
Yosemite: Its Wonders and Its Beauties (1868) by John S. Hittell

Photographs by Eadweard J. Muybridge “Helios”

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Summary

Yosemite: Its Wonders and Its Beauties was an early guide book to Yosemite. Some claim this was the first Yosemite guide book. (I consider Hutching’s *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity* (1860) the first, as it has detailed directions and travel advice, was advertised as a guidebook, and latter editions had the subtitle *Tourist’s Guide Book*). Hittell’s book was not highly original (it quotes heavily from books and accounts by Josiah D. Whitney, Samuel Bowles, Horace Greeley, and Thomas Starr King). However, the book is interesting because it is the first Yosemite book with photographs. It has 20 original photographs by early Yosemite Photographer Eadweard Muybridge. These were albumen photographs tipped in by hand in every copy of the book. John Hittell commissioned Muybridge “. . . because no engravings could do justice to the scenes, or convey perfect confidence in the accuracy of the drawing of such immense elevations as those of Tutucanala and Tissayac.”

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Photographs by “Helios” (Eadweard J. Muybridge).

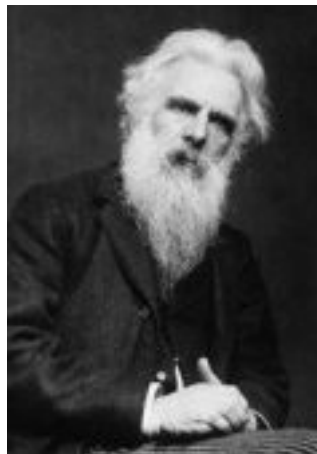
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About the Author



John S. Hittell wrote several books on California for H. H. Bancroft and Company, a major early California publisher. John Shertzer Hittell was born December 25, 1825 in Jonestown, Pennsylvania. His family moved to in Hamilton, Ohio in 1832. He graduated from Miami University in 1843, then studied law, but never completed his studies. He went to California in 1849 and worked as a miner in Shasta County. In 1853, Hittell moved to San Francisco and became the editor writer of the San Francisco *Daily Alta California* newspaper. John eventually wrote several books on California and religion. His most popular book at the time was *The Resources of California* (1879), where he eulogized California for its rich natural resources. He never married. John was an active member of the Society of California Pioneers. His brother Theodore H. Hittell was a prominent San Francisco lawyer. Theodore wrote *The Adventures of James Caspen Adams, Mountaineer and Grizzly Bear Hunter, of California* (1860), otherwise known as “Grizzly Adams” and his bear “Ben Franklin.” John Hittell died in March 8, 1901.

Photography: Eadweard J. Muybridge “Helios”



Eadweard J. Muybridge, born Edward James Muggerridge on April 9, 1830 in Kingston-upon-Thames, England. He changed his name because he believed it was the Anglo-Saxon original of his given name. Eadward began his career as an assistant to landscape photographer Carleton E. Watkins. Eadward started his career in 1867 with photos of Yosemite and San Francisco. Many of his Yosemite photographs reproduced the same scenes taken by Watkins. Muybridge quickly became famous for his landscape photographs, which showed the grandeur and expansiveness of the West. He published his photographs under the pseudonym “Helios” (Greek god of the sun). In 1874, Muybridge was tried for murdering his wife’s lover, but was acquitted as justifiable homicide. Muybridge thought his son was fathered by someone else and put in an orphanage. When his son grew up, he had a remarkable resemblance to Muybridge.

After Muybridge’s acquittal, he left the U.S. and photographed in Central America under the name Eduardo Santiago Muybridge. Muybridge returned to the U.S. from his self-exile in 1877. Eadward is most famous for his invention of high-speed photography. This was to settle a question by railroad baron and then Governor Leland Stanford, Jr. Stanford thought, correctly, that a galloping horse is sometimes completely in the air. This led to Muybridge’s invention in 1879 of the Zoopraxiscope, the predecessor of the motion picture camera. Eadward Muybridge died May 8, 1904 in Kingston-on-the-Thames.

