can he find out. But if he would rightly estimate his moral and intellectual worth and define himself to himself he must reflect. "The moment Byron reflects", said Goethe, "he is a child. Byron had no self knowledge. We have all known people who were ready and sure in action, who had no self-knowledge at all. Your weakness or strength as a person comes out in action; your weakness or strength as an intellectual force come out in reflection.

29. Bright, still, clear cold, down to 20 this morning. Julian goes a ducking up the river -- gets one nondescript duck. No Thanks giving dinner. Madams temper made me very unthankful all the forenoon.

-- Are the men of the hour ever the men of the eternities?

-- is like the little girl who when she was sick thought she had the chicken pox because she found a feather in the bed.

Dec. 1 Still, motionless day with light snow

2 Two or three inches of snow this morning and still snowing, very quiet.

Snowed nearly all day, a still gentle, meditative sort of snow, nearly 7 inches.

3. Clear and mild to-day. River like glass all day.

4 Down to 16 this morning, a thick fog. at noon trees all loaded with frost foliage, masses of white, as a few weeks ago they were masses of green. Wires in vineyards long white cords. River like glass still.

-- The unseen, the unknown and unsuspected players in the game of life -- how many there are -- how they take the game from us or give it to us and we know it not! They look over our shoulders, they guide or withhold our hand. See the

poor mortal trying to solve his problem of life with all those unknown factors entering into the game. Then invisible players, are first, race, then time, age, country, then family, then temperament, then accidents of birth and environment, education, books, friends, etc. etc. all these things take a hand and help or hinder the result.

7. A kind of Dec. Indian Summer the past 4 or 5 days Still, clear, cold, not a cloud, not a breeze; mercury near 20 each morning; fair sleighing. J. killed two mallard ducks (drakes) this week, a very proud boy. Am off to N.Y. to-day to the dinner to Conan Doyle.

9. Back home last night. Dr Doyle a large hearty

John Bull -- plain features, but [~~crossed out: a~~] a good, healthy, fresh boyish nature. Liked him much. Mr Mabie presided with his usual skill. Of the speakers I was most drawn to Mr Frost, president of some college in Ky; plain, earnest, nature good; -- no vanity, no attempt at oratory; -- excellent.

12. The ugliest side of winter the past 4 days -- cold, sleety, raining, snowy, dark, foggy, disgusting, the nether extreme of the seasons.

Heavy rain nearly all day, ground full of water. Snow nearly gone.

-- That humor is the most pleasing and effective that plays upon or across a background of deep seriousness. When there is not deep seriousness we soon tire of the humor. What is more tiresome than a funny paper, or a professional humorist?

14 Fair day with sun and cloud. Go up the river with Julian after ducks; glad I went, tho' we got no ducks. J. had three shots, but gun failed to kill. A beautiful warm sunset as we row back on the painted water.

Remarked for the first time this morning that the spokes or rays of light from the sun which come through an opening [crossed out: from] in the clouds all point to a centre just in or beyond the clouds whereas the sun is 93 millions of

away. If they pointed to the sun they would be parallel to the eye. How is this to be explained. Never saw it referred to. The phenomenon seems quite local like the rainbow.

15. Clear, mild, still, like early Nov. Mercury up to 50. Albay girls here.

16. Partly overcast, but still mild, Mercury 50.

17. Still warmer, 55, a fine Nov. day; getting colder at night.

18 Clear and sharp; froze lat night. Go to P. at night

20 Julian and I start for home on Early train. A clear mild day, no wind, no cloud walk up from the station reach home at noon.

No snow. The old seems draw me as usual. Remarkable weather.

21. Clear and sharp; we all go fox hunting; old snow quite deep in the woods on the sides of the mountain. Hounds fail to raise a fox. Back through Jim Boutons and Smiths hollow about 3 P.M.

23 Colder. Johnny and I go over to Edens. All well. Hiram and Eden both look well.

24. Near zero this morning. We go fishing on the ice; hook up my first sucker; a pleasant forenoon. Catch 25 fish. Go back to Curtis's in P.M. A cold drive over the mountain.

25 Xmas. A light skim of snow last night. Off with the hounds

again this morning. On the big mountain start a fox, which "By kills in P.M. I stand an hour or more by a big fire and warm myself; then back home across the old Clump, carrying a hare which Johnny has killed. Julian returns as we are finishing dinner. Johnny and By, later.

