

honored head of the distinguished gentleman fallen upon the earth, while from that great heart the blood streamed, making a sinister pool at the roots of the ancient olive-tree, — the olive-tree, sole and incorruptible witness of the deed. Also he spoke of the despair of donn' Anniria and of the orphaned son, not mentioning any family dissatisfactions on account of the latter.

"This one is right," said Antonio to himself, "and if justice knows its trade, I shall go straightway to the galleys."

After they had finished the trial for the murder of don Cosimo, and Antonio believed that all was at an end, and he could go at once to prison without any more annoyances, they began anew for cause of Marina. And this was like a fire, which burned Antonio without consuming him. He let his head fall between his palms, pressing hard at the temples in order not to go mad. For he

must make it understood that he loved Marina; he loved her truly, so that he would have died a thousand deaths rather than twist a hair of hers. And the bullet, — he had sped it in order to save her honor, as he had given the blow with the knife to don Cosimo Mascarelli.

Finally, after so many long-windednesses and delays, sentence was given: Antonio Morreale was condemned to the galleys for life. In the crowd that pressed to look at him there was no one who gave him a word of pity. Only when Antonio came out of the court house of the assizes, handcuffed, between two brigadiers, master Vito Dauria's black horse, that was tied there by the bridle, stretched out the neck toward him and whinnied.

"Good-by, Mureddu, for we shall never see each other again," said the man from Aidone.

And he went away, with bent head, to punishment.

Elisabeth Cavazza.

THOREAU AND HIS ENGLISH FRIEND THOMAS CHOLMONDELEY.

IN one of his published letters to his most constant correspondent, Mr. Harrison Blake, of Worcester, Henry Thoreau said (October 1, 1854), "A young Englishman, Mr. Cholmondeley, is just now waiting for me to take a walk with him." This date and slight mention mark the beginning of perhaps the most serious of Thoreau's later friendships, which was accompanied with a long correspondence during the later years of his life, and brought to the Concord recluse tidings from the great world in which he was so resolved to have but a small share. Thomas Cholmondeley was the son of a sister of Bishop Heber, who had married into an old county family of Shropshire, England. Graduate of Oxford, friend of Arthur

Hugh Clough, student of philosophy in Germany, — such was the brief account given of him by himself, in September, 1854, when he first visited Concord, bringing letters to Emerson, as so many young Englishmen did. He declared that he was unknown in England, having lived for a time in New Zealand, about which he had just printed a book called *Ultima Thule*. He now wished to see America for himself, and would like to take lodgings for a while in Concord. It does not appear that he had ever heard of Thoreau till he met him at dinner in Emerson's house; but when his host learned of his wish to remain in the little town, he advised Cholmondeley to apply to Mrs. John Thoreau, who sometimes took lodgers. The mother

of Henry Thoreau received him into her family for a few weeks; and there began an intimate acquaintance between the two men. The difference in their ages was less than that between Emerson and Thoreau; each had an original character and history, and the son of the Shropshire squire did not long outlive his New England friend. Thoreau died in the spring of 1862; Cholmondeley (he had changed his name to Owen, as a condition of inheriting an estate in Shropshire) died in Florence, two years later, and is buried in the churchyard near Condover Hall, his house in the neighborhood of Shrewsbury.

I suppose that Cholmondeley, who was religiously educated, with a bias towards ritualism, went to New Zealand among the so-called Canterbury Pilgrims who founded there the colonial, High-Church province of Canterbury in 1851; as Merivale says,¹ "in a spirit of enthusiasm unequalled in modern colonial enterprise, which carries the mind back to the days of Raleigh and his contemporaries." At any rate, he had been experimenting in founding a state there, where most of the landed gentry were savages, and had been cannibals; and he came to New England, which Raleigh's contemporaries had colonized, to look into the foundations of our American polity, against which he found his admired Thoreau had been protesting by emancipation speeches, refusal to pay taxes, and other conduct which must have startled the Oxford graduate not a little. But he was that rare creature, an *ideal* Englishman, who valued the institutions of his great country more for the spirit out of which they grew than for their current form, which that spirit was even then hastening slowly to destroy. Like Thoreau, he was of the Elizabethan period in mind, though modern and liberal in culture.

He left Boston in December, 1854, to take part in the Crimean war, then going

¹ Colonization and Colonies, page 128.

badly for England, as he thought, and this was his first letter:—

HODNET SALOP,
Tuesday, January 20, 1855.

MY DEAR THOREAU, — You will be glad to hear that I am safe at my brother's house in Salop, after a most disagreeable passage to England in the steamer *America*.

I have accepted the offer of a captaincy in the Salop militia, and it is probable that we shall be sent before very long to relieve other troops who are proceeding to the seat of the war; but if the strife continues to consume men at its present rate of one thousand a week, we shall be involved in it, I hope, before the year is out, by volunteering into the line. Meanwhile, I shall use my best diligence to learn all I can of my men, etc., and prepare myself for the active service to which I impatiently look forward. Nothing can be more awful than the position of our poor army. In the present rate of mortality, they will be finished up by the time they are next wanted; and it will be reserved for the French to take Sebastopol. We are learning a tremendous lesson: I hope we shall profit by it, and, so far from receding, I trust we shall continue hostilities with greater energy and greater wisdom than before. *I would rather see the country decimated than an inglorious or even an accommodating peace.* My passion is to see the fellow crushed, or to die in the attempt. Lord John has resigned, and the Ministry is, we all think, breaking up. It was high time, considering the mismanagement of Newcastle.

We are in the midst of a great snow (great at least for us). Colds are rife in the parish, so that "coughing drowns the parson's saw." I find the red brick houses are the most striking feature, on revisiting this country. Though a great deal smaller than your elegant villas, our cottages, on the whole, please my

eyes, and look more homely and very suggestive of good cheer. There is such a quietness and excessive sleepiness about Shropshire — the only excitement being an occasional alehouse brawl — that it is hardly possible to imagine we are at war! The fact is, the common people never see a newspaper; and such is their confidence in “the Queen’s army” that they believe prolonged resistance on the part of any power would be impossible and absurd. My cousin in the Crimea still survives, contrary to my expectations. We have heard a good anecdote from him. Early on Christmas morning, the remains of the regiment to which he belongs gathered painfully together, and, as day dawned, they all sung the fine English carol, Christians, Awake. It is rather touching.

