

From April 3d, 99 to Feb 15, 1900

April 3d My 62d birth day, clear and cold like yesterday, with light flurries of snow at noon. Go to P, spend an hour at van Klucks.

Health and spirits good, even a little extra for several days. The old relish for the coming of spring and for the face of nature. Robins very plentiful.

How I enjoy their calls and laughter and thin twilight challenge, [How]

What would April be without the robin and the blue bird and the sparrow and the phoebe!

I am sleeping well, eating well and working well? finding much of the old charm and satisfaction in life. But how my whole emotional nature [leaves treasure] the old home and the days of my youth, like a plant toward the sun, a letter from Julian telling of bidding farewell to his high

school girl. It near quite pathetic.

Karl self-denied in the bay.

4. Same weather continued, sharp and frosty, but clear and inviting this morning, a beautiful letter from miss Peck, lots of ducks on the river in [river]

5. Another sharp bright day, no change in the weather now for several days, very uniform, 27 or 28 below freezing at night and 36 or 38 above by day. River under the strong north wind, or great [alaby] monster creeping there in the sun light this morning.

P.m. a day without a cloud, with strong wind from the north, set fire to Mulfords swamp in afternoon, it escapes up the hill and into the muddy fields and I have more fun than I bargained for. Fight it for 2 hours Allie and Acker help and we finally subdue it.

The first butterfly yesterday with woods got choked with snow, except on the exposed slopes.

6. Still clear and cold from the north but with signs in the south of approaching storm, warmer in afternoon.

7. Cloudy with light rain in p.m. Booth and snow up.

Heavy rain all night, much snow yet in the woods.

8. Foggy in morning, partly charming before noon, mild mercury 40. Six inches of frost yet in the swamp. Heard the first "peeper" yesterday, not yet in the marshes, spend the day at S.S. cleaning house.

a homesickness which home cannot cure, that is my complaint.

Sunday.

9. Fair day, but chilly in the shade, write letters and read a little, walk over by R.R. in p.m. checking frogs, (wood frogs) in chorus in little pond up the road by the cedars. In croaking the skin is inflated on each side just back of fore leg, are seemed croaking. Were they all males? Had females not yet arrived?

10. Always a significant date to me for some reason. Bright and fair this morning, a little freezing last night.

What is the complexion of my days? Rather sad and dull, write long, long reminiscent thoughts.

No writing for nearly a week since last Nov, I have finished and written the following prices;-

April 10, 99

Paid

100 The vital touch in literature (Atlantic)

75 Recent phases of literary criticism (UGR).

25 Nature with cloud doors (Perucius Gazette Chicago)

25 Nature study (Outlook)

50 Winter bird life (Youth companies)

80 Bird talk (St. Nicholas)

175 Wildlife around my cabin (Century)

80 Criticism and the man (Atlantic)

125 Library values (Century)

150 The art of seeing things (On hand)

25 A walk in the fields (Independent)

75 Thou shalt not preach (On hand)

985

11 Brilliant day, not a cloud in the sky till sundown, mercury down to 26 in the morning. I walk to Black pond to get Travis boat, enjoy the walk through the fields and woods in the strong sunlight, enjoy drinking at the spring by the path in the woods. How beautiful to get

to the fountain head of anything, to see the beginnings. I wish I might always drink direct from the spring, such a drink is relished by something more than the tongue, my whole mind drinks. To [stook] down or lie down and draw a life giving draught directly from the [lartte] how satisfying. Black pond still covered with ill except on the southern end unable to fetch the boat out, I walk back by Julian Rock, what a view through the transparent air. The Catskills gleam white with snow where they present a direct front to me, shading into dark brown as they turn this way or that. Take my dinner at Slabsides, or spend the afternoon there. How sweet the solitude.

12. Cloudy light rain this morning, quite heavy from 12 to 2, clearing off at 3? warm

I sit over in Mulfords field a long time. Phoebe birds all about me sitting on the little cedars and Mullen stalks with glances directed to the ground. Every few minutes they swoop down and snatch some insect from the leaves or dry grass and then watch again. Two red poll warblers also the first of the season they perch and watch and swoop also. At this season all insect feeders seem to be looking to the ground.

