



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1897-04-06

Letter from C. S. Sargent to John Muir, 1897 Apr 6.

Charles Sprague Sargent

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ARNOLD ARBORETUM,
HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

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Jamaica Plain, Mass.,.....April 6,.....1897.

My dear Muir:

I am glad to get your note of the 29th and enclosures. We have been summoned to Washington again and things look as badly as possible. The President's intention now is to suspend some of the Reserves, especially those where big corporations want to continue to steal timber, and, what is still worse, it is proposed to pass a general forestry bill giving the Secretary of the Interior extraordinary powers to open reservations for all sorts of purposes but providing no machinery for it to protect them. This means, of course, that the western people, getting by this law all they want, will never consent to establish a forest service which will interfere in the smallest degree with their liberties. General Abbot and I urged this to the extent of our ability both to the President and the Secretary of the Interior, but the matter had all been arranged before we got there and Hague, Brewer and Pinchot, declared that the passage of such a bill would be an immense advantage and that it ought to be done. Hague, I fancy, has been working against us more or less from the start. He generally carries Pinchot with him, and in this case Brewer seems to have lost his head. The General and I left Washington utterly discouraged and I cannot see today any salvation in the situation.

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Of course this is all for your own eyes only and not to be talked about until we hear from Washington what they are really going to do. I think I made some impression perhaps on the President, but Bliss is one of those machine trading politicians who knows nothing outside his dry goods' store. He has been convinced too by the Geological Survey, who expect to get the appropriation for surveys out of this bill, that he is doing just the right thing. It would be a great comfort to me if I could see you for five minutes and tell you just how I feel.

Faithfully yours,

C. S. Sargent

John Muir, Esq.
Martinez, Cal.

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