—Dan Anderson, 2004

- Critique of Mr. Muybridge’s Yosemite photographs, by Helen Hunt Jackson in *Bits of Travel at Home* (1878).

Bibliographical Information

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—Dan Anderson, www.yosemite.ca.us

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YOSEMITE:

ITS WONDERS AND ITS BEAUTIES.

WITH INFORMATION ADAPTED TO THE WANTS OF TOURISTS
ABOUT TO VISIT THE VALLEY.

BY JOHN S. HITTELL.

Illustrated with Twenty Photographic Views

Taken by "Helios,"
AND A MAP OF THE VALLEY.

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PREFACE

The sublimity, the variety, and the unparalleled greatness of the scenery of Yosemite, render it worthy of illustration by pen and picture. The people of California feel a general interest in the valley, which is one of the most remarkable natural features of their wonderful State. Many have visited the grand chasm, and want something to recall by association the adventures of their trip and the pleasures of their stay, Others intend going, and wish advice in regard to the most impressive views and the best method of traveling. And all desire to be familiar with the general appearance of that world-famous collection of cliffs, cataracts, domes and dells. This book is published to supply the want. It is small so that it can be used as a guidebook it is cheap so as to be within the reach of all; it is illustrated so that the reader can see the mirror held up to nature; and the illustrations are photographs, because no engravings could do justice to the scenes, or convey perfect confidence in the accuracy of the drawing of such immense elevations as those of Tutucanala and Tissayac.

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[These views are copied from "Helios's" series of large photographs.]

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[Editor's note: all photographs by Eadward J. Muybridge, "Helios." Photographs courtesy of The Yale Collection of Western Americana, The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library—DEA.]

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I. General View of the Yosemite Valley looking East from Komah, (Moon Rock) on the Mariposa Trail, 1,500 feet above the Valley. The prominent objects are El Capitan, the Half Dome, Cathedral Rocks, and Bridal Veil Fall.

YOSEMITE:

ITS WONDERS AND BEAUTIES.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE VALLEY.

Yosemite Valley is generally regarded by travelers who have visited it, and have seen many of the most noted scenes in other countries, as one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest of the natural wonders of the world. Niagara, the Mammoth Cave, the Giant's Causeway, the views from Mount Diablo, Mount Shasta, Mount Washington, Ben Lomond, or from any peak of the Alps, are rated as far inferior by those whose ability, taste and observation give authority to their judgment. There is more to see in Switzerland than in this one little valley, but if a fair comparison is to be made by taking into account the whole region of the Californian Alps, from the Mokolumne to Kern River, a distance of a hundred miles, the Helvetian Alps will be as much inferior as the Staubbach is to the grand Cataract of the Sierra Nevada is. The great attraction of Yosemite is the crowding of a multitude of romantic, peculiar and grand scenes within a very small space. One of these waterfalls, one of these vertical cliffs, half a mile high, one of these dome or egg-shaped mountains, or the chasm itself, as a geological curiosity, would be worthy of world-wide fame; but at Yosemite there are eight cataracts, five domes, a dozen cliffs, several lakes and caverns, and numberless minor wonders, besides the big-tree groves near by, and a score of mountains that reach an elevation varying from 13,000 to 15,000 feet, including the highest peak of the United States, within sight. The cataract of the Staubbach, of Switzerland, reputed to be the highest waterfall of the Old World, is only nine hundred feet high, and that of Tequendama, in New Grenada, which had the first place in the New World before the discovery of the Yosemite, is only six hundred and fifty. The largest and highest works of human art dwindle into insignificance when compared in bulk or elevation with the tremendous precipices of Yosemite. The elevation of Cheops pyramid is four hundred and ninety-eight feet, and the highest cathedral spires are those of Strasburg, four hundred and sixty-six feet, Vienna, four hundred and forty-one feet, and of Rome, four hundred and thirty-two feet. They would be lost in the unnoticed talus of Tutucanula, which rises to 3,800 feet, or of Sentinel Rock, which ascends to 3,000.