13. Bright warm and lovely promises to be an ideal April day. I write letters, read in Audubon's journal and put final touches on "The art of seeing things," a letter from Rev. John Scott appreciation of my paper in independent.

Mercury goes up above 60.

Drive to Wester park in p.m. to see Hiram, she looks well and is busy with his bees.

14. Ideal April day, mercury near 70. How jubilant are the birds. Indications of showers in afternoon. I go to P; find my first hepaticas on my way to the boat, everywhere columns of smoke are going up; the annual spring purification by fire. Women in sun [connets] and with old [mits] on their hands are raking their door yards. Reading Audubon's journal, no writing this week.
15. Bright lovely day, mercury near 70. Hiram comes down today and in p.m. we go over to Slabsides and begin life there again, seems very good; remnants of snow yet in the woods.
16. Slow cold rain nearly all day, from N. W. We sit by the fire and read and doze.
17. Clear and bright and colder; froze a little last night;

18. Ideal April day, getting smoky; mercury above 60, the plow is at work here and there. Go back to Riverby today.
19. Perfect day, a slight mildy smoke and vapor. Wind S. W, mercury near 70. With my glass I see the farmers plowing all about. We start the flow in the vineyard. Burn brush all forenoon. To SS. to plant pear in p.m. Dicks man Charley sowing onions. Amara planting celery.
20. Lovely weather continues, cool at night and sometimes frosty.
21. Every storm approaching from the west flashes in the pan. Gory and bright. Rucy these days burning the grape trimmings. Gene Traver helping me. Boys plowing vineyard. Health excellent.

22. Walk to Black Pond to get the boat a delightful paddle down the lake and the outlet to the sign of the Dead Dog, where I have the boat. Home through the woods via Slabsides by noon, a little arbutus opening here and there, a hout healthful day, Hiram comes back from Wester Park and we go over to S.S.

23. Slabsides, still clear and day lown up and the Ingeresolls. It is a luxury to live there tranquil bright April days. Am meditating a trip to the Pacific and Alaskan Coast as guest of a wealthy N.Y. man.

28.The dry fine summer weather continues without a break, near 80 each day.
Miss Ball and her friends up today, plenty of arbutus, an enjoyable day.
Cherry trees just blooming.

29. The sun comes up red and fall down reder. The sky tarnished with smoke, a spring drouth, Hiram leaves this morning for Wester Park; up before 5. The artist Bruce Harsefall leaves also, all day the woods, summer heat.

30. Still smoky, dry hot, oriole here, cat bird here, wren here, again I walk under blooming maples, again the cherry trees are white as snow.

In all the woods and groves the hand maples are sketched in yellow green.

May 1st. No Change; hot day, wood thrush here.

The woods are all brushed with tender pink and yellow green, a mist of unfolding leaves.

Burning bogs and brush today at Slabsides.

The tree toads have been calling for three days and no rain yet.

2d I am sitting here on the porch at Slabsides. My senses all bathed in this pull several times. It is warm as mid summer. The woods are naked no longer, they are all clothed in their undergarments at least and it looks like a kind of tender green gauze. I see the ingsole house through a veil of new leaves. The tree-frog calls nearby, in the distance I hear the "chink" "chink ch r-r-r-r" of the nashville warbler. Then the fine strain of the black and white creeping warbler. The S.W. wind is warm and moist. The fine shower of last night has been a spur to everything.

This morning the pear trees were in bloom and the apple trees were showing the pink. The spring promises to be early after all.

Yesterday the morning was above 80. The orchard starting and King-bird here this morning. They met in p.m. 84 a fine shower at 4.

3. Cooler with north wind and clouds a little frost at night, back of the hill.

4 Clear, cool, lovely. Again I walk in blooming orchards. (Again I hear the wood thrush sing, again the young leaves cast their shadows) And linger long with pensive feet. Again I sit in fragrant twilights and hear with joy the young lambs bleat. All day at Slabsides reading, writing musing, watching Amara plant his potatoes and drinking in the beauty of the day and seem.