26. Go out to Homer's on noon train. H. looks better, but is in a very bad way. Cold with signs of storm. Hiram comes in P.M.

27. Big driving, N.E. snow storm rages this morning. Go down to the train floundering through deep snow. Up home through drifts and wind. The first big storm of winter, a foot of snow and very cold. 1 1/2 hour walking up. Snows and blows all P.M.

28. Below zero this morning. The boys break the roads and in

P.M. take us down to the train Pass the night with Henry Abbey

29. Six below this morning; reach home on Early train. River closed; winter full blown upon us at a bound.

30. 10 above this morning. Snow nearly one foot.

31. 10 above; day bright.

1895

January 1st Five below this morning. Clear; the air full of glittering frost particles. Good skating on river.

2d Clear, cold, -- fine masculine winter weather. Mercury 8.

3d 10 degrees this morning. Ice nearly 6 inches on river. No wind.

-- Our best younger novelists like Howells, James, Stevenson, and others, are too conscious of the artist

I read a few lines or stanzas, and stop. I see it is only deft handicraft and that the heart and soul are not in it. [~~crossed out: The itch of literature~~], One day my boy killed what an old gunner called a mock duck. It looked like a duck, and acted like a duck, but when it came upon the table, it mocked us. These mock poems of the magazines remind me of it.

-- Nearly all the religious and devotional hymns of our fathers are a sign for rest, for an end of struggle and strife -- for that in fact which is death. Because when struggle ceases, death or dying begins.

"Now understand me well, it is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success

no matter [crossed out: how great] what, shall [crossed out: arise] come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary."

January 4. Still fine snug winter weather.

I ought to go to the Stevenson memorial meeting in N.Y. to-night, but shall not.

His death fills quite a space in my thoughts. He seems nearer to me than any other contemporary British man of letters -- of the younger school. Some one has said "be an artist or prepare for oblivion." S. was an artist and he is safe from oblivion for a time at least. Yet he is not one of the great ones. His literary equipment surpasses his more solid native human equipment, as with so many of the late school of writers. He was not a

man of mass and power, any more than I am. We are all light weights, and try to make up in cleverness what we lack in scope and power. S. is not one of the men we must read; we can pass him by. But he is one of the men who fills the hour and relieves the tedium of life. He inspires love, and the thought of him as gone from life and sleeping there in far off Samoa on a mountain peak fills me with sadness.

-- Dr Holmes [~~crossed out: was a~~] wrote fine and eloquent [~~crossed out: poet~~] poems, yet we cannot call him a poet. His work never has the inevitableness of nature; it is a feat, a performance very skillfully gone through with. His poetry is a stream

in an artificial channel; his natural channel is his prose, here we get his freest and most spontaneous activity

6th Sunday. Snow part of the day, 2 or 3 inches.

7 Much warmer with rain, mercury 45.

8 Still warm, with signs of a change to cold. Old snow reduced to 3 or 4 inches. Ice on the river covered with a thin sheet of water. Overcast -- light snow.

10 Fine slow rain -- freezing on the trees etc. Storm coming up the coast. Cold wave in Canada.

11. Warmer 40 degrees fog, wind S.W.

-- Why is F. Harrison far less persuasive and convincing as a critic in the same fields than Arnold? Is it because he seems to have less root in himself that his great talent is less a vital part of his personality? He is more like a flower without the stem and leaves; we do not see where all this richness of language and illustration come from. The weight of the speaker is not so much in what he says as with A. When a vessel stands so high out of the water, we know it is not heavily laden.

-- True you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear; neither can you make a sow's ear out of a silk purse, and the ear is of much more conse-

quence to the sow than a silk purse would be.

-- I heard a reader say after finishing one of Stevesons stories "How well it is written." Was not this after all, rather a disparagement? He had noticed the style, the dress. It should have been so well written [~~crossed out: that~~] as to make him forget that it was written at all but a direct laying bare of the authors mind and heart. We should think our pleasure from the essay or story, is entirely in the subject matter. Not ever woman has such charm as to make us blind to her dress, but the best writer always has. I think we do feel with regard to some of the books of Stevenson, how

well they are written, books like *The Inland voyage*. *Travels with a Donkey* etc. We do not quite lose sight of the style. Hence a British critic hits it when he says that S. lacks home-lieness. Does not the best oratory make us forget the orator in the argument. When the people heard so and so they said, how fine, how eloquent, when they heard Demosthenes they said we will fight Phillip. The complete identification of the style with the thought, the complete absorption of the man in his matter so that the reader shall say how good, how true, is the most to be desired.