Yosemite Valley is situated one hundred and forty miles east of San Francisco, on the western slope of the Sierra Nevadas, thirty miles west; of their summit, at an elevation of 4,060 feet above the sea. The general course of the valley is nearly east and west, its length about eight miles, and the width of the level



II. Pohono, (Spirit of the Evil Wind) Bridal Veil Fall, from the Northwest, a mile off; 940 feet high.

bottom land from half a mile to a mile. The walls are of granite, varying in height from 1,200 to 4,700 feet, in many points vertical, and in all very steep, so that there is no place where a wagon can enter it, only two where horses can get in, and there with much difficulty, and half a dozen others where men can clamber out. The two sides of the valley are crooked, and nearly parallel to each other, suggesting the idea that they were torn apart from each other, and have not changed much in outline since. At the base of the walls on each side is a talus or slope (if rocks and dirt which have fallen from above. The angle of this talus is from twenty-five to forty degrees, the height from one hundred to four hundred feet, generally two hundred. The main material is rock, covered in most places with a stony soil, and elsewhere bare, showing here small fragments of rock, and there immense masses, with great passages under their projecting edges.

The bare rocks of the talus are largest in the Toloolewack cañon. The color of the walls is yellowish on the north side of the valley, and blue or gray on the south.

The Merced runs nearly in the middle of the valley, is sixty feet wide, from three to eight feet deep in July, and the surface is generally from five to ten feet below the surface of the valley. The river is clear and the current lively; the descent in the eight miles of valley being about fifty feet. The water is never warm enough for comfortable bathing, but there are some ponds which get warm in the summer.

Prof. Whitney says:

“The peculiar features of the Yosemite are: first, the near approach to verticality of its walls; next, their great height, not only absolutely, but as compared with the width of the valley itself; and finally, the very small amount of debris or talus, at the bottom of these gigantic cliffs. These are the great characteristics of the valley throughout its whole length; but, besides these, there are many other striking peculiarities and features, both of sublimity and beauty, which can hardly be surpassed, if equalled, by those of any other mountain scenery in the world.”

Horace Greeley, in his *Overland Journey to California*, says: “The Yosemite Valley (or gorge) is the most unique and majestic of nature’s marvels.”

In a letter published in the New York *Independent*, in March, 1868, he wrote thus:

“Of the grand sights I have enjoyed—Rome from the dome of St. Peter’s—the Alps from the valley of Lake Como—Mont Blanc and her glaciers from Chamouny—Niagara—and the Yosemite—I judge the last-named the most unique and stupendous. It is a partially-wooded gorge, one hundred to three hundred rods wide, and 3,000 to 4,000 feet deep, between almost perpendicular walls of gray granite, and here and there a dark yellow pine rooted in a crevice of either wall, and clinging with desperate tenacity to its dizzy elevation. The isolation of the Yosemite—the absolute wilderness of its sylvan solitudes, many miles from human settlement or cultivation—its cascade 2,000 feet high, though the stream which makes this leap has worn a channel in the hard bed-rock to a depth of 1,000 feet—renders it the grandest marvel that ever met my gaze. Next to Yosemite, I judge that Niagara has more distinct and diverse attributes of sublimity than any other.”

The opinion of Starr King was that:

“Nowhere among the Alps, in no pass of the Andes, and in no cañon of the mighty Oregon range, is there such stupendous rock scenery as the traveler now lifts his eyes to.”

The following is in extract from Bowles:

“ Indeed, it is not too much to say that no so limited space in all the known world offers such majestic and impressive beauty. Niagara, alone, divides honors with it in America. Only the whole of Switzerland can surpass it—no one scene in all the Alps can match this, before me now, in the things that mark the memory and impress all the senses for beauty and for sublimity.”

Richardson wrote thus:

“ The measureless, inclosing walls, with these leading towers and many other turrets; gray, brown and white rock, darkly veined from summit to base with streaks and ribbons of falling water; hills, almost upright, yet studded with tenacious firs and cedars; and the deep-down level floor of grass, with its thread of river and pigmy trees, all burst upon me at once. Nature had lifted her curtain to reveal the vast and the infinite. It elicited no adjectives, no exclamations. With bewildering sense of divine power and human littleness, I could only gaze in silence till the view strained my brain and pained my eyes, compelling me to turn away and rest from its oppressive magnitude.”

