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1873-03-23

**Letter from Abba G. Woolson to John Muir, 1873 Mar 23.**

Abba G. Woolson

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And, you will <sup>not</sup> be left to their  
Companionship long. A few weeks  
will bring to your haunts the usual  
number of travellers resolved upon  
"doing" the Valley; and before their stupid  
eyes Nevada will fling down her  
laces, and in their stupid ears  
Go Sumner will raise her thunder, and  
the Herald will print her wavering,  
luminous rainbows at their feet.  
But, - though they shall tread in the  
Chamber of the gods, the gods shall keep  
the full glories of their minor courts sacred  
from their gaze.

Let us know what further books  
we can send you; and whenever you  
are too prodigal to write fine rhapsodies  
for the papers indicate us a few lines to  
let us know how it fares with you.

Very Truly Your Friend.

Abba E. Tolson.

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Boston. To Chas. Sumner.  
Nov. 23. 1843.

Dear Mr. Sumner,

Although you have not  
deigned to take any notice of a long  
letter which I despatched to you last Fall,  
I am disposed to be magnanimous and  
forgiving toward one who has so many  
noble and engrossing objects to occupy  
his thoughts. I am sure that if I were  
to abide under the shadow of El Capitan,  
with the South Sea and Go Sumner Fall  
before my eyes, all sounds from the outer  
world which might creep over the rocky barrier  
that enclosed me would seem too far-away and  
feeble to demand any immediate attention.  
It is thus that I explain your silence;  
and so long as you will write to the world  
at large such reproaching letters as that we  
read the other evening in our own "Boston  
Transcript" I will postpone any private  
and individual claims which I might bear,  
and be content with my share of the general  
communication.

That letter made me <sup>22</sup> homesick for  
the Yosemite. I do so hate these dull  
dingy streets, where the sky is almost  
invisible to us, and I should <sup>gladly</sup>  
the wonder of those far-off, marvelous  
valleys, that I submit with little  
patience to the lot which keeps me here,  
without hope of a change. When my  
friends ask me, as they constantly do,  
if I am not going to Europe one of these  
days, I answer, "Not until I have seen  
the Yosemite again."

I am sorry you are to read my little  
book, because you can never understand  
why it should be written; and such  
things as social reforms seem to you  
needless botherations. But it is one thing  
to live in a happy wilderness, and another  
to live amid a struggling, suffering  
community of human beings, one half of  
whom oppress the other half because they  
are too stupid to know that it is oppression.  
In this day book I have said my say  
in favor of woman; and whether the world  
heeds or not, I feel the better for it.  
But though nature and not man makes

your world, and you can <sup>33</sup> live almost inde-  
pendent of human institutions, I do not  
forget that you told me once that I had  
convinced you of the right of woman-suffrage.  
I still claim you as a convert.

One of these days, I hope grace will  
be given me to say something of the  
Valley, but I have always shrunk  
from it. Not a line have I written  
concerning it yet, but not an impression  
of its particular beauties has faded from  
my mind. I do purpose, however, to  
embody my impressions of it in some  
articles soon.

I shall send you at once the other  
book of Shoran's which I promised  
so long ago. The "Excursions," I mean.  
I dared not send it until Spring, lest  
it be delayed and lost somewhere in  
the winter "waits" upon the way.

We have heard from Mr. Libbey  
of your visit to San Francisco. No  
doubt, you felt there like an exile  
from a better land, and were glad to  
return to your friends the bear and the  
eagle.