I find all here quite well and hearty, and hope your people will be the same when this arrives at Concord, — a place I shall often revisit in spirit. Pray remember me to your father, mother, and sister, to Mr. Emerson and Channing, and do not forget your promise to come over some time to England, which you will find a very snug and hospitable country, though perhaps decaying, and not on such a huge scale as America. My romance, the dream of my life, without which it is not worth living for me, is a *glorious commonwealth*. I am persuaded that things must, in their way to this, be greatly worse before they can become better. Turn it how you will, our English nation *no longer stands upon the living laws of the eternal God*; we have turned ourselves to an empire, and cotton bags, and the leprosy of prodigious manufacture. Let that all go, and let us grow great men again, instead of dressing up dolls for the market. I feel we are strong enough to live a better life than this one which now festers in all our joints. So much for the confessions of a thorough English conservative, as you know me to be.

You have my direction, so pray write. Your letter will be forwarded to wherever I may be.

Dear Thoreau,

Ever affectionately yours,

THOS. CHOLMONDELEY.

HENRY THOREAU, ESQRE.,
Concord, Massachusetts,
U. S. North America.

To this epistle Thoreau replied with a longer one, sufficiently curious on some accounts. The period in our history was that in which the slaveholders, who controlled the feeble administration of General Pierce, were seeking to annex Cuba and to carry slavery into Kansas. Hawthorne was in Liverpool, making observations on England; the rest of the Concord circle were still at home, except Alcott, who was making preparations to return, as he did in 1857.

CONCORD, MASS., *February 7, 1855.*

DEAR CHOLMONDELEY, — I am glad to hear that you have arrived safely in Hodnet, and that there is a solid piece of ground of that name which can support a man better than a floating plank, in that to me as yet purely historical England. But have I not seen you with my own eyes, a piece of England herself, and was not your letter come out to me thence? I have now reason to believe that Salop is as real a place as Concord; with at least as good an underpinning of granite, floating on liquid fire. I congratulate you on having arrived safely at that floating isle, after your disagreeable passage in the steamer America. So are we not all making a passage, agreeable or disagreeable, in the steamer Earth, trusting to arrive at last at some less undulating Salop and brother’s house?

I cannot say that I am surprised to hear that you have joined the militia, after what I have heard from your lips; but I am glad to doubt if there will be occasion for your volunteering into the line. Perhaps I am thinking of the

saying that it "is always darkest just before day." I believe it is only necessary that England be fully awakened to a sense of her position, in order that she may right herself, especially as the weather will soon cease to be her foe. I wish I could believe that the cause in which you are embarked is the cause of the people of England. However, I have no sympathy with the idleness that would contrast this fighting with the teachings of the pulpit; for, perchance, more true virtue is being practiced at Sebastopol than in many years of peace. It is a pity that we seem to require a war, from time to time, to assure us that there is any manhood still left in man.

I was much pleased with [J. J. G.] Wilkinson's vigorous and telling assault on Allopathy, though he substitutes another and perhaps no stronger *thy* for that. Something as good on the whole conduct of the war would be of service. Cannot Carlyle supply it? We will not require him to provide the remedy. Every man to his trade. As you know, I am not in any sense a politician. You, who live in that snug and compact isle, may dream of a glorious commonwealth, but I have some doubts whether I and the new king of the Sandwich Islands shall pull together. When I think of the gold-diggers and the Mormons, the slaves and the slaveholders and the filibustiers, I naturally dream of a glorious private life. No, I am not patriotic; I shall not meddle with the Gem of the Antilles. General Quitman¹ cannot count on my aid, alas for him! nor can General Pierce.

I still take my daily walk, or skate over Concord fields or meadows, and on the whole have more to do with Nature than with man. We have not had much snow this winter, but have had some remarkably cold weather, the mercury, February 6, not rising above 6° below

¹ Quitman, aided for a time by Laurence Oliphant, was aiming to capture Cuba with "filibusters" (filibusters).

zero during the day, and the next morning falling to 26°. Some ice is still 30 inches thick about us. A rise in the river has made uncommonly good skating, which I have improved to the extent of some 30 miles a day, 15 out and 15 in.

Emerson is off westward, enlightening the Hamiltonians [in Canada] and others, mingling his thunder with that of Niagara. Channing still sits warming his five wits — his sixth, you know, is always limber — over that stove, with the dog down cellar. Lowell has just been appointed Professor of Belles-Lettres in Harvard University, in place of Longfellow, resigned, and will go very soon to spend another year in Europe, before taking his seat.

I am from time to time congratulating myself on my general want of success as a lecturer; apparent want of success, but is it not a real triumph? I do my work clean as I go along, and they will not be likely to want me anywhere again. So there is no danger of my repeating myself, and getting to a barrel of sermons, which you must upset, and begin again with.

My father and mother and sister all desire to be remembered to you, and trust that you will never come within range of Russian bullets. Of course, I would rather think of you as settled down there in Shropshire, in the camp of the English people, making acquaintance with your men, striking at the root of the evil, perhaps assaulting that rampart of cotton bags that you tell of. But it makes no odds where a man goes or stays, if he is only about his business.

Let me hear from you, wherever you are, and believe me yours ever in the good fight, whether before Sebastopol or under the wren.

HENRY D. THOREAU.

THOMAS CHOLMONDELEY, ESQ.,
Hodnet, Market Drayton,
Shropshire, England.

Cholmondeley was so occupied with his drilling and making ready for the campaign that he seems to have written no more till he was about to set forth for the Black Sea. But he had gathered together, with much care and cost, a box of books relating to India and Egypt, such as he fancied Thoreau might like, and sent them to Boston in the autumn of 1855, preceded by this letter : —

October 3, 1855.