-- I hardly know why it is, but it seems to me that all the old men I see now adays are shams, counterfeits. The real old men are all dead. I knew a lot of them in my youth. They were always old; they were probably coeval with the hills and rocks, but they finally passed away. And now up springs this crop of imitation old men. Why, I knew some of them when they were comparatively young and now they are trying to pass as genuine old men like their fathers! I have a mind to expose the fraud.

12. Clear, still, hazy, two or three degrees of frost. Looks as if winters heart had failed him. Bare ground beginning to peep thro' the snow, here and there.

16 Slow easy snow nearly all day 3 inches, mild.

Ill since Sunday with [~~crossed out: dia~~] a sort of winter cholera, better to-day, a grand liquidation, probably paying off old scores of over feeding. A sort of house cleaning on the part of Nature, a fearful scrubbing out.

17. Clear, still, mercury 13, trees all white.

-- I think one feels of the poems of Holmes, that they are skillful literary feats not an inevitable spontaneous poetic utterance They are less sincere poems than those of Longfellow.

January 19. More snow last night, about 6 inches; very light. Mercury 16 this morning.

-- Finished the 5th play of Ibsen last night. Have read *The League of Youth*, *Pillars of Society*, *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, and *A Dolls House*. Do not think I shall read any more of them. There is nothing in them for me. Ibsen is not a sky shaker; shakes the doors and windows a little that is all. Nothing inspiring or prophetic in him. Nothing for the soul, no poetry and not much philosophy. He is interesting, manages the dialogue well, language vigorous and direct, now and then a happy and telling comparison, but never breathing the atmosphere of the great creative geniuses.

20. Down to 4 or 5 below this morning.

21. Warmer with rain in P.M and at night.

22. Clearing off with signs of colder weather again. Rain has settled the snow and put an enamel of ice on things.

-- To C.W. Lansing, Mich.

Those poems you send me are only the surface indications whether there is really a valuable poetic vein there I do not know. You must find out for yourself. How much you have "salted" your mind from your reading, time alone can tell.

24 -- Clear -- down to 10 this morning

Clifton Johnson comes at night. Saw Mrs Barker at H. P. probably for the last time.

25 Still clear, down to 10, in morning.

29. Clear cold weather, down to 3 or 4 below this morning.

Again the old scenes on the river; the ice harvesters at work, began Monday morning the 28; ice about 10 inches.

31 Clear and cold. Down to 10 degrees this morning; good sleighing; the ice-men are rushing in the ice.

Feb 1st Winter renewing his hold -- down to 6 below this morning. Ice on river 1 foot.

2d Light snow

3 Clear, down to 3 above. Saw a flock of 6 robins. Robins have been around all winter -- saw 2 in middle of January on different days and heard of others seeing them.

4. Overcast, threatening snow. Down to 15 above.

-- Style in the service of style or for styles sake, is like an open fire of asbestos logs payed over by gas flames.

5. Winter keeps his hold; down to zero this morning. A cock robin in the apple tree; his breast glowed, but he looked hungry.

6 Down to 7 degrees below this morning, a wind like a raving maniac Sky clear as a bell. Ice men driven from the river.

-- Why will artists in painting naked women so often give them the same expression of face that they wear when clothed and in their right minds in society. Think of the face of a society girl upon a nude figure! One feels sorry for

her; how ashamed and awkward she must feel without her cothes! Sometimes one sees the face of a pretty school-marm upon these nude figures. The face and the body should be one, there should be no contradiction, as there is none in the Greek figures.

7. Six below this morning. A storm coming; light snow from the N. in P.M.

8. The worst storm of the season snowed and blowed violently all night, mercury about zero, about a foot of new snow this morning badly drifted. Mercury only gets up to 3 above all day, a seamless cloud over the sky; wind N.W. drifting the snow; a regular blizzard, trains delayed or stopped entirely.

9 Still zero weather-- a hard soulless iron monster seems to hold the world in its embrace

-- "Christ is God made easy" -- a good definition.

