

It than by the woods and swamps that surround it. A town-
 the feeds. A town is saved, not more by the righteous men in
 does loads of muck. There are the strong men on which
 qrites as many acres of meadow to his prospect as his farm
 same soil is good for men and for trees. A man's health re-
 of Nature. The wildwood covers the virgin-mould—and the
 —a *sacrum sanctum*. There is the strength, the marrow
 wood, the thickest and most ineliminable and, to the cit-
 us, and we felt every moment as if about to die of as-
 ration oppressed and suffocated us; the air seemed to fall
 uted lands, the agitation, perplexity, and turmoil of civil-
 long on the steps of Liberty say: "On re-creating civil-
 in a mere animal existence." They who have been traveling
 us liquors excite only disgust. There is a keen enjoyment
 bashes, omitting other flower plots and borders, trans-
 should like to have my house front on this mass of dull red
 painted andromeda, lambkill, azalea, and rhodora—all
 names of the shrubs which grow there—the high-blueberry,
 earth's surface. Bonyony cannot go farther than the
sandra calyciflora) which cover these tender places on the
 to my eyes than the dense beds of dwarf andromeda (Ca-
 tivated gardens in the village. There are no richer patterns
 swamps which surround my native town than from the cul-
 dazzled me. I derive more of my subsistence from the
 a natural sink in one corner of it. That was the jewel which
 a few square rods of impermeable and unfathomable bog—
 ing. I have frequently found that I was attracted solely by

ship where one primitive forest waves above while another
 primitive forest rots below—such a town is fitted to raise
 not only corn and potatoes, but poets and philosophers for
 the coming ages. In such a soil grew Homer and Confucius
 and the rest, and out of such a wilderness comes the Re-
 former eating locusts and wild honey.

To preserve wild animals implies generally the creation
 of a forest for them to dwell in or resort to. So it is with
 man. A hundred years ago they sold bark in our streets
 peeled from our own woods. In the very aspect of those
 primitive and rugged trees there was, methinks, a tanning
 principle which hardened and consolidated the fibres of
 men's thoughts. Ah! already I shudder for these compara-
 tively degenerate days of my native village, when you can-
 not collect a load of bark of good thickness—and we no
 longer produce tar and turpentine.

The civilized nations—Greece, Rome, England—have
 been sustained by the primitive forests which anciently
 rotted where they stand. They survive as long as the soil is
 not exhausted. Alas for human culture! little is to be ex-
 pected of a nation, when the vegetable mould is exhausted,
 and it is compelled to make manure of the bones of its
 fathers. There the poet sustains himself merely by his own
 superfluous fat, and the philosopher comes down on his
 marrowbones.

It is said to be the task of the American "to work the
 virgin soil," and that "agriculture here already assumes pro-
 portions unknown everywhere else." I think that the
 farmer displaces the Indian even because he redeems the

a dry cellar), so that there be no access on that side to cit-
 the swamp, then (though it may not be the best place for
 and disguised me. Bring your sills up to the very edge of
 elaborate ornaments, acorn tops, or what not, soon wanted
 was never an agreeable object of study to me; the most
 by as the dweller within. The most careful front-yard fence
 mason have departed, although done as much for the passer-
 up and make a decent appearance when the carpenter and
 and Art, which I call my front yard? It is an effort to clear
 assemblage of curiosities, that poor apology for a Nature
 my parlor, behind this plot, instead of behind that meager
 thrown out in digging the cellar. Why not put my house,
 the fertile spot under my windows, not a few imported
 planted spruce and trim box, even graveled walks—to have
 bashes, omitting other flower plots and borders, trans-
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meadow, and so makes himself stronger and in some re-
 spects more natural. I was surveying for a man the other
 day a single straight line one hundred and thirty-two rods
 long, through a swamp, at whose entrance might have been
 written the words which Dante read over the entrance to
 the infernal regions: "Leave all hope, ye that enter"—that
 is, of ever getting out again; where at one time I saw my
 employer actually up to his neck and swimming for his
 life in his property, though it was still winter. He had
 another similar swamp which I could not survey at all, be-
 cause it was completely under water, and nevertheless, with
 regard to a third swamp, which I did survey from a dis-
 tance, he remarked to me, true to his instincts, that he
 would not part with it for any consideration, on account
 of the mud which it contained. And that man intends to
 put a girdling ditch round the whole in the course of forty
 months, and so redeem it by the magic of his spade. I refer
 to him only as the type of a class.

