

Oct 1st 51

To Conantium - at twilight, the moon not quite half full.

The twilight is much shorter than a month ago, probably because the atmosphere is clearer and there is less to reflect the light.

The air is cool & the ground also feels cold under my feet as if the grass were wet with dew, which is not yet the case.

I go through Wheeler cornfield over the track, in the twilight, where the stalks are bleached almost white and the tops are still stalked along the edge of the field. The moon is not far up above the S. horizon.

Looking west at this hour, the earth is an unvaried undistinguishable black in contrast with the twilight sky. If as if you were walking in twilight up to your chin. When the twilight has over you will see objects on the earth's surface more distinctly.

Dr Wright tells me that he observed some when he met the

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other evening that he could not
see because it was not dark enough -
which his companion thought was
merely an odd expression. But
it is ever so: when there is less
light in the sky you will see
better on earth.

There is no wind stirring. An
oak tree in 'Wulbards' pasture
stands absolutely motionless &
dark against the sky.

The crickets sound further
off or fainter at this season
as if they had gone deeper into
the soil to avoid the cold.

There are no crickets heard on
the alders, on the causeway. The
moon looks colder in the water -
though the water insects are still
active.

There has been a great change
between that crystal moonlight
walk. I experience a comfortable
warmth when I approach the
south side of a dry wood, which
keeps off the cooler air & also
retains some of the warmth of
day. The stars are brighter

than before.

I hear the voices of travellers in the road
far over the fields from the Comantlan
house

The moon is too far west to
be seen reflected in the river at
Western Cliff - but the stars are
reflected. The river is a dark mirror
with bright points feebly fluctuating.
I smell the crushed horse-mint
which I cannot see while I
sit on the brown rocks by
the shore

I see the glow-worms under
the damp cliff. No whippoorwill
is heard tonight, and scarcely
an note of any other bird.

At 8 I look the fogs
have begun which with the low
half-moon hanging in them
look like cobwebs or thin white
veils spread over the earth.
They are the dreams or visions
of the meadow.

Oct 5 to 57

70 Cliffs 8 PM moon 3/4 full.

The nights now are very still for there is hardly any noise of birds or insects. The whippoorwill is not heard nor the mosquito, only the occasional ticking of some sparrow. But about the villages you still hear the barking of dogs instead of the howl of wolves.

The moon gives out a creamy but white cold light, through which you can see far distinctly.

The sand slopes in the deep cut gleam coldly as if covered with rime when I descend into the valley by Wheeler's grainfield, I find it quite cold.

As I go through the prairie woods I perceive a sweet long scent from the underwoods like that of the fragrant life ever lasting. I suppose it is that.

To appreciate the moonlight you must stand in the shade & see where a few rods or a few feet distant it falls in between the trees. It is a "molder day" made for some inhabitants whom you don't

see. The fairies are a quiet & gentle
folk invented plainly to inhabit the
moonlight. As moonlight is to sun-
light so are the fairies to men.

I frequently see a light on
the ground within thick & dark
woods when all around is in shadow
& haste forward expecting to find some
decayed & phosphorescent stump, but
find it to be some clear moonlight
that falls in between through some
crack between the leaves. Though
I cannot readily tell which is ^{the} better
of it.

Standing on the cliffs, no sound
comes up from the woods. The earth
has gradually turned more wester-
ward. The birds have fled south
after the sun, and this impresses
me as well by day as by night
as a deserted country.

There is a down-like mist on
the river & pond, and consequently
there are no bright reflections of
the moon or shimmering of her light
on the surface of the pond, all the
light being absorbed by the low fog.

Oct 6th 51

To F. D. Pond 7^{1/2} pm - by boat, the moon
4/5 full but a cloud in the sky - paddling
all the way.

The air is almost 0.0° - the water per-
fectly so gleaming like oil in the moon-
light with the moon's disk reflected
in it.

When we started we saw some
fishermen kindling their fire for
opening by the river side. It was
a lurid reddish glow contrasting
with the white light of the moon,
with dense volumes of black smoke
from the burning pitch pine roots,
rolling upwards in the form of
an inverted pyramid. The glow
reflected in the water was almost
as distinct as the substance. It
looked like tarring a ship on
the shore of the shore of the Type
or Coccyzus; for it is still and
dark as with standing the
moon & there is no sound but
the crackling of the pine. The
fishermen can be seen only near
at hand, though their fire is
visible far away, and when we are

they appear as dusky, fuliginous
figures, half enveloped in smoke,
seen only by their ^{white} ~~red~~ ^{blended} ~~black~~ ^{side},
and hark in their old coats, to be
sent them from the foggy spire, they
look like devils - One standing
up forward holding the spear
ready to dash it while the smoke
& flames are blown in his face.
The other paddling the boat slowly
& silently along close to the shore
with almost imperceptible motion.

The river appears in-
definitely wide. There is a mist
rising from the water which increases
the indistinctness, ^{and it appears to be bounded only by} a high bank or moun-
tain with river & a distance over the
meadow, with its sandy patches
clearly exposed when the Indians
peared.

