



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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Letter from C[harles] S[prague] Sargent to John Muir, 1904 Jun 16.

Charles Sprague Sargent

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Jamaica Plain, Mass., June 16, 1904.

My dear Muir:

I am delighted to learn that you are safely back in Martinez. I have often felt anxious about you since we parted, but you have certainly made good your boast that you knew how to take care of yourself and could not be lost. It is very good news indeed that you are in such fine condition and have seen so many interesting things, and I only wish I had seen half of them.

After we separated in Shanghai Robeson and I embarked on a Chinese steamer for Pekin. One of the European officers had a bad case of cholera on board and this demoralized us a good deal, but so far as we were concerned nothing came of it. I enjoyed Pekin very much and saw a few most interesting trees there, beautiful temples, a lot of dirt, etc., etc. From Pekin we returned to Shanghai and then went by steamer to Singapore. Leaving Shanghai I was taken down with an attack of the dingesfever which made me uncomfortable and kept me in my stateroom for eight days, among other things depriving me of the opportunity of going to Canton. We staid a few days at Singapore and then went to Java where we were a couple of weeks, far too short a time to do anything more than see the Gardens which, although less beautiful than the ones at Singapore, are older, far richer, better equipped and more interesting.

From Java we returned to Singapore, then to Hongkong where I had a ^{couple} ~~number~~ of capital days botanizing all over the island, then back to Shanghai to pick up our various belongings, then by the

way of Japan and Honolulu to San Francisco and home over the Atchison & Topeka, getting at Martinez a view of your house and the big ^{date} ~~Tree~~ Palm growing up against it.

We got a good deal of material at Pekin and in the south, and I was busy for a long time after I got home in arranging this. Since then I have been hard at work on a Manual of North American Trees, this being a one-volume edition of The Silva. I find the boiling-down process most tiresome and stupid, and I shall be glad when it is off my hands which won't be, however, until late in the autumn. If it hadn't been for this I would have gone back to Pekin this summer to get plants and seeds which I did not have time to get last year; and then from Pekin have gone to Manila which I very much want to see. This is one journey. Then I must go to Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon, India, etc., before I get through traveling.

That Spruce-tree which we saw in eastern Manchuria appears to be an undescribed species. Fortunately the seeds we got were ripe enough to germinate and I have a good crop of seedlings. The plum we bought at the railway station is probably also an undescribed species. I do not think, however, that we got hold of anything else very new, although I have been able to get from Pekin since I got back some plants I have been trying to get for the last twenty years.

What are you going to do now--write a book about your travels or come east and pay us a visit, or start off again for some of the places you haven't seen, like South America, and South Africa? If you feel as restless as I have since I got home you

won't stay long in Martinez. Let me hear about your plans.

Faithfully yours,

C. S. Sargent

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