



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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1902-09-20

**Letter from Geo[rge] Hansen to [John Muir], 1902 Sep 20.**

George Hansen

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ADVISORY ARCHITECT TO PARK COMMISSIONS,  
MUNICIPALITIES AND CEMETERY ASSOCIATIONS

Spt. 20th., 1902.

My dear Sir ,

What a beautiful thing to be alone just then when you ought to be, alone from ~~the~~ company of strangers, those that you do not feel like embracing and shedding your tears on their necks. But I wished for wife and babe when your letter, your message of sound and echo from hill-tops and valley banks came to me, this morning. But the mother is called away to cheer the old and very sick mother up home in Anador County, and the babe, of course, had to go along to shed sunshine and heaven's hope into the soul of the brave old pioneer that faced the plains in '50. So I was alone, as I had sent away to market the lady that takes care of my wants while alone. If only my legs were limber, I feel sure I would have sunk on my knees as I have not done since a boy. But I had to satisfy my overflowing heart in cries and sobs, and then feel stronger and more eager to work than ever. Cripple that I am, I could not dream of a <sup>man</sup> figure on the globe that could tempt me to change my lot. Not even you, wholesouled friend, a man so overwhelming in his frankness, in his naturalness as you, you protege of the sequoias. I have a wife as noble as the sugar-pines that she is born under, and a child, that is as I told you "just a California sapling". To win, ~~the~~ to deserve the care and tenderness of her and to guard and care for the growth of the latter: could a man seek more sacred duties? Since I walk on fours, I am like a child, I am closer to the ground, and I feel that I am stranger than when I walked "erect", and ~~did~~ was less conscious of the bottom that gave me life.

Do not let me write more today. It is only a few weeks since I am up from a sickbed, so weak that the good wife had to turn me to change my

aching bones. I have to write lots more today, and I will find some book-lets for you that no printers' hands ever shall turn into halftones. They are only for souls that are deep and still as mountain lakes and that defend themselves with crags and pinacles against civilization (so called). They will reach you when I can get them out, and I trust I will be able to get them to you a week hence, when they - forgive my thought - may be to you what your messages were to me : my sermon for tomorrow.

Don't you feel like I do, that the passing of pain taints, or at least affects our most noble deeds?

How glad I am that we made such lucky investment when, twelve years ago, we invested in lots for a home where no structure can take the view from us as the eye sweeps from Goat Island to San Rafael, and wide out into the Seven Seas. That is medicine for sick and well alike.

I wish for the day that I can see face to face the man whom our child will love. If fate decides different, make free to pat on the back the young sapling who may tramp ~~over~~ "Contra Costa" some day when he grows up.

Messages like yours smell of the woods and discount drugs,

Sincerely yours

