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1860-12-21

Letter from David M. Galloway to John Muir, 1860 Dec 21

David M. Galloway

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John you seem to have good times among the Bells
 but I trust you have not yet felt that in-
 -comprehensible something; or you would never call
 those sinners who play at "Blind mans Buff"
 &c or who have so far cast off all natural
 coldness & sullenness as to kiss each other
 promiscuously. I will not at this time censure
 you for your stiffness, for I know you are
 bashful, & I spare you; I will leave S.
 to tell you all the particulars of the late
 affair at Hickory Hill &c. & how it was
 mooted that you were to be near; and I
 wish John from the very innermost corners
 of my heart that you may have good luck
 in this as in every other undertaking, & to borrow
 a few words from my favourite poet which fully
 express my mind I will conclude

And last though not least May God
 who alone is able to
 "May plenty to you for
 "And losses & crosses
 "Near at your halbanca
 keep you from falling, guide & direct
 you through all the thorny ways of this
 life & bring you to that Heaven of rest at last
 is the sincere wish of your aff. Brother
 letter & sign it - D.W.S.
 David M. Calloway

Please address to me Robin P. W. Mangrove Co. & also please date your

00250

Buffalo 21st Dec^r 1860

My Dearest Brother John We received
 your long lookt-for letter three days ago
 & were very happy in particular to know
 that you enjoy good health. You de-
 -voutly desire" me to write you a letter,
 but John "what under the Sun" can
 I write you about; I can fully appre-
 -ciate your desire, for I remember well
 when first I left my Father's House
 & Father Land how I longed & pined
 for news from old home; & although my
 longings were poorly satisfied, for the
 old hackneyed apology with every let-
 -ter of nothing new to write about; still
 met my eye, & I wondered & was astonished
 how so much could be written & so little
 said, for myself I felt something like
 old Job's comforter, "full of matter" &
 could write a perfect streak; but my dear
 I trust you are about as verdant now; as
 I was then; tickled with every new thing

As you say in your letter "seeming all a dream" Th. (my boy) the hard, stern reality of living in this cold, cruel & selfish world, I have now experienced, I have long ago awaked.

You say that you "swear you are happy". John! hear me! I AM happy with my Sarah & Anna & George & you would say so if you saw me with a little one on each knee cozily toasting by the warm fire while the "Gaid wife (with her needle & shears) gars auld claes look amiest as well as new". While this picture of happiness is before you John, it seems to me a fit place to explain a little that awful word "Grumbling" alias "Discontented." "Discontented" alias "Grumbling" you have heard so much about these few years back & I believe in Sarah's last note to you; John you have good reason to believe me a "hard case" that is if you believe all you hear; Well if shewing & stating things as they are in their true light be grumbling; I have grumbled & (hope if called upon) will Grumble,

* Ruens

if regretting that I have not now as soon some time for leisure & reflection & social friendly intercourse with kindred spirits be discontent I am discontented & hope will continue to be; John if being contented to (Grub) with my nose in the dirt from day light to dark from January to January be the very acme of spiritual perfection and Christian contentment then truly I am void of understanding. there is indeed no soundness within me. Appropos to this, while cutting stove wood this afternoon & being tired pounding at these old twisted, knarled, knotty, thrawny, crook, contre, ugly sticks, I sat down a few minutes, my eyes instinctively turned towards Mr. Dr. Chien to John & his contrivances; & I thought you would be a philanthropist in the highest sense of the word if you could invent some kind of a Battering Ram to split wood; you would indeed bestow a priceless boon on the present & after generations but more especially on your humble servant

Yours
Dave