8 Lovely dry warm weather continues all day on the Shathya with miss Arnold and Blue Eyes. Home from Cornwall in the morning where I spent Sunday with the less.

10 To Albany to visit Gov Roosevelt.

11 The worst headache for two years last night. The govenor very kind and considerate.

A light rain today for two or three hours - very dry.

12 In Columbia co valley of the Kinderhook, In many ways

the most beautiful part of the state I have yet seen; a world of green fertile round hills and broad sweeping valleys.

13. Home this morning. 15 Vassar girls come up, cloudy with sprinklys of rain - dry weather rain.

14. Clear and cooler, grape arms 12 to 15 inches long, apple bloom all off.

17. Go out home this afternoon. Abigail and I walk up across to John S; Country green and fresh, Olly is out looking after her chickens. We meet her on the road; We reach crests at dusk, all well and glad to see me.

18. Cold, cloudy with shorts of rain today I walk about and listen to the bobolinks. They sing more like [noise] of my youth than any I

have heard for a long time. One very fine singer out by the "New Barn", reminds me of one Harmonica. Some of the notes have a distinguished accent like [store] of great metropolitan preacher, a note that sounds like the word "Civilizer" is very striking in this respect.

19. Still cloudy and cold. The boys are planting their potatoes over by the hay barn. I pass that way in the p.m. on my way to the train and pause a while.

20. A big gang of Vassar girls come up, a cloud day streaked with sunshine and sprinkler of rain. A fine tune with the 21 girls.

21. Bright but cool.

22. Cold and clear and dry, near a frost. grape arm 2 feet on Del.

May 23. Join the Harriman expedition to Alaska today at 2p.m. in N.Y. Pass my place on Hudson at 4p.m. Look long and fondly from car window upon the scenes. I am to be absent from [for] till August. The sun is shining warmly, I see the new green of the vineyards; wife is weaving her white apron from the summer house. I sit alone in my room in the pullman car, and am sad. Have I made a mistake in joining the crowd for so long a trip, can I see nature under such conditions? But I am in for it.

Aug 9 Returned from the Alaska trip today, in much better condition in every way in both body and

mind than where I left. The months upon the sea - June 1st - July 30th.

I have written up my impressions from day to day in the Harriman book and in the three poems. What joy to be back again and once more at my case. No news from home till. I reached Portland Aug 1st, all is well; fine crop and grapes and vineyard in good shape. A hot dry summer here, only light rain to June 23rd when heavy showers came with hail in many parts of country. Heavy showers again in July, grass light.

20. Dry, no rain since my return; the past 3 days muggy and very uncomfortable. Caught thieves in my vineyard on the night of the 17th. Grapes repening feet. First

shipments on the 11th No rot or leaf mildew this year, as yet.

22d. Wind and rain last night broke down the elm and maple by the spring; rain only moderate. Very muggy weather the past few days. Ed, came today at 3 1/2.

24. A sudden shower without any warning, came across the river. A mere sprinkle over there, here a downpour for 15 minutes, clouds rammed themselves out. Temperature moderate.

29. Lovely weather the past few days; Could not ask for better for grape cutting and shipping, ripening very fast. Ed and I at Slabsides at night.

31. Lovely tranquil August weather continues, over 3 tons of grapes today.

Sept 1. Getting hot, cloud and seen today. Taking my case today, the grape war letting up.

2d. Heavy rain last night with thunder nearly all night. 3 1/2 inches water.

4th. Warm yesterday, heavy thunder shower at night 1 1/2 inches, cool and clear this morning with the first suggestion of fall. Health good.

11. Fine mild weather since my last entry. Julian and I go up black brick pond lilies: Eat our lunch on shores of black pond. Cloudy, begins to rain about one. Stop at Slabsides and warm and dry ourselves by open fire, our first day out together this summer; few birds.

13. Frank Chapman and wife today a very enjoyable day, bright and mild.

14. Colder, clear. Boys mowing weeds in vineyard.

20. Fine weather continues, sleep at S.S. most of the time.

Suiter young people came yesterday. All stayed at SS, getting warm.

