



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1885-06-08

Letter from Helen [Hunt] Jackson to John Muir, 1885 Jun 8.

Helen Hunt Jackson

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[June 9, 1885]

My dear Mr. Muir,

I want
some help from you.

I have been terribly ill
for four months - severe ma-
larial poisoning contracted in
Los Angeles.

The doctors say that in six
weeks I may be strong enough
to be laid on a bed in a
wagon, and drawn about.

I know, with the certainty
of instinct, that nothing except
three months out of doors night
& day, will get this poison
out of my veins.

I want to get where it
is cool, and moist, and
among trees.

I cannot endure heat.
I cannot bear a high alti-
tude - nothing over 4000 ft.

The best I can bear of,
is to be taken by train to
the Sierra foothills - say the
Dutchman's Flat region, and
work up towards Truckee.

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Can you suggest anything better? or more?

I want to keep moving. I cannot go away from Wells & Fairport!

I must have even more than comfortable fare.

I have the fortune to know an old guide & camper who will conduct my train, & has made estimates for me.

I must have eight horses, - four vehicles -

an ambulance for me in bed - two camp wagons, for tents &c - a comfortable phaeton buggy. - Four servants - myself, maid, & doctor. -

Now do you know any good itinerary for such a cumbersome caravan as this?

How you would score such lumbering methods!

I am too ill to risk any other. I shall do this, as a gamester throws his last card!

I have always hoped I should see you. I believe

I know every word you have written. I never wished myself a man but once - that was when I was ~~at~~ ^{born} in Sweden, to be rooked in the top of a pine tree in a gale.
Myra truly Helen Jackson

San Francisco
1600 Taylor St
June 8. 1886-

1600 Taylor St.,
San Francisco, June 8, 1885.

My dear Mr. Muir,

I want some help from you. I have been terribly ill for four months, severe malarial poisoning contracted in Los Angeles.

The doctors say that in six weeks I may be strong enough to be laid on a bed in a wagon and drawn about. I know, with the certainty of instinct, that nothing except three months out of doors night and day will get this poison out of my veins. I want to get where it is cool, and moist, and among trees. I cannot endure heat. I cannot bear a high altitude -- nothing over 4000 feet. The best I can hear of is to be taken by train to the Sierra foothills, say the Dutchman's Flat region, and work up towards Truckee. Can you suggest anything better? or more? I want to keep moving. I cannot go away from Wells Fargo posts. I must have even more than comfortable fare.

I have the fortune to know an old guide and camper who will conduct my train and has made estimates for me. I must have eight horses, four vehicles -- an ambulance for me in bed, two camp wagons for tents, and a comfortable phaeton buggy -- four servants, myself, maid, and doctor.

Now do you know any good itinerary for such a cumbersome caravan as this? How you would scorn such lumbering methods! I am too ill to wish any other. I shall do this as a gamester || throws his last card!

I have always hoped I should see you. I believe I know every word you have written. I never wished myself a man but once -- that was when I read how it seemed, to be rocked in the top of a pine tree in a gale.

Yours truly,

Helen Jackson.