



1877-12-05

Letter from John Muir to [Strentzel Family], 1877 Dec 5.

John Muir

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1419 Taylor St
San Francisco
Dec 5th 72

Friends Three,

I made a capital little excursion over your Mount Diablo & arrived in good order in San Fran after that fine rest in your ever white home.

I mounted on leisurely after bidding you goodbye enjoying the landscape as it was gradually unrolled in the evening light. One charming bit of picture after another came into view at every turn of the road & while the sunset-fires were burning brightest I had attained an elevation sufficient for a grand comprehensive feast.

I reached the summit a little after dark & selected a sheltered nook in the chaparral to rest for the night & await the coming of the sun. The wind blew a gale but I did not suffer much from the cold. The night was

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Keen & crisp & the stars shone out - with better brilliancy than
the one could hope for in these lowland atmospheres.

The sunrise was truly glorious. After lingering an hour or so
observing & feasting & making a few notes I went down to that
halfway hotel for breakfast. I was the only guest - while the
family numbered four well attired & intellectual looking persons
who for a time kept up a solemn quakerish silence, which
I tried in vain to break up. But at length all four began
a hearty spontaneous discussion upon the art of cat killing
solemnly & deeply relating in turn all their experiences
in this ^{delightful} business in bygone time embracing everything with
grave fervor in the whole scale of cat all the way up from
sackfuls of purblind kits to tigerish Toms. Then I knew
that such knowledge was attainable only by intellectual
New Englanders.

My walk down the river-side across the Vals & thro' the
Oakland hills was very delightful, & I feasted on many
a bit of pure picture in purple & gold Nature's best -

I beheld the most ravishingly
beautiful sunset on the bay
I ever yet enjoyed in the
lowlands -

I shall not soon forget the
rest I enjoyed in your parlor
while here on the feast at your
fruity table. Seldom have I
been so deeply merry - & as for
hunger I have been hungry still
in spite of it all & for aught
I see in the depths of the stomach
may go hungry on this life &
into the grave & beyond -
Heaven forbid a dry year!
May wheat grow!

With truly remembrances
of your rare kindness I am
very ~~anxiously~~ yr friend
John M. Minn