21. Rain nearly all night, about 1 1/2 inches.

As we get old how the past overpowers the present, kills it, dwarfs it, makes its events, its people and of little account. We hardly heed today, it pales so in the night of yesterday. It is one of the signs of old age. Does Cicero speak of it in his discourse on old age? or does Emerson? memory for the old anticipation for the young.

24. Fine yesterday, cloudy with light rain this morning.

You may light your reason by mine, but not your faith, or any purely personal

emotion or aspiration. How I have tried to [light] kindle my faith in immediately by Whitmans, but I can not, I am [mould] warned by his tremendous faith but it is only as [the wind moves the water] fire warms iron. [I soon as the mark in my old skepticism] I may soon cool off again. There is no combustible material in one of that kind in which the spark can take.

26. Heavy rain; began at 4 this morning; rained till 9 O'clock. Julian and I go up river; J kills two ducks; short sharp showers till 2 when it clears.

27. Much cooler, Julian again leaves for Harvard. Heed wheels his trunk over this time. He goes off well and cheerful. Much better than last year, clear up the grapes today.

30. More rain last night, fine again today and cool, men still working on the road to Slabsides. Word with them in afternoon.

Oct 1st Cool, autumnal weather, almost a frost last night. Fire in study today, health good, just read, Capt Slamm's Voyage in century, well told; makes one like the Capt.

3. Heavy frost last night, too heavy for time of year scorched most of the grape poridge.

4. More frost, but bright and mild today. Stay at Van Slykes last night in K; to High falls today where I taught school when I was married 42 years ago. Walk about in a strange sad dream; meet one of my old schollars, now a man of 50.

Only a few of the old land marks left.

Birds are beginning to be prominent now, robins, blue birds, sparrows, snow birds, cedar birds. They are now in loose flocks and seem full of fun and flolie. For a time in Sept the birds seem to have retired from view; the fields and grows more deserted; here and there a robin in the woods, very shy and silent, were they moulting? blue birds calling now and then high in the air rarely visible. The old ties were breaking up the old habits, the old domestic life, now the new conditions seem to have been marked or more public and careless life.

11. Fine weather since my last entry and mild, off today to Arden to visit the Harrimans still, warm hazy day.

14. Home from Arden this morning. Glorious weather, warm, bright, calm, a fine visit to the Harrimans.

15. A kind of early Indian summer, the time of the falling leaf, with no wind to shake them down, golden tranquil days, the woods all color, the river a mirror, the hills asleep under a soft blue veil. In the woods the leaves fall one by one, like great flakes of golden snow, slowly and with only a slight rustle as they touch the ground. The perfumes of the witch hazel is on the cool moist air, all the streams and

pools are [flecked] with fallen leaves by the groves and the wood borders, the pale asters stand in a rising tide of new fallen leaves. The birds are social and are pie [niling] in bands and flecks in the vineyard, in the husky places and along the edges of the woods; robins, white throated sparrows, juncos, bush sparrows, blue birds, and at Arden I saw red bellied nuthatches, knights, brown creepers, cheewinks, all playful and merry. In the early morning the crows caw land and long. It is a social and festal time with them too. And the jays, now noncattle they are too now they are secreting oaks and mistrusts and planting future forests. Apples lie in many colored piles in the orchards, corn in golden heaps in the corn fields.

Oh, that autum fragrance of the

woods, oh, the tranquility that broods over the landscape in the golden days.

17. Still fair and warm with light mist this morning and indications of warmer weather.

Start for the old home today, Columbia beat Shamrock yesterday. Reach home at 6 in the autumn twilight, all well
Conelia Davids there whom I had not seen for 40 years, knew me at once, but little changed, strong family likeness, a
lean faced big nosed, big mouthed family with a tendency to slang.

