



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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1902-12-09

**Letter from C[harles] S[prague] Sargent to John Muir, 1902 Dec 9.**

Charles Sprague Sargent

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*Jamaica Plain, Mass.*, December 9, 1902.

My dear Muir:

I suppose you are hibernating again and have no time or energy for letters. I daresay you will reply to this that you wrote the last letter which has passed between us. This is perfectly true but then as you are a gentleman of elegant leisure and I am a slave to Crataegus your excuses will hardly be acceptable.

What are you about and how are you getting on, and have you made up your mind to go with me next year? To ask this question is really the principal reason for writing this letter. My idea now is to get off toward the end of May and if you are going you ought to be here by the 15th. We ought to reach Pekin by the middle of September, stay in China a few weeks, go to Java and get back to the United States by Christmas. Of course all this is still very vague, but it certainly looks now as if I could manage the journey. Of course I want your company. Let me know soon what you will do.

You will get this letter a little before Christmas but nevertheless it carries to you Christmas Greetings and all good wishes for the New Year to you and yours.

Always faithfully yours,

John Muir, Esq.  
Martinez, Cal.

*C. S. Sargent.*

What am I doing? <sup>trying to write</sup> a review of the Silva have been doing little else <sup>except to say for</sup> the last 2 or 3 <sup>& the thing is not yet finished after</sup> weeks, practically <sup>disastrous</sup> the better part of this good new century winter. On my own book I have <sup>made a beginning</sup> the best of all three days going to the reviews <sup>this evening</sup> I don't regret it. <sup>according to my</sup> ~~work~~ for the work has been <sup>delightful</sup> ~~own~~ heart, recalling our delightful trips & leading me again & again to our noble trees over all the continent. The main job I found is to keep the thing within bounds. I don't want any thing like an adequate idea of the book as a whole. I asked Perry how big an article he could <sup>manage</sup> or could we but to this part of my letter he made no reply. I have already thrown away 1/2 of what I have written & fear will perhaps throw away the other half or more of it. I don't have any other book I should have let him see (another review such work is out of my line anyway. With his labor & perhaps in his time I think I could have written a readable

[Rough draft of letter on back of Sargent's letter of Dec. 9, 1902]

[Martinez, Dec. 1902].

[To C. S. Sargent]:

What am I doing? trying to write a review of the Silva - have been doing little else, sooth to say, for the last 2 or 3 months, and the thing is not yet finished, after devastating the better half of this good new century winter. On my own book I have scarce made a beginning, the best of all these days going to the review. This honor I don't regret, for the work has been according to my own heart, recalling our delightful trips and leading me again and again to our noble trees over all the Continent. The main difficulty, I find, is to keep the thing within bounds, while giving anything like an adequate idea of the book as a whole. I asked [Bliss] Perry how big an article he wanted, or could use, but to this part of my letter he made no reply. I have already thrown away half of what I have written and will, perhaps, throw away the other half, or most of it. Had it been any other book I should have let him seek some other reviewer. Such work is out of my line anyhow. With less labor, and perhaps in less time, I think I could have written a readable article on each of the 14 volumes.

[John Muir]