MY DEAR THOREAU, — I have been busily collecting a nest of Indian books for you, which, accompanied by this note, Mr. Chapman will send you, and you will find them at Boston, carriage-paid (mind that, and don't let them cheat you), at Crosby & Nichols'. I hope, dear Thoreau, you will accept this trifle from one who has received so much from you, and one who is so anxious to become your friend and to induce you to visit England. I am just about to start for the Crimea, being now a complete soldier; but I fear the game is nearly played out, and all my friends tell me I am just too late for the fair. When I return to England (if ever I do return), I mean to buy a little cottage somewhere on the south coast, where I can dwell in *Emersonian leisure*, and where I have a plot to persuade you over.

Give my love to your father and mother and sister, and my respects to Mr. Emerson and Channing, and the painter who gave me Webster's head.¹ I think I never found so much kindness anywhere in all my travels as in your country of New England; and indeed, barring its youth, it is very *like our old country*, in my humble judgment.

Adieu, dear Thoreau, and immense affluence to you. Ever yours,

THOS. CHOLMONDELEY.

P. S. Excuse my bad writing; of course it is the pen. Chapman will send

¹ Rowse, who engraved Ames's head of Daniel Webster.

a list of your books, by which you can see whether they are all right, because I hate to have anything lost or wasted, however small.

These two notes from Dr. Chapman, the London publisher and bookseller, show with what pains the Crimean soldier provided for his friend's reading : —

LONDON, 8 King William St., Strand,
October 26, 1855.

DEAR SIR, — Enclosed is the list of books referred to in Mr. Thos. Cholmondeley's note. The parcel I have forwarded to Messrs. Crosby & Nichols & Co., of Boston, and have requested them to deliver it to you, free of all expense. As Mr. Cholmondeley has gone to the East, I should be glad of a note from you, acknowledging the receipt of the parcel. . . .

November 2.

The parcel of books advised by me on the 26th of October as having been sent by the Asia steamer, from Liverpool, has been shut out of that vessel on account of her cargo being complete several days previous to her sailing. Under these circumstances, I have therefore ordered the parcel to be shipped by the Canada of the 10th proximo, and trust that you will not experience any inconvenience from this unavoidable delay.

JOHN CHAPMAN.

The books arrived in Concord, finally, November 30, 1855, and I saw them soon after, in the attic chamber where Thoreau kept his small library, in cases made by his own hands. After receiving the first announcement of their coming, and before they came, he had fashioned for these treasures a new case, out of driftwood that he had brought home in his voyages along the Musketaquid, thus giving Oriental wisdom an Occidental shrine. Writing to Mr. Blake, December 9, he said : "I have arranged my books in a case which I made in the

mean while, partly of river boards. I have not dipped far into the new ones yet. One is splendidly bound and illuminated. They are in English, French, Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit. I have not made out the significance of this godsend yet." None of these languages were strange to Thoreau except the Sanskrit, and in this there was only a volume or two.¹ He at once acknowledged the receipt of the books, but before Cholmondeley could receive the letter he had reached the seat of war, but only in time to see the last act of the great drama that had included Inkerman and Balaklava, and the romantic deeds of Florence Nightingale, in the earlier acts. Cholmondeley replied, a year later, from Rome.

In the mean time Thoreau had written him another and longer letter, and the reply covers both, and how much besides!

ROME, December 16, 1856.

MY DEAR THOREAU, — I wish that I was an accomplished young American lady, for then I could write the most elegant and "recherché" letters without any trouble or thought. But now, being an Englishman, even my pleasures are fraught with toil and pain. Why, I have written several letters to you, but always, on reading them over to myself, I was obliged to burn them, because I felt they were bad letters, and insufficient for a passage of the ocean. To begin, then, a new and a good letter, I must acquaint you that I received your former communication, which gave me *the sincerest pleasure*, since it informed me that the books which I sent came to hand, and were approved of. I had indeed studied your character closely, and knew what you would like. Besides, I had, even from our first acquaintance, a previous memory of you, like the vision

of a landscape a man has seen, he cannot tell where.

As for me, my life still continues (through the friendship of an unseen hand) a fountain of never-ending delight, a romance renewed every morning, and never smaller to-day than it was yesterday, but always enhancing itself with every breath I draw. I delight myself, I love to live, and if I have been "run down" I am not aware of it.

I often say to God, "What, O Lord, will you do with me in particular? Is it politics, or philosophical leisure, or war, or hunting, or what?" He always seems to answer, "Enjoy yourself, and leave the rest to itself." Hence everything always happens at the right time and place, and rough and smooth ride together. There is an old Yorkshire gentleman — a great-grandfather of ninety — who promises to see his hundred yet, before he flits. This man was asked lately (he has had his troubles, too) "what of all things he should like best." The merry old squire laughed, and declared that "he should like of all things to begin and live his life over again, in any condition, almost, — he was not particular." Now, I am like the squire in my appreciation of life. It is so great a matter to exist pleasantly. The sensation of Being!

Thus much about myself. As for my Phenomena, I have seen and thought and done quite up to my highest mark; but I will not weary you with descriptions of the Crimea, Constantinople, or even Rome, whence I am now writing.

But one thing I will attempt to tell you. I saw the great explosion when the Windmill Magazine blew up. I was out at sea, a good ten miles from the spot. The day was fine; suddenly the heaven was rent open by a pillar of

¹ In a letter to Daniel Ricketson, of New Bedford (December 25), Thoreau says that he has had "a royal gift, in the shape of twenty-one distinct works (one in nine volumes, — forty-four volumes in all), almost exclusively relating

to Hindoo literature, and scarcely one of them to be bought in America. I am familiar with many of them, and know how to prize them. I send you this information as I might of the birth of a child."

fire, which seemed ready to tear the very firmament down. It was like the "idea" of the hottest oven. As it hung (for it lasted while you might count) on the horizon, the earth shook and the sea trembled, and we felt the ship quivering under us. It was felt far and wide like an earthquake. We held our breath and felt our beating hearts. Presently we recovered, and the first feeling in every heart was, "Better go home after that!" The *roaring noise* was, I am told, tremendous. Strange that I cannot at all recollect it! I only saw the apparition and felt the shock. . . .