Having considered thus the general features of the valley, let us take up the principal peaks, cliffs and falls, one by one.

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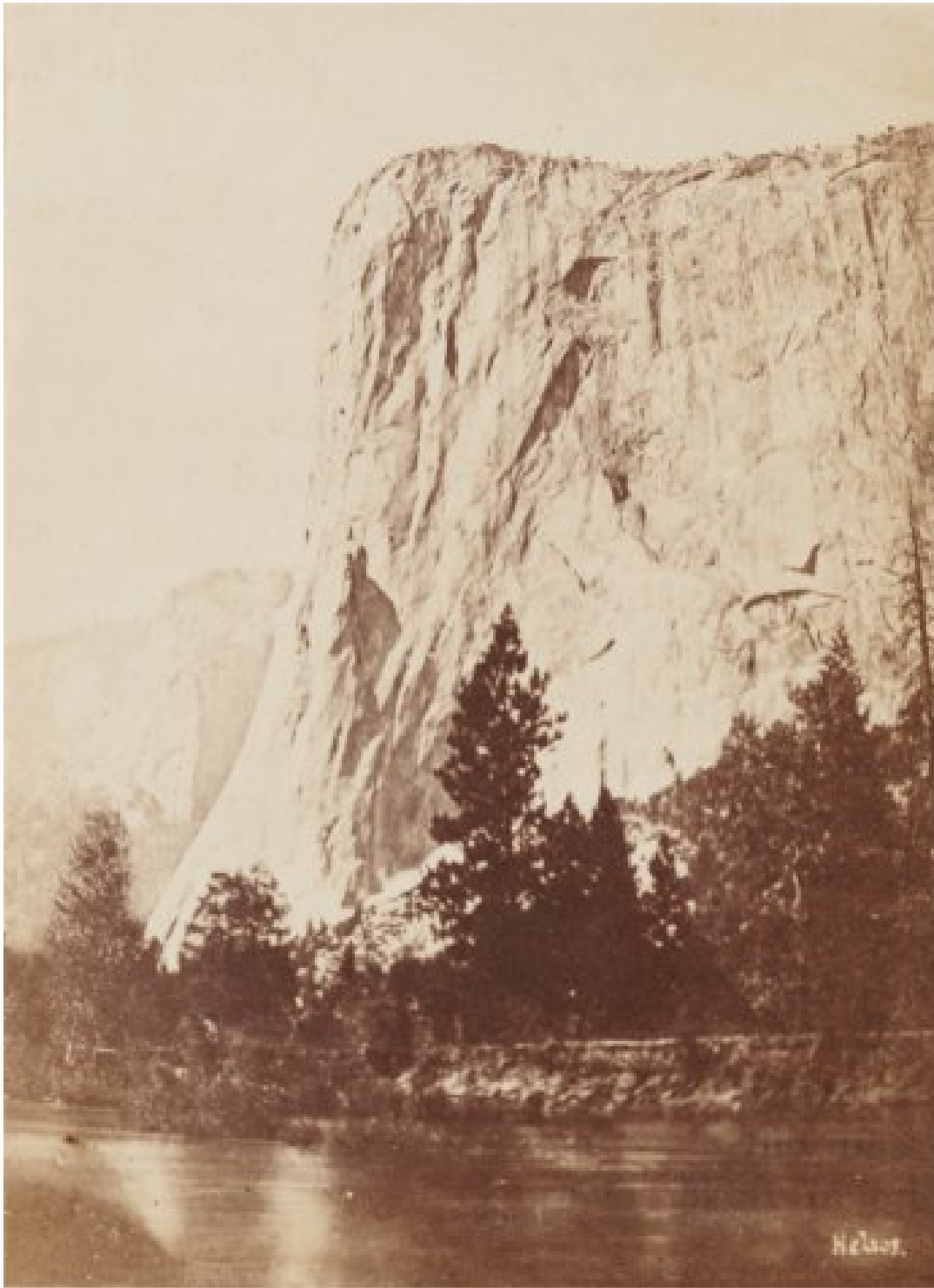
BEST GENERAL VIEW.