Now the fisherman's fire left
behind acquires some thick rays in
the distance and becomes a star,
as much as the sun light falling
through an irregular cloud makes
a round figure on the opposite
wall - So this blaze at a distance
appears a star. This effect has
the atmosphere -

I remember the time when some
15 years ago when I was a steam
myself - I was out ^{with} ~~working~~
with my brother with a horse made
up of board seats, & a crate
made of an old tin pan with holes
punched in the bottom to hold our fire.
It was about 2 1/2 till night my
pat for our purposes - and we had
just fairly commenced operations &
peared a few feet - when suddenly
the imperfect parting of our
crate was burst away & down
it plunged with all its fiery contents
& a ^{loud} ~~sizzling~~ ^{burst} ~~down~~ ^{to the bottom}
^{where I expected to rest, another tin was thrown}
The men were leaving us astonished
in total darkness - But we improved
the opportunity to play a trick on some
of the neighbors whose light was seen
we stole up the stream with muffled
paddles till we lay directly opposite
to them only 40 or 50 yds distant - and
watched all their motions & the
expressions ^{as revealed by their faces} of their faces, while
they were intently engaged in peering
they were to the familiar acquaintance
& neighbors - but that we did not dream of the
weight and hood of the mortals -
When it had set our gaze we
suddenly started away with regular
& rattling motion of the oars

Downing them atomized and
passing out into the dark.

At last the time came
beatsmiths had knibbled their
fire on the opposite side of the river
were fishing down one side of the
river while we held the other. But
with further view that below a certain
bridge which we were approaching
only one side was available for
passing, and we soon learned
of the sound of their oars that
they were bent on getting the
start of us. Then commenced
a race in the good learned. It
was quite dark & we could only
see each others fire & hear the
rattle of the oars. They were the
strongest party having more men
at the oars, but we were much
better acquainted with the river.
We knew that the river was high
& that we ^{could} hardly go under
the bridge without striking back.
We only knew that they could go
where we did. As we reached the
bridge together proposed to pass
between neighboring piers - Gladly
my companion suddenly turned

sun grate - 9 at the oars in-pelled
the boat through without
losing any headway - At the
same instant, an antipodist's
wake struck the bridge - waves of the
heart and all its blessing contents
were showered over them. A hearty
laugh went up from their boat
& ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~in~~ the dark - and there
was an end of their fishing ^{for} that
night.

The bright cheer of the moon
is constantly travelling with us,
and is seen at the same angle
in front on the surface of the
pads, and the reflection of its
disk in the rippled water by our
boat-side appears like bright
gold pieces on the river's counter.
This cheer is incessantly poured
forth as from some unseen horn
of plenty at a fair side.

I do not know but the
whiteness of the gleaming oily
surface is enhanced by the thin
fog & few water insects are seen
flaming on ^{its} ~~the~~ course.

about like a farmer's
oxen - a short barking shout,
and instantly the woods on the
eastern shore take it up - then
the western with a little up the
stream, and so it appears to rebound
from one side of the river valley
to the other, till at length I hear
a farmer call to his team as
far up as I can hear any where
we are bound.

^{By the way} When we pass through ^{the} woods
where there is no fog - where perhaps
a little sun is shining. Our clothes
are almost wet through with the
<sup>sun heat the lower half of my clothes thoroughly, & collect
in my neck coat & trousers. I felt the sun heat of my clothes
most in some portions of the river</sup>
are much warmer than others.
In one instance it was warmer
in the midst of a fog, than
in a clear reach.

In the middle of the
pond we tried the echo again.
I the first on the right took it
up - then one further up the stream
on the left, and then after a long
pause when we had almost given
it up - and the longer expected the
more in one sense unexpected & sur-

prising it was - we heard a
farmer shout to his team in
a distant valley far up on the
opposite side of the stream, and
much louder ^{more distinctly} than the previous
echo - and even after this when we
had forgotten who the original farmer
was, we heard one shout faintly
in some neighboring town. But
why did the echoes always travel
up the stream? I turned about
& shouted again, and then I found
that they all appeared equally to
travel down the stream, or perhaps
I heard only those that did so.

As we rowed to the eastern
shore of the pond - a moon lit
hill covered with thick water,
we could form no opinion of
our progress toward it, not seeing
the line where the water met the hill -
not until we saw the weeds,
cut sandy shore and the tall
kull-rushes rising above the shallow
water like the marks of large
wrecks in a haven.

The moon was so high that
the angle of incidence did not permit
of our seeing her reflection in the pond.

As we paddled down the stream
with our backs to the moon, we
saw the reflection of every wood
& shrub on both sides distinctly.
These reflections answering per-
fectly to the real objects impress the
voyagers with a sense of symme-
try, as when you fold a flattened
paper & produce a regular figure.
To the shore, had been folded &
doubled. What you commonly
call 'but & half'.

When the shore is very low, the
actual and reflected trees appear
to stand foot to foot, and it is but
a line that separates them, and
the water & the sky almost flow
into one another - & the shore seems
to float.

As we paddle up for some we see
the cabins of muskrats faintly,
rising perm amid the weeds, and
the strong odor of musk is borne
to us from particular parts of the
shore. Also the odor of a skunk
is wafted from over the meadows, or fields.

The fog appears in some places
gathered into a little pyramid or
equal & steady on the surface of the
water.

The clouds of the village have lost many of their leaves & their shadows & moonlight are not so heavy as last month. Oct. 28 '52

To Coffe. 8 PM The moon beginning to wane. It's quite warm but moist night. As I cross the RR I hear the telegraph bark again.

I hear no sound of a bird as I go up the back road - only a few faint chirps - these the birds we are reduced to. What a puny sound that for the great globe & make!

After whatever revolutions in my moods & experiences, when I come forth at evening, as if from years of confinement to the house, I see the few stars which make the constellation of the Lesser Bear in the same relative position - the ever-lasting geometry of the stars. How incredible to be described as those bright points which appear in the blue sky as the darkening increases, said to be other worlds - like the berries on the tith when the summer is ripe. Even the ocean of birds - even the regions of the ether are studded with isles. For in ^{the} ether it reveals the Berpennian isles ^{invisible} unseen by day.

The springing muckew leaves more distinctly
than by day. They are remarkably
warm to my hand, compared with
the earth or a stone. I should
be glad to make my bed of them,
some time.