



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1879-02-26

Letter from P. C. Renfrew to John Muir, 1879 Feb 26.

P. C. Renfrew

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literally glorious in May and June with rhododendron and other flowering shrubs. Your second question is have you been on the Three Sisters. Yes on the center + north - the former on July 28th the latter on Sept. 10th 1875.

3^d How many glaciers are there on their flanks. To my positive knowledge there are three active ones each sending its stream of "puke" (they would say in N.Y.) to the lowlands east and west. I do not say there are not other active ones but these I have visited; the largest four times.

Now, allow me to ask you the cost of an aneroid barometer suitable to take altitudes, give size ^{diameter} in inches with price. Don't forget that I promised you any data I possessed if you came here. Come.

Respectfully + Truly
R. C. Ketchum

00836

McKenzie Bridge Oregon
Feb 26th 1879

Mrs. John Meier

Dear Sir.

There are occasions in my life as there must be in that of every man "who, in the love of nature holds communion with her -" that may be called epiphanies; when, overawed by her majesty I am lifted out of myself and individuality with all that encumbers it is for the moment extinguished.

This I first experienced on the deck of a Pacific Steamship witnessing sunrise on a perfectly waveless sea, next on viewing from above, a fog-filled valley of the Southern Sierra at sunrise, again on my first sweeping view of the Yosemite Valley and last when standing on the northwestern glacier of the volcano known as the "Three Sisters"!!

The gist of these love-feasts is now and then resurrected by less striking views strewn at intervals along the pathway of a life abounding (I sometimes think) in hard tasks and small rewards.

Yet more frequently they are recalled by etchings from the pens of those devoted men who "make themselves free" to woo from bounteous but ever bashful nature her rarest gems.

And I say that many times I have risen from the perusal of articles closing with your name with "thank you" in my heart or that it now lifts itself in thankfulness to one yet greater for the lieve to express it on paper and for the hope that I may soon clasp your hand and let you hear it from my lips?

Your kind response of the 2^d is before me and the question about conifers brings me face to face with the fact (which honesty

forces me to acknowledge) that I have never had a treatise on botany in my hand that I now recollect, but Nil desperandum I will do the best I can.

They comprise, in my judgment, about 75 percent of our forests and include, in the order of their abundance, Fir, white, red and yellow

Kedars, " + "

Pine " , sugar, yellow, pitch

and in the higher altitudes black. Hemlock in varieties, Spruce, Birch, cypress, yew but no Sequoia.

On bottom lands we have inter-spersed Maple in variety, Ash, cottonwood, alder + hazel. Our Leguminosae are in small variety, Chinkopin its chief representative. Of Ericaceous trees we have a greater number and the dry hillsides where fires have swept off the fir are spangled with Madrone and bristle with Mt. gainta + Ceanothus. Our forests are made