The English temper keeps very warlike. They want another turn with Russia. But since Europe is now pretty well closed up, it seems to be the general impression that Asia will be the field of the next Russian war: and who knows how long it may last when once it begins? They descending from their Riphean hills, hordes of poor and hardy Tartars, — Gog and Magog and their company; we ascending, with the immense resources of India behind us, towards the central regions, the scarce-explored backbone of Asia. The ruins of long-forgotten cities half buried in sand, the shattered temples of preadamite giants, the Promethean cliffs themselves, will ring with the clang of many a battle, with the wail of great defeats and the delirious transports of victory. There is a very old English prophecy now in circulation, "that the hardest day would come when we should have to fight against men having snow on their helmets." So that superstition swells the anti-Russian tide.

I have seen something of Turks, Greeks, Frenchmen, and Italians, and they impress me thus: the Turk, brave, honest, religious; the Greek, unclean, lying, a slave, and the son of a slave; the Frenchman, light-hearted, clever, and great in *small things*; the Italian, great, deep, ingenious. I would put him first. He is greater than the Frenchman.

Having been in the Redan, the Malakoff, etc., I am truly astonished at the endurance of the Russians. The filth and misery of those horrid dens were beyond expression. Even the cleanest part of our own camp swarmed with vermin. I caught an aristocrat — a member of Parliament — one day stopped for a flea-hunt in his tent. Though too late for any regular engagement, I managed to experience the sensation of being under fire. It is only pleasurable for about a quarter of an hour; in short, it soon fatigues, like a second-rate concert. The missiles make strange and laughable sounds sometimes, — whistling and crowing and boiling. Watching them moving through the air from the north side of the harbor, they seemed to come so slow!

The Crimea is a beautiful country, — the air clear, hilly, clothed with brushwood; the pine on the hill, and the vine in the valley. It is a fine country for horseback, and many a good ride I had through it. I see that I am falling into description, whether I will or no. The Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmora — indeed, all the neighborhood of Stamboul — are charming, in spite of rags, dirt, and disease. Nature has done her utmost here, and the view from the Seraskier's Tower is the finest in the world. The Turkish ladies (for I saw plenty of beauties in the bazaars) are, in figure, like our own; that is, "very fat." The Turk and the Briton seem to agree that a good breed cannot be got out of lean kine. In the face, however, they excel ours; the lines are more regular. In expression, *babies*; in gait, waddling; the teeth often rotten from too much sweetmeat.

There was an English lady at Stamboul who had traveled with a bashaw's favorite wife. They were put in one cabin on board a ship. She told us how the favorite behaved: how she was laughing and crying and praying in a breath; how she was continually falling fast asleep and snoring loudly, waking

up again in a few minutes; she was the merest infant, and as fat as a little pig; lastly, how the bashaw was always popping into the cabin, to see what she was about, at all hours, and cared nothing for the English lady, though she was sometimes quite *en déshabillé*.

I met Abdel Kadir in the East. He is a very handsome man, with mild, engaging manners, a face deadly pale, very fine eyes, beard, and hands. Very like one of your Southerners, some of whom are not to be surpassed. He is now residing at Damascus. I noted the Circassians to be a fine race, very tall and well made, with high features; grave and fierce, and yet sweet withal. They wear high caps, and carry an armful of daggers and pistols. The feet and hands long and small. They have, too, a fine, light, high-going step, full of spring and elasticity, like the gait of a high-mettled horse. "*Incessu patuit.*" But every nation has a motion of its own. Among the boatmen on the Bosphorus I saw many faces and figures very like the same class at Hong-Kong and on the Canton River in China. Both have a Tartar look. Mongolians, I imagine.

I think I should like, as I grow older and more stay-at-home, to pay attention to the subject of "breeding." Astonishing facts come out upon inquiry. Now, *sheep, horses, dogs, and men* should be more closely watched. I see already some things. I see that Nature is always flowing. *She will not let you fix her*, and she refuses to be caught out by any process of exhaustion. There is always somewhat unknown, and that somewhat is everything. You may think that you have exhausted the chances of vice and disease by putting the best always together. Now, if you merely put the best together, you will have either no breed or a very bad one. There is something in the "black sheep" which the better one loses. There is something divine, which is pity to lose, even in the most barbarous stock. Lord Byron said

that the finest man and the best boxer he ever met told him that he was the offspring of positive deformity, and that he had brothers still finer than himself. On the other hand, I know a young gentleman who is an absolute baboon, but the son of a good-looking father and a mother of a race famous for beauty. But the family crest is a baboon, and it came out after the lapse of centuries.

A student of family pictures will observe, in a good gallery, how the same face comes and goes. It will sometimes sleep for three hundred years. A certain expression of countenance is in a certain family; some change takes place, — perhaps they lose an estate or gain a peerage; it goes, and turns up again in another branch which never had it before. Is not Walker¹ the best representative of old Rolf Ganger? I think that both *gang* the same gait.

This is enchanted ground, — St. Peter's, the Pantheon, the Coliseum, etc. But let me tell you what attracts me most in Rome and its neighborhood. It is the lake and woods of the ancient Alba Longa, the mother city of Rome, which you see clearly and well in the distance (about 14 miles off). The lake, which is very large, many miles round, is in the crater of an old volcano, and therefore high up. It is surrounded by woods, chiefly of holm oaks; but here are also the stone pine, the common deciduous oak, and other fine trees. These woods are pierced by numerous beautiful walks.

[Here follows a sketch of the neighborhood of the Alban lake.]

