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Summering in the Sierra. John Muir's Description of a Wonderful Region. Owens Valley and Its Lava Floods-The Conflict Between Frost and Fire-Mono Valley-Dead Lakes-A Mountain Character. (Special Correspondence of the Bulletin.) Yosemite Valley,...

John Muir

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To the Editor of the "Bulletin of Geological History."

John Muir's Description of a Wonderfull Region

Owens Valley, September, 1875.

In every country there are districts which are not only of rivers but of men. Therefore we all look forward to the day when the Sierra Nevada will become a sanctuary for human beings, and, although according to ordinary commercial methods of occupation it may seem a doubtful gain, there is no time for a delay. This is a land of wild men, and not a land of wild beasts, yet measured by other standards the distance becomes merely a dream.

PORT INDIPENDENCE

In a few miles from the summit of Mount Whitney we found ourselves in the midst of a cluster of beautiful homes, where, surrounded by the ever-present sheep, we lived a life of meeting by the winds, the sunny, the living beauty and health, in an estate of however and grass. It was the gray hot sage plains of Drag and the black mesa of the ancient lava, the sage and shrub, the green color of the green, the gray of the dun in the sun, the blue of the sky, the green of the mountains, the rain, the sunshine...and the sun was shining.

OWENS TALLEY - LAVA FLOOD

This was the lava flow of 1875, and has been poured out in every direction. The entire surface was wholly changed, save where an ancient water flow had forced its way through the lava. The ancient ravines were filled with cinders and lava, and the entire surface was covered with dry lava, except where the ancient water flow had forced its way through the lava. The ancient ravines were filled with cinders and lava, and the entire surface was completely blanketed with dry lava, except where the ancient water flow had forced its way through the lava.

PLEASANT CORRESPONDENCE OF THE BULLETIN

In this region, lying between the ancient lava and the ancient cinder cones, we find a land of wild men, and not a land of wild beasts, yet measured by other standards the distance becomes merely a dream.

A PLEASANT CHANGE - LONG VALLEY

Winding through the rocky, we finally emerge upon a series of small brooks, which we follow up into the rocky hills, where we find ourselves in the midst of a land of wild men, and not a land of wild beasts, yet measured by other standards the distance becomes merely a dream.
MONO VALLEY—DEAD LAKE

Crossing over to Mono, we ride along the bottom and around the shores of many a desert lake, shallow and sparkling, reflecting the sky and the clouds. The waters of these lakes are bright, dazzling, and level, standing the test of the dry summers. Wild flowers, brilliant and numerous, spring up upon dry lava rocks, seemingly as much at home in these spots as the pines or maples in more northern regions. The glaciers that flowed here, and in the foreground the snow-towers, are but vestiges of a more glacial era. The greatest of the snow-towers, the formations that come upon a landscapes are loftiest of those that are dusted around the base of lava bluffs that mark the former lake shore. These spires of snow are the only remains of a former water body; for the sea now lingers no more in the land.

Desert to Lake

The glaciers die; fewer streams descend into the table-land, the wild flowers wither and around the shores of the lakes the red and yellow pines are left, forming the Mono Mountains '.

There are many smaller glaciers, the bases of which lie at different levels, the floating masses of ice adding to the general impression of arctic barrenness. The level of Mono Lake is so much lower than the level of the glaciers that flowed here that the water has disappeared, leaving the shore alone. The shores of many a dead lake, like Mono Lake, once resplendent mountain lawn we pass as we go; ripening it are large purple cones, a purple sky above, and a glare of sun below.

MONO LAKE—A LOVELY SCENE

Here, within the borders of our wonder-land, the ultimate effect of antagonistic forces of fire and ice. Volcanoes and glaciers have worked together in producing the Mono Lake region. 

ANTAGONISTIC FORCES OF FIRE AND ICE

Nowhere within the region of Mono Lake can we see the results of fire and ice so perfectly defined and contrasted as in this neighborhood. The volcanic phenomena are so strikingly presented as to be a complete contrast to the general impression of barrenness. The Helen volcano is the most active of the Mono volcanoes, and the Mono lake itself is the result of a volcanic eruption.

The glaciers are the cause of the Mono Lake's existence, for the lake was formed by the glaciers. The lake is now a shallow body of water, but it was once much larger and more extensive. The glaciers have been slowly melting, and the lake has been getting shallower. The lake is now about half the size it was a century ago, but it is still a beautiful and interesting body of water.

The Mono Lake region is a land of glaciers and volcanoes, and it is one of the most wonderful places in the world. The Mono Lake region is a land of glaciers and volcanoes, and it is one of the most wonderful places in the world. The Mono Lake region is a land of glaciers and volcanoes, and it is one of the most wonderful places in the world.
Many Californians are not aware of the grandeur of their own land. They are leaving it for foreign excursions whenever they become able—leaving the wonders of our unrivalled plains and mountains wholly unrecognized.

One mile traveled in a vertical direction is equivalent to a thousand in the direction of the poles. We have Laplands and Labradors of our own, and Alps rivaling all that Switzerland can boast, and streams from glacier-caves, rivers of mercy sacred as the Himalaya-born Ganges. We have our Shasta Vesuvius also, and Bay of Naples, and over here among our inland plains are African Saharas, Death Valleys and deserts, with sand storms and green oases where congregate the travelers, coming in long caravans, the trader with his gold and the Pai Ute Indian with his weapons—the Bedouin of the California deserts.

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The Decrease of Forests in Europe. — Judging from statistics recently published, the time is not far distant when France, Holland and Belgium will begin drawing upon this country for their supply of oak timber. In the former country, notwithstanding the diminution of the area devoted to forests, the consumption of oak timber has doubled within the last fifty years. For the manufacture of wine-casks alone 15,000,000 cubic feet are annually required, whilst for building purposes 600,000 cubic feet and in railway carriage construction 150,000 cubic feet are used per annum. In 1873 $4,000,000 worth of staves were imported, which figure had grown to $30,000,000 in 1874. Belgium and Holland, although not as large consumers of timber as France, have no forests to draw upon, and have to look to other countries for their supply. Italy, too, has cut down almost all her forests, whilst Spain and Greece are almost woodless. Of the other European countries Austria has but few forests remaining, and North Germany, although better provided that some of her neighbors in the way of timber, has, nevertheless, within the last decade begun cutting down her young trees. Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Russia are at present the thickest timbered of the European countries, in the former one-fourth of her area being in forest; in the second one-half, in the third one-sixth, and in the fourth one-third of their total area being given up to the growth of timber. From the above four countries all the others in Europe will have to draw their supplies, and it would seem as though, notwithstanding all the care exercised in replanting and in forest culture, that at no distant day the time will arrive when their forests will be exhausted by the constant drain upon them. Then other sources will be sought for, and Canada, the northeastern and northwestern sections of the United States will become the lumber marts of the world, and from these boundless forests the timber necessary for the use of Europe will ultimately be taken. Already America is exporting large amounts of timber to Europe, and the export grows every year.

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John Muir