The best general view of the valley is to be obtained from Komah Point, on the Mariposa trail, about a mile from the edge of the valley, and about 1,500 feet above its level. Two miles and a half farther from the valley, and at a greater height, is Inspiration Point, from which a very good view can be had. Prof. Whitney says:

“At a little distance from the [Coulterville] trail on the southern or right-hand side [east of Crane Flat] is a place from which a partial view of the Yosemite Valley can be obtained. It is not a satisfactory one, however, on account of the number of trees in the way, and the bend in the valley itself, which cuts off the view of all the upper part. In this respect, it is inferior to the birds-eye view of the Yosemite and all its surroundings, which is had from Inspiration Point, on the Mariposa trail into the valley, and approaching it from the south. Those who desire to have the finest and most comprehensive view of the whole scene at the first, should enter the valley by the Mariposa, and return by the Coulterville trail; those, on the other hand, who would reserve to the last the grandest effect of all, and who would wait until they have become familiar with the details, before having the whole scene spread out before them, will do well to reverse the order of their coming and going.”

Mr. Bowles says of the view from Inspiration Point:

“The overpowering sense of the sublime, of awful desolation, of transcending marvelousness and unexpectedness, that swept over us, as we reined our horses sharply out of green forests, and stood upon a high jutting rock that overlooked this rolling, upheaving sea of



III. Tutucanula, (Great Chief the Valley of) El Capitan, from the South-east, a mile off, 3,300 feet above the Valley.

granite mountains holding, far down in its rough lap, this vale of meadow and grove and river-such a tide of feeling, such stoppage of ordinary emotions, comes at rare intervals in any life. It was the confrontal of God face to face, as in great danger, in sudden death. It was Niagara magnified, All that was mortal shrank back; all that was immortal swept to the front and bent down in awe.”

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BRIDAL VEIL.

The Bridal Veil, or Pohono fall, is on the right side of the valley, two miles from the lower end. It is the only cataract visible to the tourist while approaching or leaving this wonderful chasm, and it forms an important part of the views from Inspiration Point and from Komah Rock, and these are essential elements in the general ideas of the place. The fall is about 1,000 feet high, and the body of water is usually in June about seven!y feet across. In consequence of its great height, and its position where the valley is wide and the wall nearly straight for a considerable distance, the fall influences, and is influenced by the winds greatly, and strong gusts blow about it, carrying the stream from one side to another, “making it flutter like a white veil; hence [says Whitney] the name, which is both beautiful

and appropriate.” The stream falls upon the talus, which is there two hundred feet high or more, and a heavy mist surrounds its foot. Beautiful rainbows can be seen here every clear afternoon. The stream, after striking the talus, divides into three branches to reach the Merced. Travelers not unfrequently go up into the gusts and mist, but they do not report very favorably of the pleasure of the adventure. The best view of the fall is obtained from a point half a mile to the northeast. Starr King gives his impressions of Pohono, thus:

“As I think of it, I lose quickly the impression of the widening of its watery trail before it struck the rocks to thunder from them; I do not dwell either on the fascinations of its ever-melting and renewing tracery, nor on the brilliance of its iris banners, that are dyed into its leaping mists and flying shreds; I can recall for my supreme delight only the curve of the tide more than eight hundred feet aloft, where it starts off from the precipice, and the transparency of its vitreous brink, with the edge now and then veiled with a little curling misty vapor, when the wind blew hard against it, but generally tinged with a faint apple-green lustre.”

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TUTUCANULA.

The next object of interest is Tutucanula, or Capitan, an immense rock which rises almost perpendicularly from the valley to a height of 3,300 feet. It has two fronts, one facing to the west and the other to the south, the two meeting nearly at a right angle, and together about a mile long. This immense cliff is considered by many the most sublime feature of the Yosemite scenery. The immensity of its bulk, the altitude, verticality and smoothness of its faces, and its prominent situation, (being visible from nearly all the principal points of view) fix the attention of the tourist upon it. It is so tall that its height is greater than the width of the valley in front of it, and if it were to topple over, it would rest upon the opposite cliff. The Indian name, spelled also Tutochahulah and Tutatinello, means the Great Spirit, and Capitan is Spanish for Captain. Prof. Whitney says: “It would be difficult to find, anywhere in the world, a mass of rock presenting a perpendicular face so imposing.” Starr King declared: “A more majestic object than this rock, I never expect to see on this planet.”