This little map will give you some inkling of these beautiful hills, of the lake of Alba and its sister Nemi. You will see that the colonists moved northwest to found Rome; you will imagine, when you stand on the bank of the lake, where is the long ridge or street whence the old city (all long ago gone) took its name, that you are at a height sufficient

¹ The Central American "filibuster."

to see all the country round; yet you have got the Monte Calvo, with the old temple (now a convent) of Jupiter Latiaris at your back and many hundred feet above you (perhaps a thousand). What a position for a city! What an eagle's nest! Here is every variety of scenery, with the sea quite plainly seen to the west. Hence you wind up through a modern town, called Rocca di Papa, and across a section of *Hannibal's camp* (you remember when he came so near Rome), which is another mountain basin, towards the temple aforesaid, where the thirty Latin cities used to sacrifice. The holy road to the top of the mountain still remains. It is very narrow, and flagged with great uneven stones. Algidus (not so high) lies behind. To the east, across the Campagna, are the Sabine hills, with Tibur in their bosom, and the old temple of Bona Dea on a great hill near it. The Etrurian hills are to the north, behind Rome, and Soracte, a little isolated shelf of rock, stands midway between them and the Sabine. Snow on Soracte marks a very hard winter. You remember the ode, "*Vides ut alta, etc., . . . Soracte.*"

And now to come to yourself. I have your two letters by me, and read them over with deep interest. You are not living altogether as I could wish. You ought to have society. A college, a conventual life is for you. You should be the member of some society not yet formed. You want it greatly, and without this you will be liable to moulder away as you get older. *Forgive my English plainness of speech.* Your love for, and intimate acquaintance with, Nature is ancillary to some affection which you have not yet discovered.

The great Kant never dined alone. Once, when there was a danger of the empty dinner table, he sent his valet out, bidding him catch the first man he could find and bring him in! So necessary was the tonic, the effervescing cup of conversation, to his deeper labors.

Laughter, chatter, politics, and even the prose of ordinary talk is better than nothing. Are there no clubs in Boston? The lonely man is a diseased man, I greatly fear. See how carefully Mr. Emerson avoids it; and yet, who dwells, in all essentials, more religiously free than he? Now, I would have you one of a well-knit society or guild, from which rays of thought and activity might emanate, and penetrate every corner of your country. By such a course you would not lose Nature. But supposing that reasons, of which I can know nothing, determine you to remain in "quasi" retirement; still, let not this retirement be too lonely. Take up every man as you take up a leaf, and look attentively at him. This would be easy for you, who have such powers of observation, and of attracting the juices of all you meet to yourself. Even I, who have no such power, somehow find acquaintances, and nobody knows what I get from those about me. They give me all they have, and never suspect it. What treasures I gleaned at Concord! And I remember at Boston, at my lodgings, the worthy people only held out a week, after which I was the friend of the family, and chattered away like a magpie, and was included in their religious services. I positively loved them before I went away. I wish I lived near you, and that you could somehow originate some such society as I have in my head.

What you are engaged in I suspect to be Meditations on the Higher Laws as they show themselves in Common Things. This, if well weaved, may become a great work; but I fear that this kind of study may become too desultory. Try a history. How if you could write the sweet, beautiful history of Massachusetts? Positively, there is an immense field open. Or take Concord, — still better, perhaps. As for myself, so enamored am I of history that it is my intention, if I live long enough, to write a history of Salop; and I will endeavor

to strike out something entirely new, and to put county history where it ought to be. Take the spirit of Walton and a spice of White! It would be a great labor and a grand achievement, — one for which you are singularly qualified.

By being "run down" I suppose you mean a little "hipped," — a disorder which no one escapes. I have had it so badly as to have meditated suicide more than once. But it goes away with the merest trifle, and leaves you stronger than ever. Ordinary men of the world defeat the enemy with a sop, such as getting drunk or having a woman; but this is a bad plan, and only successful for a time. He is better defeated by sobriety or a change of scene, such as your trip to the Connecticut River. "*He is beginning to preach now,*" you will say. Well, then, let us have a turn at politics and literature. I was certain from the first that Buchanan would be President, because I felt sure that the Middle States are not with the North. Nor is the North itself in earnest. You are fond of humanity, but you like commerce, and a great heap, and a big name better. Of course you do. Besides, your principle and bond of union appears to be most negative, — you do not like slavery. Is there any positive root of strength in the North? Where and what? Your civilization is all in embryo, and what will come out no one can predict. At present, is there not a great thinness and poverty? *Magnas inter opes inops!* You have indeed in New England the genius of liberty, and for construction and management; you have a wonderful *aplomb*, and are never off your feet. But when I think of your meagreness of invention, and your absurd whims and degraded fancies of spirit-rapping, etc., and the unseemly low ebb of your ordinary literature, I tremble.

You have one Phoenix,¹ — the greatest man since Shakespeare, I believe, — but where is the rest of the choir? Why,

¹ Emerson is meant.

the men that promise best — such as Channing, some of whose poems are admirable — do not go down; and they never will as long as newspaper novels are in request. It is the same as in England, — all is fragmentary, poor, and draggletail. There is no continence. A perfectly beautiful conception, generously born and bred, such as Schiller's *Cranes of Ibycus* or *The Diver*, is simply impossible in such a state of things. And observe, I would affirm the very same thing of England as it is at this hour. There is no poetry, and very little or no literature. We are drenched with mawkish lollipops, and clothed in tawdry rags. I am sorry to see even in Mr. Emerson's *Traits of England* that one or two chapters are far inferior to the rest of the book. He knows it, no doubt. He has sinned against his conception herein in order to accommodate the public with a few sugarplums. Those chapters will hurt the book, which would otherwise be, like his *Essays*, of perfect proportion and of historical beauty. I have seen some fragments by a certain W. Whitman, who appears to be a strong man. But why write fragments? It is not modest. Completeness of conception is the very first element of that sweet wonder which I know not how to call by its right name. There is a man we both of us respect and admire, — Carlyle; but has he not damaged his own hand beyond cure? He drives a cart, and strikes against every stone he sees. He has no "perception" of the highest kind. A good preacher, but after all a creaking, bumping, tortuous, involved, and visionary author.

I wonder what Emerson will give us for his next book. The only new books in England I have seen are Froude's *History*, of which I cannot speak too highly, and a report on India by Lord Dalhousie, very able and businesslike. There are also the Russian accounts of the battle of Inkerman (which were printed in the *Times*), curious and able.

