

self face to face with the enemy, my courage and confidence mount, and I acquit myself entirely to my satisfaction. I speak about one-third of it and read the rest. A fine audience, and appreciative.

*April 15*

The days are sweeter and sweeter, and warmer and warmer. What an appetite I have for them! I sit this morning with my door open and let the sounds and odors come in — the drumming of the highholes, the call of Phœbe, the trill of the bush sparrows and song sparrows, and all the other bird-sounds. The river shimmers and glints through the haze. The morning is like a nude woman veiled by her own hair. April is in heat; she is pairing with the Sun. She yields herself to his embraces all day. I can see the union taking place even in my vineyard.

*April 18*

Hiram and I move over to Slabsides.

*June 22*

John Muir came last night. Julian and I met him at Hyde Park. A very interesting man; a little prolix at times. You must not be in a hurry, or have any pressing duty, when you start his stream of talk and adventure. Ask him to tell you his famous dog story ['Stickeen'] (almost equal to 'Rab and his Friends') and you get the whole theory of glaciation thrown in. He is a poet, and almost a seer; something ancient and far-away in the look of his eyes. He could not sit down in a corner of the landscape, as Thoreau did; he must have a continent for his

1896

1896]

playground. He starts off for a walk, after graduation, and walks from Wisconsin to Florida, and is not back home in eighteen years! In California he starts out one morning for a stroll; his landlady asks him if he will be back to dinner; probably not, he says. He is back in seven days; walks one hundred miles around Mt. Shasta, and goes two and one half days without food. He ought to be put into a book — doubtful if he ever puts himself into one. He has done many foolish, foolhardy things I think; that is, thrown away his strength without proper return. I fear now he is on the verge of physical bankruptcy in consequence. Probably the truest lover of Nature, as she appears in woods, mountains, glaciers, we have yet had.

*July 24*

Why do the critics hesitate to call Mrs. Stowe an artist, and her 'Uncle Tom' a work of great literary merit? I suppose it is because, first, she never produced another work that approached it in general interest; her subsequent books fall far below it; second, it seems to have been the result of moral and humanitarian fervor, rather than of esthetic and artistic fervor. The subject mastered her. A man may make an eloquent speech at some crisis in his life, who is not a great orator. But the true orator is eloquent on many occasions and on many themes. The great artist does not commit himself as Mrs. Stowe did; his work has a flavor, a quality, which hers has not. Tolstoi, though he wrote with a purpose, and with as deep moral conviction as Mrs. Stowe, is much more surely an artist. He is not confined to one theme; his range is vastly