18. Go on the mountain with Johnny; warm as Sept. He starts a fox, but does not set him, kills a partridge on his
drumming log. In p.m. walk about the fields and along the roads

How different the impression I get at the old home, from the one I get at W. P. Here things have no background, no atmosphere. At the old home there is a deep background given by the memories of youth, of father and mother and the name of the families and of places there impress me so differently. The very roots of my being are in these things, while at W. P. things are of the surface and of today.

19. Go over the mountain to Edens Curtis and I. A warm pleasant day, Eden well, finishing his well, Hiram there.

20. Go over to see Homer and Jane, both about the same as one year ago. Home in afternoon. Light rain in morning and colder.

21. Back to West park today, Hiram with me to look after his bus at Weston park

23d Start for Springfield to see Clifton Johnson, a pleasant time. Weather continues hazy, tranquil warm, very remarkable.

Go to Smith College on the 26th to see miss Peek and miss Jordan, spend an hour with Jerald Stanley Lee and his wife at their house. She is the stronger person, I will make her mark, she has deep seriousness, which I fear he lacks.

27. Still hazy and warm. Back to home today.

28. Hiram comes down and we come over to Slabsides and talk up our life here once more.

31. Still at S.S. and having a pleasant time with Hiram, no cold no storm yet, a "Katy did" very hoarse two nights ago, a few pouring tree crickets still audible.

Mrs. Woodworth of northern Vermont writes this and a neighbor of hers, "something killed her hens, sometimes on the nest. She watched for the culprits at last found a weasel killing a hen, and refusing to let go when she tried to scare it away, then she tried choking it when the creature released it, held upon the hen and fastened its jaws into her hand between the thumb and fore finger. She could not choke it off and ran to a neighbor for help, but no one could remove it without tearing the flesh from the woman's hand, so they brought a pail of water into which she plunged her hand, but the weasel then would not let go and did not do so until it was drowned. Her hand was way bad afterward." This beats any weasel story I have ever heard, no doubt it is true, bold. The weasel is the most fierce and blood thirsty of our animals

Nov, 1st Rain all night, not heavy, from N.G. Raining yet this morning, Hiram leaves me again today. A dark gloomy day.

10. Indian summer since the 4th bright dreamy tranquil days, some wind today, but bright with soft freely flying clouds in the sky.

Well, but rather melancholy these days. Start for N.Y. today.

15. Home today from N.Y. snow and rain last night, 2 inches of snow, a good time in N.Y.

Weather mild and pleasant stay with Binder at Clergy house of Grace Church. Dine with the Gilders, the Johnsons, the Harrimans.

19. Weather continues mild and hazy. At Slabsides yesterday with company, a grand daughter

of Henny Ward Rucker among them miss Scoville, looks like her grandfather.

General health better this face them for many years, Alaska did it.

24. Fine Nov weather continues. Bright and sharp and day to day, river streaked with those long straight parallel lines of forme.

Chalk lines made by the wind, freezes some at night. Writing up the Alaska trip.

After a while the fires of life begin to smoulder the ashes accumulate. Then some mild excitement is needed, some social stimulous, something to fan the coals a little. I suspect that is my care now. I need more things to brighten and enliven me.

26. The dry sharp brilliant weather continues, a few degrees of frost each night. An unusual number of red bellied nut hatches this fall, with their fine infantile piping and conversing as they explore the trees. They are very cognacious, also [a] siskins or pine termites calling from the air nearly every day.

As the sun withdraws to the south my melancholy increases, the general heath is good.

30. Mild, still hazy, with gleams of sunshine: spend the day at Slabsides with wife and Hud and his family. Eat our dinner there and walk about. Rare weather.

Dec 1, Indian summer continues, a deep haze over all, more sunshine there yesterday

10. Colder, down to 18 this morning but no storms yet; remarkable weather.
11. Cloud and mist and much warmer. Rain coming from S.W. Springs low; thin ice on the ponds.
12. Warm, 58 with heavy S.W. wind and 2 hours rain, a change of 40 degrees since Saturday. Coming from SS, at 4 I heard a piping frog in the woods, at Bergers spring I saw a bullfrog. Clears off in p.m, a little cooler.
13. Clear, lovely moon light night last night, like early October. Clear this morning and little cooler, only light frost. Such weather in Dec, saps the strength of winter. At night lovely moon; sat a long time in my summer house.