-- Have been re-reading laterly several number of the Autocrat -- read the first [crossed out: when] as they came out in The Atlantic. In places they are very good; in other places very bad -- nearly always a little forced, the writer too conscious of himself and his wit, often using factitious analogies. How absurd for instance the class poems with violins and merschaums as the three things that improve with use. The pipe and the voilin actually change, but there is no change in the poem, no matter how much more it may come to mean to us individually after long carrying of it in the mind. If we see it in print a great deal it becomes hackneyed and

we lose our relish for it. What he says of the pipe and the fiddle [~~crossed out: are true~~] is fact, what he says of the poem is fancy. This is factitious analogy. Both these implements may be said to be green when they are new -- but how is a poem any more green or sappy when it is an hour old than when it is a century? Holmes was a fine and superiour amateur and nothing more. He took up literature as a young fellow takes up skating, and he excelled in it. He cuts capers and flourishes on every page.

-- It is the physical properties of the pipe and violin that he is talking about but what physical properties has a poem? If it has anything analogous to say it always has it. If it is true that we let a piece of writing season, we mean we cut it and revise it and re-shape it.

Dr Holmes's writing is like the songs of certain birds -- it always implies a spectator. He is always "showing off" a little. He was so fond of pleasing, too fond, to deny himself at all. Always on the strain to be witty and bright.

11. A little below zero this morning -- the day of absolute clearness and brightness, the sun softening the snow a little. Roads being shovelled out.

12 Zero again and clear. The trees with frost foliage, air hollow -- full of sounds, crows, dogs, and other sounds.

-- 14 Lovely St Valentines day. Clear, mild; winter softening a good deal.

15 Days of absolute brightness, days like clear rock crystals. Down to 10 this morning. The P. boys come up a jolly time.

16. Still clear and sharp; down to 3 this morning. The air full of white frosty vapor. Great column of steam go up from the engines at the ice house; I hear the steady rattle and see the racing of the big ice blocks along the runs.

17. Zero this morning. Another white still day, air full of frosty mist; the 5th cloudless day. Mercury gets up to 30 in middle of day and drops to zero or near it at night.

-- Old Mr Arnold near me died the other day, aged 83 or 4. A few moments before he died he lifted up a hod of coal and poured it into the top of the stove. He then said he guesed he would go up to his room and rest a little, a thing he had never done before his wife said. In a few minutes she followed

him up and found him just losing consciousness; in a few moments he was dead -- no effort at all for him to die; like going to sleep.

-- Sat here in the twilight last night and sang, as I have so often done before, this stanza from a favorite hymn of father and mother:

"The day is past and gone
The evening shades appear,
Oh, may we all remember well
The night of death draws near."

It always brings them and the old home vividly before me. I see father in his old age sitting by the window in the winter twilight singing it in a broken feeble voice, and I see Mother the same. She sang it during her last illness one night sitting by the window of her room. It had deep meaning to the old people and has to me.

19. Milder yesterday and to-day; partly overcast.

22 Winter still in a genial mood; bright sunshine nearly every day. Ice men finished on the 20th. Bright to-day and a little colder. Yesterday took a long drive about 10 miles. Struck my usual barren Feb. spell over a week ago. No thoughts, no work in me.

25 Start for N.Y. to-day. Weather mild and March like.

26 Cold and windy and dusty in N.Y. very disagreeable.

Stay in N.Y. till Saturday the 2nd Lunch and dine with various people. Enjoy myself fairly well.

Meet Madame Ragonin, a Russian woman of prodigious

size and learning. Speaks 8 different languages; writes books on India, Chaldea, etc. Said to be a lineal descendant of the first Czar of Russia. Does not look like a Russian; dark hair and eyes and smooth fluent features; works 8 or 10 hours daily, yet says she has no physical strength. Six feet tall and large in body and limb. A kind and gentle nature I should say and truly democratic; always has some poor unfortunate old [???], male and female, depending upon her, it is said.

While getting off the elevated at 42nd street, met Stedman getting on. "Where you going" he inquired, "Home" I replied. "Why have you not been to see me? What a fraud you are!" With a reproach-ful look. "How well you are looking" I said. "Same to you" he rejoined and the train moved off.

March 2 Three or four inches of snow fell to-day. Reach home at 7 P.M.

3d Clear and chilly.

4 Overcast. Cold wave; Rain and sleet in late afternoon.

5. Bright. Mercury at 18 this morning. Not much spring yet.

6. Gentle snow all afternoon, about 2 inches.

8 Soft still dim sunshiny day air full of smoke and vapor, mercury at 45. Snow melting. [crossed out: No blue birds yet.] Two blue birds in afternoon along R.R. track, male and female. Insects in the air the size of mosquitos muskitos, dark colored, very fragile. Song sparrow near study sings a little. Sap runs very slowly.