Grey's Polynesian legend is getting old, but we have Sandwich on Kars and Russell's admirable account of the Crimean campaign, of which I need say nothing. His excellent letters from Moscow will also form a good book. I had forgot Maurice's and Kingsley's last, and Mansfield's Paraguay. (Read that.) Truly the list grows. Our poems, such as Arnold's, Sydney Dobell's, and Owen Meredith's, are the very dregs and sweepings of imitation. Alexander Smith's last I have not seen, but it is no great haul, I hear, — small potatoes! But they talk of a Catholic priest of the name of Stoddart, — that he has written well.

Burton's African and Arabian travels, Arthur Stanley's Palestine, Cotton's Public Works of India, are all good and sound. We ought to have a book from Livingstone before long. He is now on his way home, after having succeeded in traversing Africa, — a feat never accomplished before. (He is at home, and going out again.) Newman on Universities ought to be good. The other day a man asked me, "Have you ever read the Chronicles of the Emperor Baber?" I had never even heard of them before. He said they outdid Cæsar's. Was he imposing upon my ignorance?

The books above mentioned I will endeavor to get when I visit England in the spring; some indeed I have already, and will send them to you. I want you to send me a copy of Emerson's Poems, which I cannot obtain, do what I will. Also please obtain for me a catalogue (you'll hear of it at the Boston Athenæum) of your local histories in the United States. There are hundreds of them, I believe; a list has been made which I want to examine. I suppose you are well versed in the French works written by early travelers and missionaries on America. Would you tell me one or two of the best authors of Canadian or Louisianian research? I am at present working at an essay on Amer-

ica, which gives me great pleasure and no little pain. I have a conception of America surveyed as "one thought;" but the members are not yet forthcoming. I have not yet written above a page or two. I have also been engaged upon Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra, and indeed in other ways. For my daily reading I am taking Tasso's Jerusalem, Chateaubriand's Génie, and sometimes a little Tacitus; and I also read the Bible every day.

Farewell, dear Thoreau. Give my best love to your father, mother, and sister, and to old Channing; and convey my respect to Mr. Emerson and Mr. Alcott; and when next you go to Boston, call at my old lodgings, and give my regards to them there. If you write to Morton, don't forget me there. He is a clever lad, is n't he? Also my respect to Mr. Theodore Parker, whose sermons are rather to be heard than read.

Ever yours, and not in haste,

THOS. CHOLMONDELEY.

Posted in London February 22, 1857.

However, this astonishing epistle did not end even here. On reaching London Cholmondeley continued it thus:—

TOWN, February 22, 1857.

DEAR THOREAU, — You see I've saved this letter, which is the best I ever wrote you (for I burnt the rest), and posted it in town. For Rome being so uncertain a post, I thought, "better wait till I get to town," and send it properly.

I am just going now on an expedition to search for a little cottage somewhere in Kent or Sussex, where I may henceforth dwell and endeavor to gather a little moss. I hope to get a few acres of land with it on lease; for as to *buying*, it is almost out of the question. They ask about £500 an acre now for anything like decent land in England. (I mean within hail of town, for I don't

want to settle finally in Wales or Yorkshire.) In fact, land is worth too much. It is a shame. I suppose I could buy a good *farm* in New England for £2000, could n't I? I should n't wonder if I were to settle in New England, after all, for the ties which hold me here are very slender. However, if I *do* succeed in getting my cottage in Kent, remember there will be a room for you there, and as much as ever you can eat and drink. I am staying in town with my brother Reginald, who is a painter, and has very agreeable rooms. He is very good to me, and trots me out to see people whom otherwise I should scarcely be able to meet.

I heard Maurice preach to-day in Lincoln's Inn. It was on Faith, Hope, and Charity. He explained that this charity is not human, but divine, and to be enjoyed in communion with God. It was a good and strictly orthodox sermon, and not extempore in any sense.

I called at John Chapman's the other day, but he was out, being, they said, engaged in one of the hospitals. He has turned doctor, it seems. The fact is, I fear that Chapman has done himself mischief by publishing books containing new views and philosophy, which the English, from the lord to the cabman, hate and sneer at. The very beggars in the streets are all conservatives, except on the subject of their sores. To speculate in thought, in this country, is *ruin*, and sure to lead — if pursued long enough — to the Queen's Bench or Bedlam. I am persuaded that the Turks and the Chinese are *nothing* to us. Perhaps we are more like the Japanese than any other people, — I mean as regards what Swedenborg would call "our interiors." The prophets prophesy as they did among the ancient Hebrews, and the smooth prophets bear away the bells.

I met Spedding the other day, and had much talk with him, but nothing real; but he is a good man, and in expression like your Alcott. He is now

bringing out his Bacon, the work of his whole life. Farewell.

Ever yours,

THOS. CHOLMONDELEY.

Upon the receipt of this long letter, Thoreau sent to his English friend four American books, — Emerson's Poems (the first volume only), his own Walden, a book on the Southern States by F. L. Olmsted, and the first edition of Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass. Thoreau's letter accompanying the books is still undiscovered among family papers at Condoover Hall, but here is the reply:

LONDON, May 26, 1857.

MY DEAR THOREAU, — I have received your four books, and, what is more, I have read them. Olmsted was the only entire stranger. His book, I think, might have been shortened, and if he had, indeed, written only one word instead of ten, I should have liked it better. It is a horrid vice, this wordiness. Emerson is beautiful and glorious. Of all his poems, the Rhodora is my favorite. I repeat it to myself over and over again. I am also delighted with Guy, Uriel, and Beauty. Of your own book I will say nothing, but I will ask you a question, which perhaps may be a very ignorant one. I have observed a few lines about — [so in original]. Now there is *something here* unlike anything else in these pages. Are they absolutely your own, or whose? And afterward you shall hear what I think of them. Walt Whitman's poems have only been heard of in England to be laughed at and voted offensive. Here are Leaves, indeed, which I can no more understand than the book of Enoch or the inedited poems of Daniel! I cannot believe that such a man lives unless I actually touch him. He is further ahead of me in yonder West than Buddha is behind me in the Orient. I find reality and beauty mixed with not a little violence and coarseness, both of which are to me effeminate. I am amused at his

views of sexual energy, which, however, are absurdly false. The man appears to me not to know how to behave himself. I find the *gentleman* altogether left out of the book! Altogether these Leaves completely puzzle me. Is there actually such a man as Whitman? Has any one seen or handled him? His is a tongue "not understood" of the English people. It is the first book I have ever seen which I should call "a new book," and thus I would sum up the impression it makes upon me.

