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1875 July 31 JM to Mrs Carr p1

John Muir

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BLACK'S HOTEL,
A. G. BLACK, Proprietor.

Yosemite, Cal., July 31st 1873

Dear Mrs Can -

I have just arrived
from our long excursion to Mt Whitney
all hale & happy, & find your
weary, plodding letter, containing
things that from this rocky
stand point seem strangely
mixed - things celestial & terrestrial,
cultivated & wild -

Your letters set one a thinking
& yet somehow they never
seem to make those problems
of life clear, & I always feel
glad that they do not form any
part of my work, but that
my lessons are simple rocks
& waters & plants & humble beasts,
all pure & in their places, the Man
beast with all his complications

being laid upon stranger shoulders,
I did not bring you down any
Sedum roots or Cassiope spray,
because I had not then read
your letter, not that I forgot
you as I passed the blessed
Sierra heathers, or the primulas,
or the pines laden with fragrant
nutty cones. But I am more
& more made to feel that my
gardens & herbariums & woods
are all in their places as they
grow, & I know them there,
& can find them when I will.
Yet I ought to carry their poor
dead or dying forms to those
who can have no better -

The valley is lovely, scarce
more than a whiff the worse
for the flower-crushing feet that
every summer brings -

The editorial party - are awful
wise, yet I find some fine &
good looking people among them -

I am not decided about my
summers, I want to go with the
Seymours a month or two into all
their homes from north to south,
learning what I can of their
conditions & prospects - their
age, stature - the area they
occupy etc. But John Swett
who is brother now, Papa then,
orders me home to looking -
Bless me what an awful
thing town duty is! I was once
free as any pine-playing wind,
& feel that I have still a good
length of line, but alack! there
seems to be a hook or two of
civilization in me that I would
fain pull out, yet would not
pull out - O-O-O,!!!.

I suppose you are weary
saying look, look, look,
& perhaps when you fear you
look in rocks & mossy deserts
I will with scotch perverseness

do all you ask & more -
All this letter is about myself
& why not when I'm the only
person in all the wide world
that I know anything about -
Keith the cascade not excepted.

I am your well mother quail,
good betide your brood -
& be they & you saved from
the hawks & the big ugly
buzzards & cormorants;
grange, political, right &
wrongical; & I will be
ever truly John Nemin
"Only that & nothing more"