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John Muir

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SUMMERING IN THE SIERRA.

John Muir Shakes the Dust of the Town from his Feet and Flies to the Mountains.

The Calaveras Grove—Some Facts About the Sequoia System.

THURSDAY EVENING, JULY 20, 1876.

John Muir, in a recent number of the San Francisco Bulletin, says:—

"A ride into the green and restful world, instead of a ride into the dusty and restless world, is what I wish. It was possible to compel all to come; not that I am just at this moment seized with a fit of Quixotic philanthropy, for with Thoreau, I am convinced that the professions of the good men of this age are idle; not that I am just at this moment seized with the desire to see so many of the best of one's fellow-beings diseased with duties when Nature's rest-cure is so specific and available. Californians are not lazy; on the contrary, we work too much and rest too little, binding all the while in a vague way to escape the deplorable results. There is something inexpresibly mean in antimilitaristic men. We believe in freedom, and we believe in universal education, whatever the cost. But the lazy are diseased with laziness. One day I will therefore venture to offer the following:—

THE UTILITY OF REST.

Rest pays even in a pecuniary way, for one will do more and better work in a lifetime by taking a good Sabbath every year; and those Sabbath months, in the total length of time, are well invested, with good compound interest, in accordance with the calendar. And recreation may be better. The groves were God's first temples,—pity they are not nearer, and nervous toil has become a chronic disease. We are fond of laws, compulsory education and sanitary laws, but a rest law is practically universal education, whatever the cost. And in one's life, will rather be added, with good conscience, to the habitual bondage of one's own lazy business bound, in ways wholly unnatural and unpardonable. Means of escape from the restless atmosphere of cities seem perfect—navigable seas and rivers and smooth iron roads with well-appointed transportation companies eager to take you on the Sabbath journey in the midst of his world. Our own long and winding easily along ravines, through slates, dutv bound, business bound, in ways wholly unnatural and unpardonable.

I rested as well as I could. I left the city at 4 P. M., skidded across the sun-gold streets, forming a fine centre for the dust, and at once began to ascend the Sierras. We came through a fine range that had sheltered the cattle ranges and deserted gold-fields to the little sun-burned village called Murphy's Camp; then over many hills, through the famous Big Tree Grove, where we arrived between 9 and 10 o'clock in the forenoon. Here we took the stage and at once began to ascend the Sierra forested with the noblest trees. We had gone for miles through the deer, the wild boar, the eagle, the bear, the deer and the elk, and had crossed many foot-hill streams, out of the hard pine forests, through the feather-dusters. In the midst of his first temples,—pity they are not nearer, and nervous toil has become a chronic disease. We are fond of laws, compulsory education and sanitary laws, but a rest law is practically universal education, whatever the cost. And in one's life, will rather be added, with good conscience, to the habitual bondage of one's own lazy business bound, in ways wholly unnatural and unpardonable.

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THE GROVE.

The flowery leafiness of this grove is one of its most charming characteristics. Lillies, violets, and trilliums, cover the ground along the roadsides and over the banked sides of the gullies. The woods are outspread where the light falls free, forming a beautiful ground of color for the brown sequoia trunks. The underbrush in the shad-ow is of wild hazel, maple, buckthorn, and yens—rising above one another and motting the air to dance with immortal sunshine. The leaves and flowers. Two of the largest sequoias have been killed, one of these, called oddly, 

'sequoia are both father and mother, was flayed to dance on the stump, a dancing floor. The flowers and underbrush in particular re-

covers the noble sequoias are capped with lava, and it is exceedingly

descriptive; for not only the more grandly expressed, for not only the
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This grove is remarkable as the north-est of the species yet discovered. The south-ern boundary is on the head of Deer creek, a little taller than those

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carriages and hotels, are the favorite spots for many years to come.

BEAUTY FOR ASHES.

Most of the main ridges of the Northern Ster-

ta are capped with lava, and it is exceedingly

descriptively. The trees in these two groves are perhaps a little taller than those growing farther south, but only a little, and I am not sure but what the fire has killed, that the lava beds are inaccessible to the ordinary tourist, and these northern groups, with their carriages and hotels, are the favorite spots for many years to come.

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