16. Saturday. A slow snow yesterday, nearly 2 inches. Bright and sharp to-day. Mercury has been as low as 18 during the week. Winter relaxes very slowly. Ice yet strong on the river. Spring birds very rare, occasionally a timid, half-hearted sparrow song

-- Where is the letter you burned up this morning? The ashes are there in the grate of the stove, but the meaning, the writing where is it? Surely you could not burn up that? No, that was not combustible. Is there any comfort in that kind of immortality? Death cannot affect your mind in any other way than the fire affects the message in the letter. It destroys the body, or it re-distributes the type, but what you wear were, what you stood for, exists in other minds -- and is that all? I fear me it is so.

Mch 19. Clear as crystal and sharp. Excellent sap weather. The river is beginning to wet his sheets. Few birds so far, the fewest I ever remember at this date. Only a song sparrow here and there

this morning, no robins or blue birds or starlings to be heard. Did the severe winter in the south cut them off?
-- A remarkable winter in many ways, uniform, even tempered, well-behaved; no spasms or spurts; no rain or hail or sleet, and no great snow fall. The cold came on very steadily, tighter and tighter each week till early in Feb. when it culminated in a week of very severe cold, tho' not extreme, but wide spread. Covered the continent, not heaped up in any one place. Since then it has slowly relaxed. It is now 40 degrees or 45 degrees by day and 20 or 25 by night. A clean heroic winter. I have split and burned an enormous amount of wood since Nov.

I have worked pretty steadily all winter and late fall; on my W. W. matter and latterly on nature writing; have been well, except a few days of winter cholera. No cold in 2 years.

21. Clear and sharp from the north, storm passed south of us. No birds to speak of yet; no warmth. A few bees out of the hives some days. Mercury only reached 38 degrees yesterday.

23. Clear sharp weather continues, snow gradually going off. Starling this morning. Roads dry in places. P. boys up yesterday, jolly time

24. Evening. Sitting here by my lamp I hear the honking of wild geese; rushing out I hear them over the river going north. Poor things I am sorry for them -- no open water probably between here and the north pole. What will they eat, where will they rest?

In a day or two they will go back, but how tired and hungry. Just before sundown I saw a flock of ducks going south. They too had found only an icy outlook at the north.

Light rain with snow flakes this P.M. Not freezing to-night. River liable to open any time.

25. Milder, slight rain. Great [crossed out: w]rents in the ice on the river When the tide ebbs it will probably go out. Heard jack snipe flying over. Do not remember to have heard one before in 25 years.

P.M. Ice moved out on the ebb tide.

Showers and thunder about 4. Start for home on 4 1/2 train.

26 Reach home this morning Light snow squalls all day No sap yet. Ed and By putting up the sap house. Old snow very deep in places.

27. Still cold and snow squally. Go over to Edens. Find him better. Hiram pretty well. Stay till 29th Snow all the time. The 28th very bad

30. Bright but cold; say runs a little in middle of day. Glad to be at the old spot again. Curtis'es family all well and very busy. Chant getting ready to move over [~~crossed out: down~~] on the other place; repairing the barn etc. Emma his wife, and Anne paper-ing and painting her house.

April 1st. Light rain; funeral day of Kate Benjamin (Mrs Corbin) Curtis and I drive down to the village. Eden and Mag come over on the P.M. train.

2d Overcast in morning; sun at noon. Looks like sap weather, but too cold.

Clouds up at night and snow an inch or more.

3d Give it up and start for home this morning. Bright and clear, but cold.

Reach home at 5 P.M. Thus goes my 58th birth day. Some head ache.

4th Bright and lovely. Go with Julian over to black creek for ducks. Heard the first warbler as one year ago. Do not know its name. We pic-nic under a big pine in the swamp. Old Travis and his boy; two ducks for them; none for J. his gun no good.

5th C. johnson comes again Lovely day. Walk and talk. First hyla in the woods.

6 Over cast. Sprinkles of rain

Warmer; wind south. J. leaves at 10 1/2.

