



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1897-06-08

Letter from C[harles] S[prague] Sargent to John Muir, 1897 Jun 8.

Charles Sprague Sargent

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ARNOLD ARBORETUM,
HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

Jamaica Plain, Mass., June 8, 1897.

My dear Muir:

I am much obliged for your note of May 31st with information about *Pinus Sabiniana*.

I have read your article in Harper's Weekly with a great deal of pleasure. It is admirable and it ought to have been published a month earlier, although I do not know if anything would have changed the course of events. I feel pretty blue about the outlook in which I cannot see a single redeeming feature. I cannot divest myself of the idea that the director of the Geological Survey induced Bliss to hold back our report until the time when it might have done any good had passed. I am strengthened in this belief by the fact that Hague threw every obstacle in the way ^{of} ~~against~~ the appearance of the report when it did, and nothing but vigorous talk induced him to sign it on the 1st of May. The director of the Survey has been boasting that he and Hague would get the entire control of the reservations and run them to suit themselves. What this may mean I do not know. The mere opening of the reservations for plunder another year is bad enough but this is insignificant, I think, in comparison with the authority now given to the Secretary to open all the reservations under such regulations as he may establish, as this means that any chance for a good administration in the future is destroyed. The plunderers having got all they

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they want, will never consent to be hampered in their operations. This I repeated over and over again to the Secretary of the Interior, the President, and all the members of the Commission; none of them, however, except Abbot, have been able to see the point of my argument. Well, all I can say is that if the forests have gone, I had a good trip with you, and in making the acquaintance and securing the friendship of General Abbot have made a real addition to my life. I have extended, too, my knowledge of fools, although I do not know if that was necessary.

I have polished off Muggins and your ponderous friend I hope to your satisfaction and now am beginning to think again about that Spruce business. I want to leave here late in July, or about the 1st of August, and meet you on the line of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in British Columbia to have another look at these trees and then go on to the coast and, if possible, make a short trip to Alaska with you, getting back sometime before the 1st of October. I do not want to go to Alaska without you, or even to British Columbia, in fact I do not want to look at any western trees anywhere unless I do so in your company, and I ought to take another look at them before The Silva is finally completed. Now are you prepared to sacrifice yourself on the altar of friendship and take another six weeks' run with me? I am still pretty lame but with caution can get about in reasonable places. I hope you won't tell me that you have made other plans.

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I much need for my book fresh flowers of *Abies magnifica* of both sorts, that is ^{from trees} with included and exserted cone-bracts. I have written to every one I know on the subject but the outlook for getting them this spring is not very promising. Do you know any one in the mountains who could gather and send them to me? I very much need them this spring and, curiously enough, they do not exist in any herbarium to which I have access.

There appear to be a great many people in the east who want to see and know you. Are you ever coming this way again?

Faithfully yours,

C. J. Sargent.

John Muir, Esq.
Martinez, Cal.

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