14. Little cooler, an approaching cold wave begins to be felt, Mrs Gordon very ill.

Wallhead building his house in hot haste near Slabsides. I am writing up the Alaska trip.

To be remembered in art and literature or in almost anything else, you must do something unique and that no one else could do. The secret of your power lies in the breadth of your relation to mankind and to common nature, in the richness and fullness of your human endowment; but immortality is the result of something above and beyond all this, something which is your own and which must suffuse and color and shape all the rest. The universal and the special, the general and the particular, must be blended and harmonized.

18. Fog this morning till nearly noon, now at 1 O'clock clear and still with a soft veil of smoke or vapor over all; river like a mirror. Looks like Indian summer. Mercury 40 on N, end of house.
19. Warmer 50, with rain squalls nearly all day from S.W.
20. Clear and cooler; froze this morning. Lovely day. I go over to S.S. in afternoon. Many times this day I think of it as the anniversary of fathers birth and mothers death the first 96 years ago, the last 19 years ago.
21. Still clear and fine, air sharp with some haze, Julian is reputed home today. Still writing on Alaskan trip.

22d. Calm, sharp, bright day, [sorbog stermer] Indian summer. J. goes up the river, with poor success, acres of ducks but (very) unapproachable.

23. Cloudy, calm, mild. Go up river with J. Try the new boat or sneak box; works fairly well, but ducks wild, I walk home, J. in the boat.

24. Threatens rain from S.E. mild.

25. Xmas, sharp bright day, after dinner Julian and I go over to the [shattagu] and J kill a duck. Back at 5 1/2.

26. Cold, clear, mercury 13 degrees. Julian goes up river and kills a duck.

27. Cold, calm, mercury 13. Jonkert says

"We see everything through ourselves. We are a medium always interposed between things and ourselves."

30. Still clear and dry with increasing cold down to 7 this morning. Much floating ice on river. Blue birds and robins here all this month.

31. Clear and dry with increasing cold: down to 3 this morning, not above 10 all day yesterday. The naked ground aches and cracks with the cold; The old ice mills the river, grinding again, nearly covered this morning.

The "stylist" differs from the man with a style as a womans hat differs from a mans. A man's hat is to cover his head, a womans to attract the eye. Covering and protecting the head is the least of its functions. It courts your admiration. So the stylist prides himself upon his vocabulary and his neatly turned sentences. His primary effort is not to find words for his idea, but to find ideas for his words. The serious

writer indirectly at least aims at style, but it is style that is vital in the thought. His first concern is always to have something to say. Language that is alive from the inside, and not nearly by being galvanized into a semblance of life from without, that gives style.

1900

Jany 1st. Still cold, 12 degrees this morning with light snow only a whitewash.

Good by 1800 and all they progeny. We have grown old together; thy end has come but I stay a little longer. I have looked upon the face all my life; my father looked upon it all his life, my grandfather more than half of his, now the door is shut and we shall see thee no more.

Welcome to thy successor. But he is a stranger, a new comer and it is hard for the old to make

new friends; we become acquainted but not wedded. The new days can never be to us what the old were. In our youth the days become part of us, they mingle with our blood; they take on the very color of our souls; but in age they hardly touch us, they come and go like strangers. We are living in the past and hardly have the present. Only youth can live in the present and the future. In youth we constantly pay tribute to the future, and to make the account even in age we constantly pay tribute to the past. Thus are the books balanced.

In afternoon walk over to the wood and go to S.S. while Julian and (go) Hud drive up after boat.

