



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1901-09-27

Letter from John Muir to [Alice] Sargent, 1901 Sep 27 [8].

John Muir

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[First draft of letter, in note-book #59]

(5)

[Miss Alice Sargent]

Martinez, Sep. 27⁽²⁸⁾ [1901].

My dear Miss Sargent:

I received a letter from your father a few days ago with the good news that you would be in California with Mrs. Thayer about the 1st of next month, and asking me to advise you as to places and things you should see. As to the city there is not much to see - hardly more than in Boston,--the Park with a good many interesting bushes gathered from everywhere, something like your Arboretum, and the Cliff House, and other odds and ends. I don't know the way to these places, but my daughter Wanda does. Then there are the Santa Cruz redwoods and Mt. Tamalpais, no sae bad, as the Scotch say, and within easy reach of the city. If you would like to visit these places we could plan for trips to them on Saturdays when Wanda, who is at the University in Berkeley, would go with us [as] guide, and perhaps we could get Miss Eastman. You would be a true Alice in wonderland. But if after Convention work is over you can go to the mountains, I'm your man. There I have a thousand glorious things awaiting you - the sugar pines and silver firs of the Sierra, the giant forests of the Kaweah, Yosemite valleys, glaciers, glacier meadows, glacier lakes, rejoicing streams, clear as the River of life, in glorious array, and new-born landscapes of sublime glacial architecture, glowing with life, bathed in divine light, a' that and a' that and twice as muckle 's that.

Write and tell me how much time you have for excursions, and when it will be convenient for you to see me. Any time from 9:30 to 3 o'clock will suit me. Why not make our house your headquarters instead of a city hotel? You could reach the city by the Santa Fe from M[uir] Station every morning shortly after 9 o'clock or 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and return by 6 P.M. by a train which leaves the city at 4:20. The Palace Hotel always seems to me a dreadful place where multitudes of all sorts of people chafe and grind against one another like boulders in a pot-hole on the mountains when the snow is melting. Anyhow, write and tell me about the time you have and how I can help to make your visit a happy one, or come up. Telegraph the train.

Faithfully yours,

[John Muir]

I'll meet you at Muir Station. The grapes are ripe, and my wife and girls will be glad to see you.

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[First draft of letter, in note-book #59]

(4)

[Martinez, Sep. 27, 1901]

My dear Prof. Sargent:

I'm glad to hear from you once more, and to learn that Alice is coming. Tell her to send me word when she arrives. Wish you were coming too. Our letters must have passed each other, as they often do, for I wrote you a week or more ago.

I'm at work on an index for the park book, and find it quite a job.

The LL. D. is all right, and so is your picture in the "World's Work," though one might say it is almost ridiculously like you. Please send me a photo for my work room.

You are welcome to the use of as much as you like of my Seq[uaia] article, but you should get consent of the "Atlantic."

I spent 2 or 3 days this spring among the Big Basin redwoods, a magnificent park, easy of access. But friends of the noble tree should strive together to purchase a much larger block in the heart of the belt for a national park.

No end to variety in form of roots. Have no particular photos of roots. Only small portion of roots upturned to view. They spread far and wide. An entire root system brought to light would be a wonderful spectacle. Have written no separate article on the subject. What little I know of the subterranean forests is scattered through my writings. You will find exceedingly interesting and instructive notes and observations on plant roots in the works of Darwin.

Many thanks for "Into the Light." I have read it through three times with growing pleasure. The divine calm of God's forests is in it all through, and the thoughts the serene wisdom that naturally grows beneath them. Choosing the foot of an ancient pine tree for your pulpit and a representative, eager, youthful, questioning human soul for your audience is a happy plan. When I try to choose the verses I like best I find them so united, the thought flowing on so stream-like, I am unable to choose. Only those accustomed to sit beneath trees and leaf thoughtfully will appreciate the poem - to such it sounds as natural as the wind in the branches. How particularly suggestive is

[Letter breaks off here]

[John Muir]

[Date supplied from following letter in series - to Miss (Alice) Sargent]