

But teaching was distasteful to him, and he entered his father's establishment, and applied himself diligently for a while to the art of making lead-pencils. He believed in his own mind that he could make a better lead-pencil than was then in use, and he actually proved as good as his word. He took his work to Boston, showed it to the chemists there, obtained their certificates as to the value and excellence and quality of his pencils, and then he returned home, not to make more of them, but to renounce the craft altogether. His friends rallied around him, and told him how fortunate he was, and what a fine prospect in the way of money-getting lay before him. But Henry astonished them all by saying that he would never make another pencil as long as he lived. "Why should I," said he; "I would not do again what I have done once." So it was, and he left the factory, and went on with his studies, which were of a miscellaneous sort, and took long walks in the silent woods. He loved solitude for its own sake, and when he wanted a companion, he preferred an Indian. The nature of the man forbade intimacy. He was often invited out, and dinner-party invitations were frequently sent to him, but he declined them all. He would not go to dinners because he imagined that he would be in somebody's way, and he failed to see how he could meet the guests to any purpose. "They make their pride," he said, "in making their dinner cost much: I make my pride in making my dinner cost little." Once or twice he yielded to pressure, and accepted the invitation to dine. When asked at table what dish he preferred, he answered, "the nearest." Of course, such a man was better alone, or with his good Indian, roaming through the forest and communing with nature. He never used tobacco, but in his youth he sometimes smoked dried lily stems—this in his æsthetic days, and long before he was

a man. Afterwards, in speaking of these lily stems, he said: "I have never smoked anything more noxious."

The first number of the *Dial*—Margaret Fuller's paper, and the organ of the Transcendentalists,—was published in July, 1840. It was a quarterly, and its aims were high, and its policy was independent and courageous. The initial issue contained contributions by Emerson, Miss Fuller, George Ripley, C. P. Cranch, Bronson Alcott, John S. Dwight, afterwards editor of the *Journal of Music*, Theodore Parker, W. H. Channing, and Thoreau. The latter wrote for it his poem on "Sympathy." Among his other contributions to this serial, were the papers on the Natural History of Massachusetts, and translations from Pindar and Æschylus. He was a good Greek, and his renderings are creditable to his scholarship and poetic skill. In the first volume of the *Dial* there appeared three of his pieces; in the second, he published two; in the third, sixteen, and in the fourth, five. Thoreau may be said to have made his first appearance as a writer in the pages of this magazine. He was only 23 years of age when "Sympathy" came out, and it was promptly recognized as a poem of singular beauty. His first prose production, and reprinted as the first paper in "Excursions," was originally published in the third volume of the *Dial*. The fourth volume contained his "Walk in Winter," one of his masterpieces. Emerson encouraged Thoreau to write, introduced him to literature, and gave him charge of the third number of the third volume of the *Dial*. The two friends met in 1837, and the death of Thoreau, in 1862, only closed the friendship. In 1841, Thoreau became an inmate of Emerson's home, and remained there two years. They worked in the garden together, and Thoreau grafted the trees of the orchard. In 1847, during Emerson's absence in England, he kept the homestead at Concord.