2. Still cold 12 degrees and fair. Julian leaves on 8 1/2 a.m. train to stop in N.Y. and see Marjorie.

4. Still dry and cold, -4 degrees this morning ice at a stand still on the river. A flurry of snow yesterday.

6. Bright lovely day, like early Nov, mercury above 40. Roads dry and dusty.
 7. Still clear and fine; down to 20 this morning, warmer in afternoon with light rain at night from S.W.
 8. Clear and cooler, a fine walk back up the hills where no men are cutting wood. I sat for an hour watching Jimmy Acker, Buch Jones and others ply their axes. From one to 1 1/2 cords is the average per day, but one man Kusler cuts his 3 cords. He cut 100 cords in one month (last March) I should like to see him work. The secret is not mere strength, he is not a large man, but in quickness and skill.
- Over in the woods by the road side I stopped to observe a flock of crossbills. They came down to drink through both

in the ice on a little pool by the road side. They were quite tame, all did not come down at once, but took turn while the others sat on the trees and bushes and kept a sharp look out. They were going and coming for some minutes, only 7 and 8 being on the ice at one time. It is at such times that a hawk would like to surprise them, and they seem to know it, and are very alert. What a pretty patch they made there mingled red, white and drab upon the leaves and ice. One of their call notes was very liquid and sweet, another reminds of the foldfinch.

I have seen and heard flocks of them every day since Oct, almost every hour in my walk I see or hear them, never saw such numbers before.

9 Clear and cold: down to 10.

10. Warmer with a sprinkle of rain from S.W. only wets the stones clearing in afternoon.

A real winter drought not 1/2 inch of precipitation for 3 months, a superb still moonlight night.

11. Colder again: down to 12, with signs of coming storm.

Literature may be defined as that which we read for its own sake. That which we read for the sake of something else. Knowledge science, fact are, may or may not be literature. We read a poem, a novel, an essay by Lamb or Stevenson and Thoreau, a work by Renan or Carlyle for its own sake, or for the sake of the personality behind it. I read [an] a criticism by Arnold or Scherer or St. Beane not because I want his judgement upon the work in hand so much as I want him, his spirit, his point of view, his kindling and illuminating touch. It seems almost impossible to pass a critical

judgment that will stand, or that will not be modified by time, but a genuine application is always interacting and helpful. The value of literary criticism is not as a guide to the judgement, but in the good literature which it contains. Who cares for Hazlitt's judgement, or Macaulay's or Lowell's, but we do care very much for what there is vital and true as literature in the works of these men.

Every writer of genius expresses a truth of his own, because he sees things from a particular individual point of view. We can make his truth ours only as far as our point of view coincides with his. Of course this is not so in science or mathematics, but it is so in aesthetics. There are no canons of criticism that can be passed from hand to hand and steal I can use as well as you. Criticism is the application not of rules, but of mind to mind. It is an art as much as [poetry or] any other branch of literature. Truth is always the aim, [but not] the truth of style, of sentiment of spirit, the truth as seen by a free and vital mind.

I have just been reading Stephenson's *Virginibus Puerisque*. Here is Stephensonian truth on a variety of subjects from love making to street lamps, light, graceful, entertaining, never profound or moving, always playful and kindly. In a vol. by Homells or Higginson or Warner, you set another kind of truth: it has another flavor, is cast in another mold. Through these authors take of point of views, yet each is true because the self expression is genuine and the product is good literature, Stevenson may plead for idlers and Carlyle praise workers and both be true because both are sincere and both working with the plastic medium of literature. Emersons praise of self reliance is true, and another man's praise for self-renunciation or of difference to rules and standards may be equally true. Councils of prudence, how good they are. Councils of daring and heroism and imprudence, are good too.

Jany 12, Two inches of hail and sleet last night, makes fair sleighing, clearing and milder.

13. Clear and sharp; down to 14.

14. Down to 20, cloudy; threatens snow.

Snowed gently all afternoon about 2 inches.

Clear at night.

15. A cloudless day of absolute calm, not a bit of motion in the air, snow melts off the trees. Go over to black creek, see a mink running on the ice on the edge of the creek; with back much arched he bounds along air a curious stiff mechanical sort of way. I had turned him back. He jumped high and covered about 2 1/2 feet at each leap. A fine walk over the spotless snow.

16. Snow rain this morning from S.W. Cleared off warm in afternoon like March. Weather gods in very easy tranquil mood this winter so far, no fury or bluster at all, storms all light and all end in clear calm skies. Fear the sleighing may all go, mercury 40.