7. Cloudy, still, mild. Walk to the swamp. Frogs in the pools croaking -- the clucking frog, or wood frog -- *rana sylvaticus*. Robins numerous and lively

8. Overcast; rain sets in in forenoon from south; warm, near 60.

9 Powerful rain yesterday and last night; ground all overflowing this morning; big pool in Peach orchard; warm, grass growing [crossed out: M] A chorus of piping frogs last night, through which ran like a raveled yarn, the long tr-r-r-r-r-r-r-r of the toad. Birds very merry this morning. Mercury reaches 70 degrees during the day.

April

10. Shower last night at 8 with much thunder. Bright and cooler this morning A cold wave approaching. River as red as a mud puddle this morning as the wind sweeps over it.

11 Bright and lovely day; froze quite hard last night. J. kills his first wild goose and a blue winged teal.

-- How many of our conclusions and opinions are like those of the farmer who says he has a spring that is cold in summer and warm in winter. We accept the testimony of our senses which say one thing to-day and another to-morrow. We often think the very elemental laws have changed, when the change is only in ourselves. In youth everything

looks fresh and young, in old age, all looks stale and old. The world is indeed what we make it.

15. Another heavy rain, from Friday night to Sunday noon, ground all overflowing again, rather warm, grass growing. River as red as the Mississippi or Missouri. Went up to K and spent Sat. night and Sunday with Abbey.

16 Two days of cloud; chilly.

20 To day is the 4th of the lovely April days, clear, brilliant enchanting. Yesterday mercury reached 65. North wind all the time. Plowing the currants. A little arbutus on the 18th. The delicate filaments of the flying spiders glance in the sun light. I enjoy every hour of the day.

21. Another perfect April day. Drive over to Sherwoods, a place redolent of lambs, calves chickens, surrounded by wild rocky nature.
22. Caught our first shad to-day. J. and I. Rain in P.M. a nice April rain
23. Clear and windy, and warm.
24. Bright day. Binder and I make a voyage down the black creek from near Centerville to the bridge in the woods near W. P. A fine time. May be I will write it up. Wind at our back all the way.
25. First heat of the season, 82 degrees in the shade. Light thunder shower.
26. Still warm, but a few degrees cooler than yesterday.
27. Much cooler. Thunder in the night.

28 A lovely April Sunday; walk to the woods with van B. and Ethel, a little arbutus left.

May 1st A lovely May day, of quiet sunshine and shadow. Mercury 70. Spend it or part of it in the muck swamp blasting out the rocks

2d Clear, brilliant and warm in middle of day. Not a cloud. All day at the swamp with George and Charley; break through the rocky barrier to-day and let the water out. I lay a long time on the rocks. Shad blow just out; little leaves the size of mouse ears all about me. How lovely the world looks; even Poppletown hill, from my perch on the rocks looks classical, as I come home the perfume of the sugar maple by the road side falls upon me, sweet as apple bloom

May 4. Season coming on apace, 84 degrees to-day in shade; leaves coming out rapidly; maples make quite a shade. Currants and cherry trees in full blow. Drive to H. in afternoon. At one point [~~crossed out: a charm~~] the spring or nesting jubilee of the finches in a maple by the roadside, at another point I pause a moment, a swallow skims low over the meadow hawking for insects [~~crossed out: the~~] groups of anemone tremble in the gentle breeze, then a meadow lark goes from one field to another across the road, I note his plump round body, his short quail-like wings and flight as he alights the two white quills in his tail show plainly. Then he turns toward me his yellow breast with its black crescent, and calls out, "spring o-the year"

Cherry trees begin to show the white to-day.

I find that many of our plants and trees not called fragrant have a brief hour in which their bloom is sweet-scented, if we are only lucky enough to catch it.

Binder and I found a handful of dicentra had a delicate perfume. The swamp maple also was fragrant. For a night and a day the sugar maple is fragrant; Spice bush, if taken at the right moment has a refreshing perfume of lemon. I have caught the long spurred violet when it was fragrant.

4 To-day gathered a few violets of pale blue color, probably the spreading violet of Gray that had a fine delicate perfume

May 6. Lovely day, pretty hot. Hiram comes to-day at 2. I meet him under the trees in front of Gordons. With Hiram comes father and mother and the old home and all the memories of my youth. He is well not here since '83. I go to Vassar at night.

8 Hot weather continues summer heat, bet. 84 and 90 according to location. The week of bloom again upon us. Foliage nearly all out. A slow shower at night, not half enough, ground getting dry.

9. Hot as ever, still, lovely, air full of bird songs and calls.