



1877-01-12

## Letter from [John Muir] to Sarah [Muir Galloway], [1877] Jan 12.

John Muir

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1871  
1419 Taylor St  
57 Jan 12<sup>th</sup>

Dear Sister Sarah,

I received your welcome letter today. I was beginning to think you were neglecting me. The sad news of dear St Mrs Gallows though not unexpected make me feel that I have lost a friend. Few lines are so beautiful & complete as hers & few could have had the glorious satisfaction in dying to know that so few words spoken were other than kind & so few deeds that did anything more than augment the happiness of others. How many really good people waste & worse than waste their short lives in mean lickerings when they might lovingly in broad Christian charity enjoy the glorious privilege of doing plain simple everyday good. Mrs Gallows character was one of the most beautiful & perfect I ever knew.



Sweet-voiced birds enwreath all the  
 zones of Shasta with delicious  
 melody that blends in fine harmony  
 with the gentle wind rustling of  
 leaves & the still gentler rustling of  
 petals. The rush & thunder of storms  
 & avalanches are often heard also  
 but the power of insect-wings

is not so far from being a  
 part of the music of the  
 world as we are not thinking of it  
 as such. It is a part of the  
 music of the world as we are  
 not thinking of it as such. It  
 is a part of the music of the  
 world as we are not thinking  
 of it as such. It is a part of  
 the music of the world as we  
 are not thinking of it as such.

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How delightful it is for you all to  
 gather on the holidays & what a grand  
 multitude you must make when you  
 are all mustered. Little did I think  
 when I used to be & am now fonder  
 of home & still domestic life than any  
 one of the boys that I only should be  
 a bachelor & doomed to roam always  
 far outside the family circle, But we  
 are governed more than we know & are  
 driven as with whips we know not where  
 Your pleasures & the happiness of your  
 lives in general are far greater than  
 you know being clustered together yet  
 independent & living in one of the most  
 beautiful regions under the sun  
 Long may you all live to enjoy your  
 blessings & to learn to love one another  
 & make sacrifices for one another  
 Yours



seems to circle around it & the azure  
 vault-bends regularly down upon  
 it <sup>like a belly glass</sup> as if belonging to it alone

all you find I have been back to you  
I am enquire about books. The other  
2 spoke of are a book of excursions  
another on Yosemite & the adjacent mts  
& another studies in the Sierra (Scientific)  
The present vol will be description  
of the Sierra animals birds forests  
fells glaciers etc which if I live  
you will see next fall or winter  
I have not written enough to com-  
= pose with much facility & as I am  
also very careful & have but a  
limited vocabulary I make slow  
progress. Still although I never meant  
to write the results of my explorations  
now I have begun I rather enjoy it  
& the public do me the credit of reading  
all I write & paying me for it which  
is some satisfaction. I will not probably

will in my next speak on the book inasmuch as I always make out  
to accomplish in some way what I undertake to do & I don't forget



I don't write regularly for anything &  
although I'm a fair to be a regular correspondent  
of the Evening Bulletin & have the privilege of  
writing for it when I like. Harpers have  
two unpublished illustrated articles of mine  
but after they pay for them they keep them as  
long as they like sometimes a year or more  
before publishing.

[Original letter in possession of Sarah Muir Galloway]

1419 Taylor St., S.F.,  
[John Swett's home],  
(Jan. 12th, [1877]).

Home of

Dear Sister Sarah:

I received your welcome letter to-day. I was beginning to think you were neglecting me. The sad news of dear old Mrs. Galloway, though not unexpected, makes me feel that I have lost a friend. Few lives are so beautiful and complete as hers, and few could have had the glorious satisfaction, in dying, to know that so few words spoken were other than kind, and so few deeds that did anything more than augment the happiness of others. How many really good people waste, and worse than waste, their short lives in mean bickerings, when they might lovingly, in broad Christian charity, enjoy the glorious privilege of doing plain, simple, every-day good. Mrs. Galloway's character was one of the most beautiful and perfect I ever knew.

How delightful it is for you all to gather on the holidays, and what a grand multitude you must make when you are all mustered. Little did I think when I used to be, and am now, fonder of home and still domestic life than any one of the boys, that I only should be a bachelor and doomed to roam always far outside the family circle. But we are governed more than we know and are driven as with whips we know not where. Your pleasures, and the happiness of your lives in general, are far greater than you know, being clustered together, yet independent, and living in one of the most beautiful regions under the sun. Long may you all live to enjoy your blessings and to learn to love one another and make sacrifices for one another's good.

You enquire about <sup>[my]</sup> books. The others I spoke of are a book of excursions, another on Yosemite and the adjacent mountains, and another Studies in the Sierra (scientific). The present vol. will be descriptive of the Sierra animals, birds, forests, falls, glaciers, etc., which, if I live, you will see next fall or winter. I have not written enough to compose with much facility, and as I am also very careful and have but a limited vocabulary, I make slow progress. Still, although I never meant to write the results of my explorations, now I have begun I rather enjoy it and the public do me the credit of reading all I write, and paying me for it, which is some satisfaction, and I will not probably fail in my first effort on the book, inasmuch as I always make out to accomplish in some way what I undertake.

Love to David and George, and all you fine lassies, and love, dear Sarah, to yourself.

From your wandering brother,

[John Muir]

I don't write regularly for anything, although I'm said to be a regular correspondent of the Evening Bulletin, and have the privilege of writing for it when I like. Harper's have two unpublished illustrated articles of mine, but after they pay for them they keep them as long as they like, sometimes a year or more, before publishing.

[Bits of manuscript on the backs of 2 pages of this letter, as follows]

[San Francisco]

Sweet-voiced birds enwreath all the zones of Shasta with delicious melody that blends in fine harmony with the gentle wind-rustling of petals. The rush and thunder of storms and avalanches are often heard also, but the hum of insect wings . . .

[2nd fragment] seems to circle around it and the azure vault bends regularly down upon it like a bell-glass, as if belonging to it alone . . .

[1877 supplied as Muir speaks as though he were just beginning to write the material published in 1878 and 1879 by Scribner's.]