



The Alaska Trip

John Muir

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John Muir (1838 – 1914) was a Scottish-American naturalist, author, environmental philosopher and early advocate of preservation of wilderness in the United States. His letters, essays, and books telling of his adventures in nature, especially in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California, have been read by millions.

The Alaska Trip," from the pen of John Muir, is a masterly description of the unrivalled scenery and rich resources of Alaska. He writes:

"To the lover of wildness Alaska offers a glorious field for either work or rest: landscape beauty in a thousand forms, things great and small, novel and familiar, as wild and pure as paradise. Wander where you may, wildness ever fresh and ever beautiful meets you in endless variety: ice-laden mountains, hundreds of miles of them peaked and pinnacled and crowded together like trees in groves, and so high and so divinely clad in clouds and air that they seem to belong more to heaven than to earth; inland plains grassy and flowery, dotted with groves and extending like seas all around to the rim of the sky; lakes and streams shining and singing, outspread in sheets of mazy embroidery in untraceable, measureless abundance, brightening every landscape, and keeping the ground fresh and fruitful forever; forests of evergreens growing close together like leaves of grass, girdling a thousand islands and mountains in glorious array; mountains that are monuments of the work of ice, mountains monuments of volcanic fires; gardens filled with the fairest flowers, giving their fragrance to every wandering wind; and far to the north thousands of miles of ocean ice, now wrapped in fog, now glowing in sunshine through nightless days, and again shining in wintry splendor beneath the beams of the aurora —sea, land, and sky one mass of white radiance like a star. Storms, too, are here as wild and sublime in size and scenery as the landscapes beneath them, displaying the glorious pomp of clouds on the march over mountain and plain, the flight of the snow when all the sky is in bloom, trailing rain-floods, and the booming plunge of avalanches and icebergs and rivers in their rocky glens; while multitudes of wild animals and wild people, clad in feathers and furs, fighting, loving, getting a living, make all the wildness wilder."

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