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1878 Mar 28 JM to Mrs Bidwell p1

John Muir

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1419 Taylor St

S. F. March 28th 78

Dear Mrs Bidwell.

I have just returned from a weeks weathering at Lake Tahoe, where I have had a fine reviving roll in the snow, and swim in the crystal water, besides a good deal of fresh lusty exercise on snow shoes on the mountain aloses to the west of the lake, and between Tahoe City and Truckee.

The winter beauty of the woods and mountains is fairly enchanting, and it was seen under all kinds of light, from the full white glow of clear noonday sunshine to the gray darkness of cordial snowstorms. The the whole was deliciously exhilarating and I come back to this dull pen life fairlt awakened and sane.

As I was passing the junction on the return I looked north and Chicoward, terribly tempted to switch off for a week or so, but my conscience would not allow me, because I have so much of this never-ending pen work piling up against me, and summer is drawing nigh, when I must take the feild again. However I shall hope to make a wee visit sometime before the orchards are out of bloom, ar at anyrate before all the fossils are gleaned out of the Chico rocks.

Two weeks ago Prof Gunning and Mr Hinton one of the Editors of the S. F. Post paid me a long visit. I have never sought the Profs aquain-tance but he was determined to find me, declaring with lecture emphasis that there was no one in Cal. he was so eager to meet as Muir.

After weather and compliments came evolution, rather loose and uncertain in statement though evidently meant to be incontrovertible, and I took a kind of half praise-half blameworthy satisfaction in rolling blocks in his way. not that I would in anyway oppose the discovered truths of evolution for I embrace them most cordialy, but

it is terribly aggravating to hear one claiming the office of teacher discoursing so well and so heartlessly on the glorious creation, of God. After proceeding a while with increasing caution he at length fell to story-telling in which he was quite amusing.

Before the Evolution period of the evening he took occasion to speak slightly of a friend of mine, an old botanist who has worked lovingly and well in the wild gardens of God near half a century. This of course brought on a capital indulgence of opposition for me.

In your letter I would infer that the Prof claimed Ammonites Chicoensis as a discovery of his own. It was discovered and named many years ago, together with some twentyfive or thirty other cretaceous shells from the exposed beds on Chico Creek, a list of which you may find on page 210, vol. I. Cal: Geological Survey.

Had a letter from Gray two weeks ago in answer to mine containing notes on the Generals old favorite- Pin^{us} ponderosa.

Also a letter from your sister full of pleasant^a memories of our fine excursion.

Ever Cordially yours, John Muir.

Copied