



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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1872-12-30

Letter from [John Muir] to [Kate N. Daggett?], 1872 Dec 30.

John Muir

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When my eyes were quenched just at the Spring-dawn  
of summer, when the voice of the bluebird began to appear  
I mingled with the first flower-wards of Eugenia &  
Anemone - but though in that terrible darkness I  
died to light, I lived again & God who is light  
has led me tenderly from light to light to the  
Shoreless ocean of rayless beamless Spirit-light that  
bathes these holy mountains

Light  
717

Light  
717

Yosemite Valley  
Dec 30<sup>th</sup> 1872

I have just this  
minute for the first-time lighted  
your elegant lamp & I send you  
again most cordial thanks for  
so precious a gift

This is the first St Germain  
lamp I have seen & it is certainly  
the most beautiful of all Light  
Fountains, its forms have been  
composed by a true artist - its  
many curves blend into song with  
scarcely a discordant tone - the trill  
around the base of the chimney  
is all that my eye-ear, desires.

The massive finely moulded  
foundation glows like an ice-polished  
dome, & the grateful green of the  
shade is like that of high glacier  
lakes

If among the multitude of

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articles that now enter a human home there be one that deserves to be crowned with beauty above

~~... ..~~ of Light, the poet is the only workman capable of making a candlestick. It is delightful to observe how steadily Godborn beauty is flowing into all the handiwork of man. Nature is insinuating herself into every pore of humanity & it is oozing out in forms that are constantly becoming less & less impure, & those forms of purer & more direct Godfulness are coming not only from the study cells of the painter & architect & art-poets in general recognized as such, but they are flowing from the workshop - from the foundry & the forge,

I know little of men, seeing them only afar off & in the lump, but standing

as I now do on the mountain side & contemplating the various hues of industry among civilizations old & new, all looming on my vision, dim in the great sea-divided distances, I have this one big well defined faith for humanity as a workman, that the time is coming when every "article of manufacture" will be as purely a work of God as are these mountains & pine trees & homie loving flowers —

I only meant to say you another warm thank-you, but the fresh dewy beauty of your sunrise lamp conjured & loosened these thoughts & sent them down to my page, as rain & frost loosen & send down trains of rattling rounwangled rocks to Yosemite meadows

I suppose our dear Mrs. Carr has told you of the eclipse in my life, years ago

To Mrs. Kate N. Daggett

Yosemite Valley,  
Dec. 30th, 1872.

[Salutation has been cut from the letter, on the back it is marked  
"to Mrs. Daggett," but these words are crossed out in pencil marks]  
[Salutation torn off]:

I have just this minute for the first time lighted your elegant lamp, and I send you again most cordial thanks for so precious a gift.

This is the first St. Germain lamp I have seen, and it is certainly the most beautiful of all light fountains. Its forms have been composed by a true artist. Its many curves blend into song with scarce a discordant tone. The trill around the base of the chimney is all that my eye-ear dislikes.

The massive finely moulded foundation glows like an ice-polished dome, and the grateful green of the shade is like that of high glacier lakes.

If among the multitude of articles that now enter a human home there be one that deserves to be crowned with beauty above *everything else* [line cut here where name on opposite side cut]

*it is the fountain*  
of light. The poet is the only workman capable of making a candlestick. It is delightful to observe how steadily God-born beauty is flowing into all the handiwork of man. Nature is insinuating herself into every pore of humanity, and it is oozing out in forms that are constantly becoming less and less impure, and those forms of purer and more direct Godfulness are coming not only from the study cells of the painter and architect and art poets in general recognized as such, but they are flowing from the workshop — from the foundry and the forge.

I know little of men, seeing them only afar off and in the lump, but standing as I now do on the mountain-side and contemplating the various hives of industry among civilizations old and new, all looming on my vision, dim in the great sea-divided distances, I have this one big, well-defined faith for humanity as a workman, that the time is coming when every "article of manufacture" will be as purely a work of God as are these mountains and pine trees and bonnie loving flowers.

I only meant to say you another warm thank-you, but the fresh dewy beauty of your sunrise lamp conjured and loosened these thoughts and sent them down to my page, as rain and frost loosen and send down trains of rattling rough-angled rocks to Yosemite meadows.

I suppose our dear Mrs. Carr has told you of the eclipse in my life, years ago when my eyes were quenched just at the spring-dawn of summer when the voice of the bluebird began to appear mingled with the first flower-words of Erigenia and Anemone. But though in that terrible darkness I died to light, I lived again, and God who is Light has led me tenderly from light to light to the shoreless ocean of rayless beamless Spirit Light that bathes these holy mountains.

[JOHN MUIR]