While I am writing, Prince Albert and Duke Constantine are reviewing the Guards in a corner of St. James Park. I hear the music. About two hours ago I took a turn round the park before breakfast, and saw the troops formed. The varieties of color gleamed fully out from the uniforms. They looked like an army of soldier-butterflies just dropped from the lovely green trees under which they marched. Never saw the trees look so green before as they do this spring; some of the oaks incredibly so. I stood before some the other day, in Richmond, and was obliged to pinch myself and ask, "Is this oak-tree really growing on the earth they call so bad and wicked an earth, and itself so undeniably and astonishingly fresh and fair?" It did not look like magic; it was magic.

I have had a thousand strange experiences lately, most of them delicious, and some almost awful. I seem to do so much in my life when I am doing nothing at all. I seem to be hiving up strength all the while, as a sleeping man does who sleeps and dreams and strengthens himself unconsciously; only sometimes half awakes with a sense of cool refreshment. Sometimes it is wonderful to me that I say so little, and somehow cannot speak even to my friends! Why, all the time I was at Concord, I never could tell you much of all I have seen and done! I never could, somehow, tell you anything! How ungrateful to my guardian genius to think any of it trivial

or superfluous! But it always seemed already told and long ago said. What is past and what is to come seems as it were all shut up in some very simple but very dear notes of music which I never can repeat.

To-night I intend to hear Mr. Dow, the American, lecture in Exeter Hall. I believe it is to-night. But I go forearmed against him, being convinced in my mind that a good man is all the better for a bottle of port under his belt every day of his life. I heard Spurgeon, the preacher, the other day. He said some very good things; among others, "If I can make the bells ring in *one* heart, I shall be content." Two young men not behaving themselves, he called them as sternly to order as if they were *servng* under him. Talking of Jerusalem, he said that "every good man had a mansion of his own there, and a crown that would fit no other head save his." That I felt was true. It is the voice of Spurgeon that draws more than his matter. His organ is very fine, but I fear he is hurting it by preaching to too large and frequent congregations. I found this out because he is falling into *two voices*, the usual clerical infirmity.

The bells — church bells — are ringing somewhere; for the Queen's birthday, they tell me. I have not a court guide at hand to see if this is so. London is cram-full. Not a bed, not a corner! After all, the finest sight is to see such numbers of beautiful girls riding about, and riding well. There are certainly no women in the world like ours. The men are far, far inferior to them.

I am still searching after an abode, and really my adventures have been most amusing. One Sussex farmer had a very good little cottage, close to Battle, but he kept "a few horses and a score or two of pigs" under the very windows. I remarked that his stables were very filthy. The man stared hard at me, as an English farmer only can stare; that is, as a man stares who is

trying to catch a thought which is always running away from him. At last he said, striking his stick on the ground, "But that is *why* I keep the pigs. I want their dung for my hop-grounds." We could not arrange it after that.

I received a very kind note to-day from Concord, informing me that there was a farm to be sold on the hill just over your river, and nearly opposite your house. But it is out of the question, buying land by deputy. I have, however, *almost* decided to settle finally in America. There are many reasons for it. I think of running over in the trial trip of the Great Eastern, which will be at the close of the year. She is either to be the greatest success, or else to sink altogether without more ado. She is to be something decided. I was all over her the other day. The immense creature, musical with the incessant tinkling of hammers, is as yet unconscious of life. By measurement she is larger than the Ark. From the promenade of her decks you see the town and trade of London, the river (the sacred river), Greenwich with its park and palace, the vast town of Southwark and the continuation of it at Deptford, the Sydenham Palace, and the Surrey hills. Altogether a noble poem.

Only think, I am losing all my teeth. All my magnificent teeth are going. I now begin to know I *have* had good teeth. This comes of too many cups of warm trash. If I had held to cold drinks, they would have lasted me out; but the effeminacy of tea, coffee, chocolate, and sugar has been my bane. Miserable wretches were they who invented these comforters of exhaustion! They could not afford wine and beer. Hence, God, to punish them for their feeble hearts, takes away the grinders from their representatives, one of whom I have been induced to become. But, Thoreau, if ever I live again, I vow never so much as to touch anything warm. It is as danger-

ous as to take a pill, which, I am convinced, is a most immoral custom. Give me ale for breakfast, and claret or port and ale again for dinner. I should then have a better conscience, and not fear to lose my teeth any more than my tongue.

Farewell, Thoreau. Success and the bounty of the gods attend you.

Yours ever, THOS. CHOLMONDELEY.

The "very kind note" mentioned in this letter was one from me in regard to his purchase of the Nashawtuc farm of four hundred acres, which was then for sale; and I perhaps pointed out that, if a portion of it only were wanted by him, the rest could be sold for buildings. He did not quite understand my suggestion, and replied, *more Anglico*, thus:—

June 9 [1857], Oxford & Cambridge Club,
Pall Mall, London.

MY DEAR SIR,—I thank you for your letter; but I must say at once that my thought of a pleasure farm in America has nothing to do with any building speculation. I confess I hate anything approaching to "business" or "investments" to bring in ever so much more than they ought. I assure you it is with the utmost difficulty I can manage what little I possess already, without a thought of increasing it. A single care would rob me of the gayety and ease of my life. If I were to settle in America, or to buy land there, it would not be with any such view. But I have sometimes thought of turning "hunter;" and in that case I should like a nook (a cabin and a flower garden, nothing more) in which to pass my vacations. As for universities and magazines, God knows I am tired of the very names.

Would you tell dear Thoreau that the lines I admire so much in his *Week* on the Concord River begin thus?—

"Low anchored cloud,
Newfoundland air," etc.¹

out, I suppose, because Cholmondeley had not the book at hand to quote from.