Horace Greeley, who entered the valley at night, thus speaks of his first impressions of the great cliff:

“That first, full, deliberate gaze up the opposite height! Can I ever forget it? The valley is here scarcely half a mile wide, while its northern wall of mainly naked perpendicular granite is at least 4,000 feet high—probably more. But the modicum of moonlight that fell into this awful gorge gave to that precipice a vagueness of outline, an indefinite vastness, a ghostly and weird spirituality. Had the mountain spoken to me in audible voice, or began to lean over with the purpose of burying me, I should hardly have been surprised. Its whiteness, thrown into bold relief by the patches of trees or shrubs which fringed or flecked it, wherever a few handfuls of its moss, slowly decomposed to earth, could contrive too hold on, continually suggested the presence of snow, which suggestion, with difficulty refuted, was at once renewed.”

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POMPOMPASUS.

A mile and a half beyond Tutucanula, on the same side, is Pompompasus, or the Three Brothers, three peaks in close proximity. The Indian name means “mountains playing leap-frog,” and a sight of the peaks shows the appropriateness of the title. The highest of these is nearly 4,000 feet above the valley, and from its summit, according to Mr. King of the State Geological Survey, the finest view can be had of the great chasm and of the surrounding scenery. Other observers, however, who have remained longer in the valley, and have looked upon it from more points, think the view from Glacial Rock better. The ascent of Pompompasus is difficult.



IV. Pompompasus, (Mountains playing Leap Frog) Three Brothers,
4,000 feet above the Valley.

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CATHEDRAL ROCK.

A mile east of Pohono, and on the same side, are the Cathedral Rocks, which suggest the architecture of the Gothic cathedrals. Immediately behind these rocks are two “slender and beautiful columns of granite,” which are about eight hundred feet high and two or three hundred feet in diameter. The summits of the rock and the spires are about 3,000 feet above the valley. The Cathedral Rocks are called, also, Poosenachucka, which means the Large Acorn Cache.



V. Posenachucka, (Large Acorn Cache) Cathedral Rocks and Spires, from the North-east, a mile distant, about 3,000 feet above the Valley.

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VI. Yosemite Falls. Upper Fall, 1,500 feet; Cascades and Rapids, 650 feet; Lower Fall, 400 feet; total, 2,550 feet.

YOSEMITE FALL.

Five miles from the point where the trail strikes the valley, on the north side, is the Yosemite Fall, where the creek of the same name, in three cataracts, jumps down 2,550 feet. The upper fall is 1,500 feet high, and is a third of a mile back from the valley, in a gorge; the second fall is rather a succession of cascades, measuring in all six hundred and twenty-six feet, after which comes the third fall, four hundred feet high, below which is a talus, two hundred feet high. There is an appearance here of considerable erosion. Below the lower fall the stream divides into three branches, and one of these is straight for half a mile, and is lined with tall trees, so as to present a beautiful vista. It is called Cascade Avenue, because of numerous little cascades in its course. It is represented by one of the photographs. In the cañon between the Upper and Lower Falls, there are very fierce gusts of wind, so strong that visitors frequently find difficulty in catching breath, and the spray sweeps down almost in showers. Most of the water of the Upper Fall breaks into mist and spreads out gradually, from thirty yards at the top of the cliff to a hundred yards at the bottom. The creek goes nearly dry in September, and it is not more than forty yards wide and four feet deep at its best, so the bulk of water is small. The general impression is, that the fall is not an important part of the attractions of the valley, and the time for a visit should be selected without special reference to the fulness of the streams. The photograph of the main fall was taken near Sentinel Hotel.

