

things are those who neither know nor know, — is still an in-
 one: to be strictly just, it must have the sanction and consent of the govern-
 It can have no pure right over my person and property but what I con-
 to it. The progress from an absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited
 monarchy to a democracy, is a progress toward a true respect for the indi-
 vidual. Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible
 government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing
 organizing the rights of man? There will never be a really free and en-
 ened State, until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher
 independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived,
 and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last
 which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with re-
 as a neighbor; which even would not think it inconsistent with its own re-
 if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced
 who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow-men. A State which
 this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened, would
 prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious State, which also I
 imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

corrections to Emerson 1107 bottom of page

cf. 1803, 1801 1849, isolation from fellow men etc

Walden, or Life in the Woods¹ *begin in*
Publ:

on my 1855
 1852

I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily
 as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake
 my neighbors up.

cf. 1152, 1875

1. Economy²

When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived
 in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built my-
 on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned

1. Thoreau began writing *Walden* early in 1846, some months after he began living at Walden Pond, and by late 1847, when he moved back into the village of Concord, he had drafted roughly half the book. Between 1852 and 1854 he rewrote the manuscript several times and substantially enlarged it. The text printed here is that of the 1st edition (1854), with a few printer's errors corrected on the basis of Thoreau's set of marked proofs, his

corrections in his copy of *Walden*, and some comparisons of the printed book and the manuscript drafts, especially the edition by J. L. Shanley (1971). Any annotator of *Walden* is indebted to Walter Harding, editor of *The Walden* (1962), and Philip Van Doren, editor of *The Annotated Walden* (1970).

2. As Thoreau explains later in the chapter, the title means something like "philosophy of life."

! Compensation!

why this word? Henry's visit, quiet, hope

honest here

living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again.

I should not obtrude my affairs so much on the notice of my readers if very particular inquiries had not been made by my townsmen concerning my mode of life, which some would call impertinent, though they do not appear to me at all impertinent, but, considering the circumstances, very natural and pertinent. Some have asked what I got to eat; if I did not feel lonesome; if I was not afraid; and the like. Others have been curious to learn what portion of my income I devoted to charitable purposes; and some, who have large families, how many poor children I maintained. I will therefore ask those of my readers who feel no particular interest in me to pardon me if I undertake to answer some of these questions in this book. In most books, the I, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were any body else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives; some such account as he would send to his kindred from a distant land; for if he has lived sincerely, it must have been in a distant land to me. Perhaps these pages are more particularly addressed to poor students. As for the rest of my readers, they will accept such portions as apply to them. I trust that none will stretch the seams in putting on the coat, for it may do good service to him whom it fits.

I would fain say something, not so much concerning the Chinese and Sandwich Islanders³ as you who read these pages, who are said to live in New England; something about your condition, especially your outward condition or circumstances in this world, in this town, what it is, whether it is necessary that it be as bad as it is, whether it cannot be improved as well as not. I have travelled a good deal in Concord; and every where, in shops, and offices, and fields, the inhabitants have appeared to me to be doing penance in a thousand remarkable ways. What I have heard of Brahmins sitting exposed to four fires and looking in the face of the sun; or hanging suspended, with their heads downward, over flames; or looking at the heavens over their shoulders "until it becomes impossible for them to resume their natural position, while from the twist of the neck nothing but liquids can pass into the stomach;" or dwelling, chained for life, at the foot of a tree; or measuring with their bodies, like caterpillars, the breadth of vast empires; or standing on one leg on the tops of pillars,—even these forms of conscious penance are hardly more incredible and astonishing than the scenes which I daily witness.⁴ The twelve labors of Hercules⁵ were trifling in comparison with those which my neighbors have undertaken; for they were only twelve,

3. Hawaiians.
4. Thoreau's source has not been found for this depiction of the religious self-torture of high-caste Hindus in India.
5. Son of Zeus and Alcmena, this half mortal could become a god only by performing twelve labors, each apparently impossible. The second labor, the slaying of the Lernaean hydra, a many-

headed sea monster, is referred to just below. (Hercules' friend Iolas helped by searing the stump each time Hercules cut off one of the heads, which otherwise would have regenerated.) The seventh labor, mentioned in the following paragraph, was the cleansing of Augeas's pestilent stables in one day, a feat Hercules accomplished by diverting two nearby rivers through the stables.

use for comment
Why does this self-torture
Why not - put
only self - part
of the world

what's the point
irony/hyp
H
I
why?
C. O. L. L. G.
early 1800s

Self-discipline
H
irony
hyp