



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1880-03-28

Letter from Kate M. Graydon to John Muir, 1880 Mar 28 .

Kate M. Graydon

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I can not see how you can be happy so far away from human care & sympathy, except the little fellow must always be singing "Are ye not of more value than many sparrows?"

All you say of him is a sermon on that - text:

I must tell you, if only to make you smile, how much sympathy I wasted on you.

Some how I thought - you had no friends nor companions, but glaciers & icebergs & birds & bears & evergreens, & that you had no mother to wear out her anxious heart about you, & all that. Well, one day my sympathies were all

Indianapolis, March 28th '80.

Dear Mr. Muir -

For a fact, I was glad to get your letter, & see that you had not forgotten me. You see in an open letter, I could not tell all truth of the reading of that piece on the eyel. It was this.

One morning Prof. Jordan greatly offended us by announcing in class that instead of the regular lesson, he would read an article from Scribner, thus intimating we were too stupid to appreciate such a piece if left to ourselves. To retaliate, when he told who wrote the article, I made him

believe I had known you always
 & that I received at least one
 letter each week. Well, when
 Prof. Jordan started to Cal.
 he naturally asked for a
 letter of introduction. Just
 then some one exclaimed
 to herself, "Be sure you will
 find her out. What if Mr. Nevins
 should ask, Who is Kate Graydon?
 So you see why I was at once relieved
 & happy, when your letter
 came.

I presume you & Prof. Jordan
 are together & if you & he do
 not mix, it is because I am
 not there to stir you up.

You must understand
 Janet introduced Mr.
 Gilbert; he is her friend.
 Janet is about as large in

stature as he, but for
 unately "the mind is the
 measure of the man."

Miss Hendricks allowed us
 to read your Alaska letters.
 I always thought it was cold
 up by the bath pole until I
 read them. You speak of
 furling streams & balmy air,
 etc, etc, as if it were Florida,
 quite an overturning of my
 geography.

You drew a pretty picture
 of what home life might be,
 with drawn curtains &
 crackling fire, & books still
 damp from the Press. Why
 not more minute; & say whether
 you would prefer a Brussels
 or Ayminster, a Knabe or a
 Steinway?

So you met your little angel?

several acres in dimensions.
When I get in the High School
& become rich, I am coming
out to see you, if "that-adoring
circle" will allow.

Janet & I are afraid you do not
intend coming in for another
12 years, we do not want to gaze
at you thro' spectacles or meetings
you on crutches, so we appoint
your visit - as next fall, to
come in with Prof. Jordan.
Another dozen years might
see Merrick Chief Justice, &
Janet & I having our rights.
I leave all the sensible news
for Prof. Jordan to tell. We
are all well.

Your friend
132 U. Sta. St. } Kate M. Graydon,

exploded. I heard your mother
was living in Iowa, & you had
not been near her for twelve
years. And then while I
supposed you had not a
loyal friend in the world, I
heard you were the centre
of an adoring circle of ladies
in San Francisco. If you
heard any one laugh about
that-time, it was I. (This last
piece of news came from
London.) See if I ever waste
my sympathy on you again!
So the Fort Mangel press
has just-issued Emerson's
last; Mama has an antidote
for Emerson in the Longer
Catechism, the cure being so

fearful, that - I'm careful
not to need it. We learned
the shorter catechism to pro-
fitiate - I suppose, the spirits -
of the Merrills who came over
in 1637, & I have no doubt - They
looked from their best abodes
& smiled on us. Solomon too
approves of the way in which we
have been trained, it remains
to be seen if we ever depart
from it.

Grandma Graydon once
give us a willow, appropriately
called weeping willow, it was
planted at our back door &
was pruned for our benefit
without regard to time or
season. Well, the elements
though long delayed, were at last
kind to us, & a tornado came
along the other night & turned

that weeping willow up side down.
Joy came with the morning,
we six children stood around
& laughed without measure.

This is too silly, but - it is such
a relief to be out of school, I
am at home now, away from
my boarding school, & it is not
a bad exchange from "Miss
Graydon", to "Katie".

Sometimes I get out of sorts &
wonder why you & Prof. Jordan
have all the sight-seeing & good
times, then I am thankful
I can sit at home, & free of all
fatigue & expense, can see it
all through your pen. I
think you should have more
consideration for woman's weak-
ness, than to suggest "lace
sixty miles wide", but some-
thing will suggest a seal skin