



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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1904-06-03

**Letter from Geo[rge] Hansen to [John Muir], 1904 Jun 3.**

George Hansen

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GEO. HANSEN  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT  
2705 HEARST AVENUE, BERKELEY, CAL.

ADVISORY ARCHITECT TO PARK COMMISSIONS,  
MUNICIPALITIES AND CEMETERY ASSOCIATIONS

Whenever you do come  
eat off of our table

June 3d., 1904.

Friend of our Home,

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Thus ran my lesson for the day that I had just finished upon the veranda under the shade of a few belated Vistaria flowers and vines. I came in figuring yet how much housecleaning there was to do, when I got a full and fair glimpse of the Goodness of the Almighty in the letter that you sent to this roof. We are not worthy of a continuation of such, but while yet under the dew of the eyes we send our souls' inspired greeting. How easy it is for some other one to hurt us to the quick with even a small offering and you, you who never saw us, you can spread your open hand and shower over us, you who never saw a glimpse of any of us, and we bow under such weight in meekness. The biggest dish on our burdened table is "not meat alone", and as the manna always reaches to lip and heart, we shall add your "Gold of Ophir" to the boys fund (that - according to his wish - someday - shall furnish him either a college education or a trip like your ~~last~~ <sup>last</sup> stone.) together with the coin that a good friend slipped "for good luck" into the pocket of his first pair of pants.

I thank you for the good word of your daughter that had special warmth for the brave wife. Her example is the vision that leads me to follow the Star in the East, her words are the breeze that keep me awake, her silence the depth that I build my ~~faith~~ <sup>faith</sup> on. There was a time when I, as boy, disgruntledly eyed the new suit and neckties that Santa Claus brought. "I would have had to have that anyhow" was the nasty youngster's idea. But when the mother came home from down-town the other day with a coconut for the boy, and a bundle of two new shirts, a cake of Pears' unscented soap and a pineapple for the old man: I wetted her hard hands with the crystal fluid of adoration. For had not this purchase been made with savings from the paltry rent? And is not this woman actually

puttying over the vacation with what coin she must have dined away for months? Is not this rent all and every bit of what she covers the expense of the entire household with, even light, fire and telephone and daily papers? This very morning she unpinned the stretched curtains "for the last time". "Linda, I said, isn't that a pair we still had at the Station?" Yes, she answered smiling, That were our best, they are almost 15 years old. It took her about three quarters of an hour last night to mend ere she wetted them, but this morning they are "as good as new". And if her soul had clefts like a Grand Canyon - God you Christ would look at the threads she put in last night and say to her "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise". In the fifteen years of our wedlock, it is only the last few months that every now and then she has not found the time to change her dress in the afternoons. But, as Mrs. Moody says, she looks a queen in her plainest garb.

I had put away the coin that I took in for the first book of mine that I sold. till a worthy opportunity should arrive to apply such. It has come. When but a tot. I was sent to an aunt to stay for a while (rather than had left us) and there I saw the first "mountains" and a red cow, and these had bells on. I sent the coin to the postmaster and asked him to buy me one of those bells. It shall be the bell of "Faith" in my chimes. The others, "Love" shall be the one off the old cow I used to milk when setting up housekeeping, and Charity is the one sent by our good neighbors, the Moodys, on their trip thru Europe, when they bought it off a goat's neck while at Chamounix. The six chimes hang in my "chapel" in a big plant, and when Roland rings the bell for me, I shall see the glory of Zion in the evening sky.

For now one year I have slowly and steadily improved. And when in throes of despair, I say the loudest: I am going to be well.

In the last number of "Sunset" they give the tunes of the meadowlark. They forgot to put the words with it. I learned them this spring, and you know them too: "God gave me a song to sing" - (The call of the quail)

I heard only once in the U.C. grounds this year; too many stray cats. And the biggest change in Berkeley? Do you care to mournfully know about it with me? - The retailed hawk came to look at their brooding ground of last year, but they refused to nest. And so, too, have the dear owls left for good. There is too much memorial building going on.

"Joy is the grace we say to God". You added a smiling field of it to our devotion. It extends from here "Contra Costa".

*Very truly yours,*  
 Robert L. ...