



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1875-11-02

Letter from [John Muir] to Sarah [Muir Galloway], 1875 Nov 2.

John Muir

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Yosemite Valley
Nov 2^d 1873

Dear Sister Sarah, here is
your letter with the Dalles
in it. I'm glad you have
escaped so long from the
cows & sewing & baking &
Guds green wild Dalles &
dells for I know you were
young again & that the natural
love of beauty you possess
had free fair play.
I will never forget - the big
happy day I spent there
on the rocky gorge Wisconsin
above Kilbourn City - What
Caves full of purple orchids &
ferns, *Aspidium fragrans* &
found there for the first-time.
& What hillsides of buckleberries
& rare asters & golden rods
Doubt you wish you were wild
like me & as free to satisfy

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Your love for whatsoever
is pure & beautiful.
I returned last night from
a two & a half months excursion
through the grandest portions of
the Sierra Nevada forests -
You remember reading of the
big trees of Calaveras county
discovered fifteen or twenty
years ago well I have been
studying the species (*Sequoia gigantea*)
& have been all this time
wandering amid those giants -
They extend in a broken in-
terrupted belt - along the western
flank of the range a distance
of 180 miles, But I will not
attempt to describe them
here, I have written about
them & will send you
printed descriptions -
I often feel alarmed about
Joanna's health? from what

I can learn about her symptoms only the greatest care & skill will restore her to perfect health - & I fondly hope that Dana's efforts - on her behalf will prove successful.

I fancy your little flock are growing fast towards prime yet how short seems the time when you occupied your family place on Hickory Hill. Our lines go on & close like a day morning noon & night. Yet how full of pure happiness these life days may be & how worthy of the God that plans them & sends them.

The book you speak of is not yet commenced but I must go into winter quarters at once & go to work.

While in the field I can only

observe, take in but give nothing out -

The first winter snow is just now falling on Yosemite rocks. The domes are whitened & ere long with avalanches will rush with loud boom & roar like new-made waterfalls -

Give my love to David & the children & Mrs Gallouay & I will hope to yet see you all. But now once more Farewell,

The November number of Harpers monthly contains Living Glaciers of Cal. The illustrations are from my pencil sketches some of wh^{ch} were made when my fingers were so benumbed with frost I could scarcely hold my pencil. This is the first paper on glaciers I have yet published.