¹ This is doubtless the passage omitted in the letter to Thoreau of May 26, 1857,—left

In my mind, the best thing he ever wrote.

I find it was the Prussian, and not the Russian duke who reviewed the Guard in the Park.

Your letter shows a very forecasting and ambitious soul! Why should you, my friend, roll the stone up the hill? Leave it to Sisyphus. You will never be happy and virtuous till you cast out the fiend; and when he is once gone, you will have no occasion to ask for anything. God will so fill your hand from morning to night that you will only say, "Hold, hold! give me less at a time." He is like the air, and we live in him from day to day. I would have you do the same, and not forecast. To forecast is a delusion of the fiend, and likely to rob you of your delicious youth. If you must have a solace prepared for your age, learn to play the fiddle; and then, even if your eyes fail, you will have a friend, supposing you keep the use of your fingers.

I have lately seen the celebrated Horse Fair of Rosa Bonheur, which one of your countrymen has bought; and upon my honor, it is magnificent. Having seen that and read Aurora Leigh, I begin to think that the day is coming when women will take the lead of our sex altogether. We are engaged with our races at present, and, as usual, "dark" horses generally win. Parliament is also going on, but nobody seems to care much about it. Pam seems Dictator for life, unless he goes mad.

Tell Thoreau that I am reading the memoirs of the Emperor Baber with great satisfaction. He was no doubt a conqueror among wits, as well as a wit among conquerors. His description of the gardens he found or made is of the best! He is translated by Erskine and Leyden. Perhaps the strangest part of the fellow is the mixture of religion and licentiousness. He was rigid in his prayers by day and night; while, on the other hand, he actually gives an account

of an infamous passion he fell into as if it was the most reasonable thing in the world. English and Irish words occur in his vocabulary. *Kuragh* means a meadow; perhaps you have heard of the Curragh of Kildare. *Oti* is wild grass of a certain kind, which is indigenous in parts of Central Asia.

I find I must stop. On looking back, I see I have written exactly what I think about your letter. But nobody ought to resent simplicity.

I am, my dear sir,

Yours very truly,

THOS. CHOLMONDELEY.

P. S. I should be glad if Thoreau would write to me that long letter he owes.

P. S. On looking back a second time, I feel that if your view should really be an aspiration, I am wrong in treating it as an ordinary ambition; but how can I tell?

The next that was heard from Cholmondeley was a rumor that he was to revisit America; and accordingly, Thoreau received this note, late in November, 1858:—

DONEGANA HOUSE, MONTREAL,
Friday, 26 November, 1858.

MY DEAR THOREAU,—I am at Montreal, and I think I shall pass south not far from you. I shall be on Tuesday evening at the Revere, at Boston. I am going to spend the winter in the West Indies. What do you say to come there, too?

Yours ever,

THOS. CHOLMONDELEY.

Early in December he appeared at the Thoreaus' in Concord, and a few days later Thoreau wrote to Daniel Ricketson, at New Bedford, under date of December 6, 1858:—

FRIEND RICKETSON,—Thomas Cholmondeley, my English acquaintance, is here, on his way to the West Indies. He

wants to see New Bedford, a whaling town. I tell him I would like to introduce him to you there, thinking more of his seeing you than New Bedford. So we propose to come your way tomorrow. Excuse this short notice, for the time is short. If, on any account, it is inconvenient to see us, you will treat us accordingly. . . .

The visit was made, to the satisfaction of all; but as Thoreau's father was then in his last illness, and Thoreau himself far from well, Cholmondeley did not remain long in New England. His last words with me were to request that I would buy for the father some grapes, as an alleviation of his invalid diet. He soon returned to England, by way of Jamaica, and this was the brief comment of Thoreau in a letter to Mr. Blake (January 1, 1859): "It may interest you to hear that Cholmondeley has been this way again, *via* Montreal and Lake Huron, going to the West Indies, or rather to Weiss-nicht-wo, whither he urges me to accompany him. He is rather more demonstrative than before, and, on the whole, what would be called 'a good fellow;' is a man of principle, and quite reliable, but very peculiar. I have been to New Bedford with him, to show him a whaling town."

He reached England before Theodore Parker—visiting Europe for health—arrived in London (June 1, 1859), and soon after called on Parker, with offers of service. In the following November, Edwin Morton, making a tour in Europe, to avoid testifying in the matter of John Brown and Gerrit Smith, was invited to Shrewsbury, where Cholmondeley then lived, and was captain of a volunteer rifle company. Morton spent some part of the Christmas holidays at Hodnet,—the house of Cholmondeley's mother, who

had married for a second husband Rev. Zachary Macaulay, a cousin of Lord Macaulay,—and was indebted to his friend for many hospitalities, such as Cholmondeley would gladly have bestowed on Thoreau, could he have induced him to visit England. Morton carried to Shropshire the latest news from Concord that Cholmondeley received, until the tidings came of Thoreau's fatal illness in the summer of 1861. Three years after, in the summer of 1864, Reginald Cholmondeley wrote to say that his brother had died in Florence, mentioning some affecting circumstances of his marriage, illness, and death. Sophia Thoreau, in a letter of March, 1865, thus expressed the feelings of his Concord friends: "I cannot tell you how startled and grieved we all felt to hear of Mr. Cholmondeley's death. His brother's letter impressed me as a painful chapter from some romance. It is hard to realize that he has left us. We have always had the truest regard for him, as a person of rare integrity, great benevolence, and the sincerest friendliness; and I am sure his loss must be very great to those who knew and loved him best."

The letters here printed will throw some light on the nature and pursuits of this one English intimate friend of Thoreau. Those who knew Thomas Cholmondeley could not easily forget him; those who had only a common acquaintance with him would perhaps wonder how any one should remember him. So rare were his gifts, and so well did his ordinary manner conceal them, that few suspected him for the ideal Englishman that he was, or perceived under the humorous mask he wore the sweet simplicity, the magnanimous eccentricity, of his national and individual character.

F. B. Sanborn.