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Letter from John Muir to [A. H., Fay and Frank ?] Sellers, 1904 Jun 16.

John Muir

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Martinez, California  
June 16<sup>th</sup> 1904.

Dear Father & Mother.

I got home safe & sound  
rich & heavy laden with notes,  
specimens, photographs &  
nerve pictures every cell  
of me full & tingling joy-  
fully triumphant, Russian  
tea, hard wanderings, starvation,  
& deadly microbes to the contrary  
notwithstanding - & found  
all well & prosperous after  
being away more than a  
year. I arrived at San Francisco  
on the 27<sup>th</sup> of last month, & a few  
days after reaching home Keith  
& my two girls made me go  
wandering again along the  
Grand Canyon & through the  
Petrified forests of Arizona.  
So I may say I am just  
home now. The slightest  
sketch of the big trip would be  
a long story - too long for letter

The Ural Mountains as far  
I saw them are low & broad  
& densely forested, mostly with  
Pines sylvestris. The Siberian  
road runs through one continuous  
bed of fertile soil open grass  
or lightly covered with hills  
& patches of birch trees 30 or 40  
feet high. Magnificent pine  
& larch forests about Tomsk &  
Irkutsk. A wonderful lake is  
Baikal 400 miles long, 5000 feet  
deep at South end though only  
1500 ft above the sea, & bounded  
by granite bluffs. Manchuria  
is a beautiful country, richly  
forested mountains & low hills,  
alternating with charming  
open fertile sunny valleys &  
broad level plains to Southward.  
The lands along the Amour  
also fertile & forested with oak  
ash, lilia, maple, pine, fir, & spruce  
larch etc. Was three times at  
Vladivostok before getting away  
on little Japanese steamer to Nagasaki  
touching at fine Korean ports on the way.

Leaving Vladivostok could hardly  
walk, was poisoned with pitomine  
grab in the Crimea, & again in  
Manchuria but managed to keep  
eyes open & mind erect most of  
time being hard to kill or hold  
down though weighing only about  
115 pounds. On the sea soon got  
well & weighed more than ever  
in the last ten years. At Shanghai  
left my companions, Prof Sargent  
& his son Robinson, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Sep.  
They returning home soon after  
visiting Peking, while I bought a  
map of the world & set out alone  
on a genuine wholehearted  
enthusiastic trip. & how far I  
wandered & roamed. I worked &  
gazed & enjoyed & was happy!

From Shanghai I went to India by  
Hong Kong, Singapore & Rangoon to  
Calcutta - thence into the Himalaya  
by Darjeeling, - thence back to Calcutta  
& thence to Benares, Lucknow, Cawnpore,  
Agra, Delhi, & into the Himalaya  
again by Simla, thence to Bombay,  
Egypt & up the Nile etc. Was unable  
to reach the Cedars of Lebanon on

account of cholera. From Port Said  
went to Ceylon, & thence away  
down on the south end of the  
world to Australia & New  
Zealand - thence by way of Port  
Darwin & Timor through the  
Malay Archipelago to Manila  
- to Hong Kong again, Canton  
Shanghai, Nagasaki, Kobe,  
Yokohama, Tokio, & home  
by Honolulu.

Had glorious time in India - the  
highest Himalaya peaks, glaciers,  
deodar forests, great Banian trees,  
Temples, 2 rivers <sup>change</sup> to <sup>of</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>valley</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>Indus</sup>, wild  
monkeys etc. Found Old Egypt  
interesting also. - its long green  
palms valley between brown deserts,  
marvellous towns, temples & monuments  
of the long yore of humanity opening  
telling views into history & making the  
dead live again. Had perfectly glorious  
revising times in Australia & New  
Zealand. Their flora are so novel &  
exciting I had to begin my botanical  
studies over again, made big piles of  
specimens, working night & day counting  
all labor as nothing. How long this letter  
& little in it definite. Goodbye ever yours  
John Muir