The weapons with which we have gained our most im-
 portant victories, which should be handed down as heir-
 looms from father to son, are not the sword and the lance,
 but the bushwack, the turf-cutter, the spade, and the bog-
 hoe, rusted with the blood of many a meadow, and be-
 grimed with the dust of many a hard-fought field. The very
 winds blew the Indian's cornfield into the meadow, and
 pointed out the way which he had not the skill to follow.
 He had no better implement with which to trench him-
 self in the land than a clamshell. But the farmer is armed
 with plough and spade.

into their wardrobe and handle their vestments, I am re-
 minded of no grassy plains and flowery meads which they
 have frequented, but of dusty plains and merchants' exchanges and
 librarist rather.
 A tanned skin is something more than respectable, and
 perhaps olive is a finer color than white man! I do not wonder
 that the African plied him. Darwim the naturalist says,
 "A white man bathing by the side of a Tahitian was like
 fine, dark green one, growing vigorously in the open
 fields."
 Ben Jonson exclaims—
 "How near to good is what is fair!"
 "How near to good is what is wild!"
 So I would say—
 Hope and the future for me are not in laws and culti-
 vated fields, not in towns and cities, but in the impetuous
 and gaking swamps. When, formerly, I have analyzed my
 partially for some farm which I had contemplated purchas-

In literature it is only the wild that attracts us. Dullness
 is but another name for tameness. It is the uncivilized free
 and wild thinking in *Hamlet* and the *Iliad*, in all the
 Scriptures and Mythologies, not learned in the schools, that
 delights us. As the wild duck is more swift and beautiful
 than the tame, so is the wild—the mallard—thought, which
 'mid falling dews wings its way above the fens. A truly
 good book is something as natural, and as unexpectedly
 and unaccountably fair and perfect, as a wild flower dis-
 covered on the prairies of the West or in the jungles of the
 East. Genius is a light which makes the darkness visible,
 like the lightning's flash, which perchance shatters the
 temple of knowledge itself—and not a taper lighted at the
 hearthstone of the race, which pales before the light of
 common day.

English literature, from the days of the minstrels to the
 Lake Poets—Chaucer and Spenser and Milton, and even
 Shakespeare, included—breathes no quite fresh and, in this
 sense, wild strain. It is an essentially tame and civilized
 literature, reflecting Greece and Rome. Her wilderness is a
 greenwood, her wild man a Robin Hood. There is plenty
 of genial love of Nature, but not so much of Nature herself.
 Her chronicles inform us when her wild animals, but not
 when the wild man in her, became extinct.

The science of Humboldt is one thing, poetry is another
 thing. The poet today, notwithstanding all the discoveries
 of science, and the accumulated learning of mankind, en-
 joys no advantage over Homer.

Where is the literature which gives expression to Na-

night in which the corn grows. We require an infusion of
 hemlock-spruce or arbor-vitae in our tea. There is a dif-
 ference between eating and drinking for strength and
 from mere glutony. The Horatians eagerly devour the
 marrow of the koodoo and other antelopes raw, as a matter
 of course. Some of our Northern Indians eat raw the mar-
 row of the Arctic reindeer, as well as the various other
 parts, including the summits of the antlers, as long as they
 are soft. And herein, perchance, they have stolen a march
 on the cooks of Paris. They get what usually goes to feed
 slaughterhouse pork to make a man of. Give me a wild-
 ness whose glance no civilization can endure—as if we lived
 on the marrow of koodoos devoured raw.
 "There are some intervals which border the strain of
 the wood-thrush, to which I would migrate—wild lands
 where no settler has squatted; to which, methinks, I am
 already acclimated.
 The African hunter Cummings tells us that the skin
 of the eland, as well as that of most other antelopes just
 killed, emits the most delicious perfume of trees and grass.
 I would have every man so much like a wild antelope, so
 much a part and parcel of Nature, that his very person
 should thus sweetly advertise our senses of his presence,
 and remind us of those parts of Nature which he most
 hains. I feel no disposition to be satirical, when the de-
 rapper's coat emits the odor of musquash even; it is a
 sweeter scent to me than that which commonly exhales
 from the merchants or the scholar's garments. When I go

and as I worked my way up the river in the light of today,
 and saw the steamboats wooding up, counted the rising
 cities, gazed on the fresh ruins of Nauvoo, beheld the In-
 dians moving west across the stream, and, as before I had
 looked up the Moselle, now looked up the Ohio and the
 Missouri and heard the legends of Dabueque and of We-
 nona's cliff—still thinking more of the future than of the
 past or present—I saw that this was a Rhine stream of a
 different kind; that the foundations of castles were yet to
 be laid, and the famous bridges were yet to be thrown over
 the river; and I felt that *this was the heroic age itself*,
 though we know it not, for the hero is commonly the
 simplest and obscurest of men.

The West of which I speak is but another name for the
 Wild; and what I have been preparing to say is, that in
 Wilderness is the preservation of the World. Every tree sends
 its fibres forth in search of the Wild. The cities import
 it at any price. Men plough and sail for it. From the forest
 and wilderness come the tonics and barks which brace
 mankind. Our ancestors were savages. The story of Romu-
 lus and Remus being suckled by a wolf is not a meaning-
 less fable. The founders of every state which has risen to
 eminence have drawn their nourishment and vigor from
 a similar wild source. It was because the children of the
 Empire were not suckled by the wolf that they were con-
 quered and displaced by the children of the northern for-
 ests who were.

I believe in the forest, and in the meadow, and in the