17. Colder this morning, down to 29. Clear with North wind.

18. Cloudy, calm, milder, mist and sprinkler of rain in afternoon.

19. Foggy, [thawry] mercury 34. Every storm "Peters" out before it gets here.

In my walk in the woods saw where a small flock of quail had passed, six of them. They crossed over from Brookmanes swamp to mine. What a pretty trail they made in the thin snow, in places where

the woods were densest, they seemed to huddle close together like scared children, I could almost fancy them taking hold of hands real babes in the woods. How alert and watchful they have been, owls, foxes, minks, cats, hunters, all had to be looked out for. In the more open places they scattered more, no doubt looking for food. In the fall there were 12 or 15 of them: now only six.

19. Afternoon, cleared off hazey, warm, mean 50, like April many blue - birds. This afternoon in the air over head, and in one flock, sleighing about spoilt.

20. Fog and rain this morning, began in the night, a real Jany, thaw, rained all day, not hard. Wind and change to colder in the night

21. Clear, colder, ice moved down this morning under the pressure of a strong N.W. wind. Blue birds this morning. Song, sparrow two days ago.
22. Clear, mercury 22 this morning, above 40 in p.m. Walk over to black creek; sit a long time on a log in the sun, warm as April. No snow.
23. Three or four degrees of frost last night, several blue birds this morning in vineyard, warbling and lifting their wings as in spring. Nearly clear.
25. Dense fog all day, miserable.
26. A cold wave with high wind.
27. Clear and sharp, down to 14 this morning. See a plant in river.
28. Clear and mild with haze in the air.
29. Our first considerable snow.

Storm last night, about 8 inches getting colder today.

The British reverses in South Africa make me gloomy. I am more than willing that British arrogance of [supersticiousness] should get a good slap but my final interest is in the higher type of civilization and the better race. Boer was a Boer 200 years ago and he is a Boer still; he will never be anything else. He is a kind of human mood chuck. He fights well, so will a wood chuck, there is no fear in his prototype of the fields. England will yet have to take my advise and treble her farce invade thus territory with an army of covered men while Buller holds Jonkert. This will save blood shed and end the war.

30. Cold, down to 5 above, good sleighing.

I suppose that one reason why during my Alaska trip there near all the time an under current of protest and dissatisfaction is the fact that I have passed from the positive to the negative side of life, when we begin to take in sail, when we meant less and not more, when the hunger for new scenes and new worlds to conquer is diminishing, when the inclination not to stir beyond our own chimney corner is fast growing upon us. The positive side of life lasts till 50 or 60, differs in different men, then there is a neutral belt when we don't care whether we go or not, then the ground begins to slope the other way and we begin the great retreat.

Feb 1, Cold and clear - down to 3 this morning.

2. Still colder, 2 below zero at sunrise; river at last closed in front.

4. Warmer, cloudy, threatens rain.

5. The clerk of the weather is playing some of the trump cards he has been holding back so long. A furious rain and wind storm all night. Water every where this morning such in my cellar, clears off cold.

6. Warmer overcast today.

7. Clear and sharp; down to 18 degrees.

8. Warmer, fog and slow rain.

9. Fog in morning, clearing in p.m.

10. Colder, down to 25 degrees. Blue birds every day.

11. Mild day, clear and beautiful in afternoon; walk to the [Shattege].

12. Cloudy; rain in afternoon and all night; move over to Slabsides.

[Feb 1900]

13 Very heavy rain all night and till 9 this morning, two and three inches of water, water water everywhere; an extraordinary winter rain clears off wind in P.M.

14 Colder, frost last night, rain today.

Staying at Slabsides, "blessed Slabsides", thank the Lord" A house of refuge. The domestic [furies] are [barred] out. They cannot enter here. How I am safe how sweet, how peaceful, a homeless cat has sought refuge here too. We are good friends, she sits on my lap and purrs so continually and gets under my feet when I do my house work.

Health better than when I came here 4 days ago.

15. Colder and nearly clear.
Go to N.Y. today.

