



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1877-12-30

Letter from John Muir to Emily [O. Pelton], 1877 Dec 30.

John Muir

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9th or 10th

1419 Taylor St. S F.
Dec 30th 77

My dear runaway sister Emily,

I have just chanced to learn your return to the Yuba hills through McChesney. Since you left here on your visit to the old East you have not sent me a single word, at least I have not received one from you. What has your poor mountaineer brother done to deserve such blank desertion. Come now.

What is my shortcoming or overcoming that you leave me thus silently to the bears, & snow-storms, & wild sheep? What kind of sisterhood is this? I've been near drowning in the Sacramento, & freezing in the Kings River Canon, & only a month ago scrambled three days without food among the dizzy cliffs & white-waters of the high Sierra but never a word from your kind heart. . . . Well I'll say no more until you break silence. I would

have written to Mrs Knox for information but I did not care to let her know how naughty you had been. & on going East you did not give me any address. I have spent last summer in regular course like all the rest, traveling the solitudes in search of wild truth. Have been at Shasta, Fall River, Feather River, Yosemite, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz etc.

Had a good time with Gray & Sir Joseph Hooker. Spent a week at Chico
with Gen Bidwell, sailed alone in a wee skiff 200 miles on the Sacramento,
250 on the San Joaquin, & 120 on Lake Tahoe. I have just returned
to my old quarters to pass away the winter with my pen.
And you have no doubt had a fine visit rambling about your
old home, & now you are back to teach. I wish you a happy
New Year & kindly notwithstanding your strange unsteady aim &
blank silence. I asked McChesney what chance there was for a
position in the Oakland schools & he said it would require a long
pull to gain one, & that you would require to be here to make the acquaint-
ance of the directors. Some teachers "labour & wait" more than a year for
a comparatively poor place, & poor pay. Could you get the position once
offered you in the Chico Academy, that would be satisfactory I should think
& I could introduce you to the Bidwells if you do not already know them.
When ever I can be made available in anyway in the furtherance of your
interests be kind enough to let me know & I will forgive your long
mysterious naufrages. Remember me to the friends I meet with you
in your Yukon hills, & believe me ever your faithful brother

John Muir