At the base of the Upper Fall, on the west side of it, is a cavern eight feet high, three hundred feet wide across the mouth, and thirty feet deep horizontally. It can only be reached in the dry season, and then by walking across from the east on a ledge of rock about twenty feet wide, upon which the water strikes with great force when the stream is full. A photographic view of the fall, as seen from this cave, is given.

Horace Greeley, who saw the fall in August, says:

“The fall of the Yosemite, so called, is a humbug. It is not the Merced river that makes this fall, but a mere tributary trout brook, which pitches in from the north by a barely once-broken descent of 2,600 feet, while the Merced enters the valley at its eastern extremity, over falls of six hundred and two hundred and fifty feet. But a river thrice as large as the Merced at this season would be utterly dwarfed by all the other accessories of this prodigious chasm. Only a Mississippi or a Niagara could be adequate to their exactions. I readily concede that a hundred times the present amount of water may roll down the Yosemite fall in the months of May and June, when the snows are melting from the central ranges of the Sierra Nevadas, which bound this abyss to the east; but this would not add a fraction to the wonder of this vivid exemplification of the Divine Power and Majesty. At present, the little stream that lea down the Yosemite, and is all but shattered to mist by the amazing descent, looks like a tape line let down from the cloud-capped height to measure the depth of the abyss.”

On the other hand, Professor Whitney says:

”The traveler who has not seen the Yosemite when its streams are full of water, has lost if not the greater part at least a large portion of the attractions of the region, for so great a variety of cascades and falls as those which leap into this valley from all sides has, as we may confidently assert, never been seen elsewhere; both the Bridal Veil and the Nevada fall being unsurpassed in some respects, while the Yosemite fall is beyond anything known to exist, whether we consider its hight, or the stupendous character of the surrounding scenery.”



VII. Lower Yosemite Fall, from Cascade Avenue; Fall 400 feet high.



VIII. Base of Lower Yosemite Fall, at low water.



IX. Base of Upper Yosemite Fall, from the Yosemite Cave.

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THE FISSURE.

On the southern side of the valley, nearly opposite to Pomompasus, is a remarkable fissure in the wall rock. It is 1,000 feet deep, five feet wide at the top and front, and gradually growing narrower as it goes down and back into the mountain. Several stones have fallen into it, and lodged half way down.

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SENTINEL ROCK.

Just opposite to the great fall is Sentinel Rock, a narrow promontory jutting out a quarter of a mile into the valley, and at the point of the mountain is an obelisk, about 2,000 feet high, and three hundred feet thick, the summit reaching an elevation of 3,000 feet. The sides show beautiful vertical cleavages in the granite. The Indian name is Loya. The Sentinel is one of the most striking objects in the Yosemite scenery, and has been a favorite subject with artists who have visited the valley. The picture of the Sentinel was taken from the west, the camera standing a mile and a half off.



XI. Loya, Sentinel Rock, from a point a mile and a half distant, 3,270 feet above the Valley.

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SENTINEL DOME.

Three quarters of a mile southward from Loya is the Sentinel Dome, or Loyemah Dome, 4,150 feet high. It is hemispherical in shape, and is next to Starr King the most regularly formed of all the peculiar dome-like peaks about the valley. The summit can be reached on horseback from the east, and the view is very extensive. From this point the profile of the South Dome, and the moraines of the Toloolewack cañon are seen to more advantage than from any other.

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GLACIAL ROCK.

One mile east of Loya, on the same side of the valley, is Glacial Rock, or Oowooyoowah, which latter name means the Great Rock of the Elk. It is said that during one of the expeditions of troops into the valley, a party of soldiers in the search for Indians undertook to ascend this rock, and while going up a very steep and smooth rocky slope the red men suddenly appeared on the summit and began to roll large stones over. These came thundering down with terrific speed and noise, and the pale faces turned and fled with precipitate haste, but the destructive missiles struck several of them with instantaneous death. A fine view of the valley can be had from the point of Glacial Rock. The Yosemite, Vernal, and Nevada falls, and all the domes, are visible from this place.

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HUNTO AND THE WASHINGTON COLUMN.

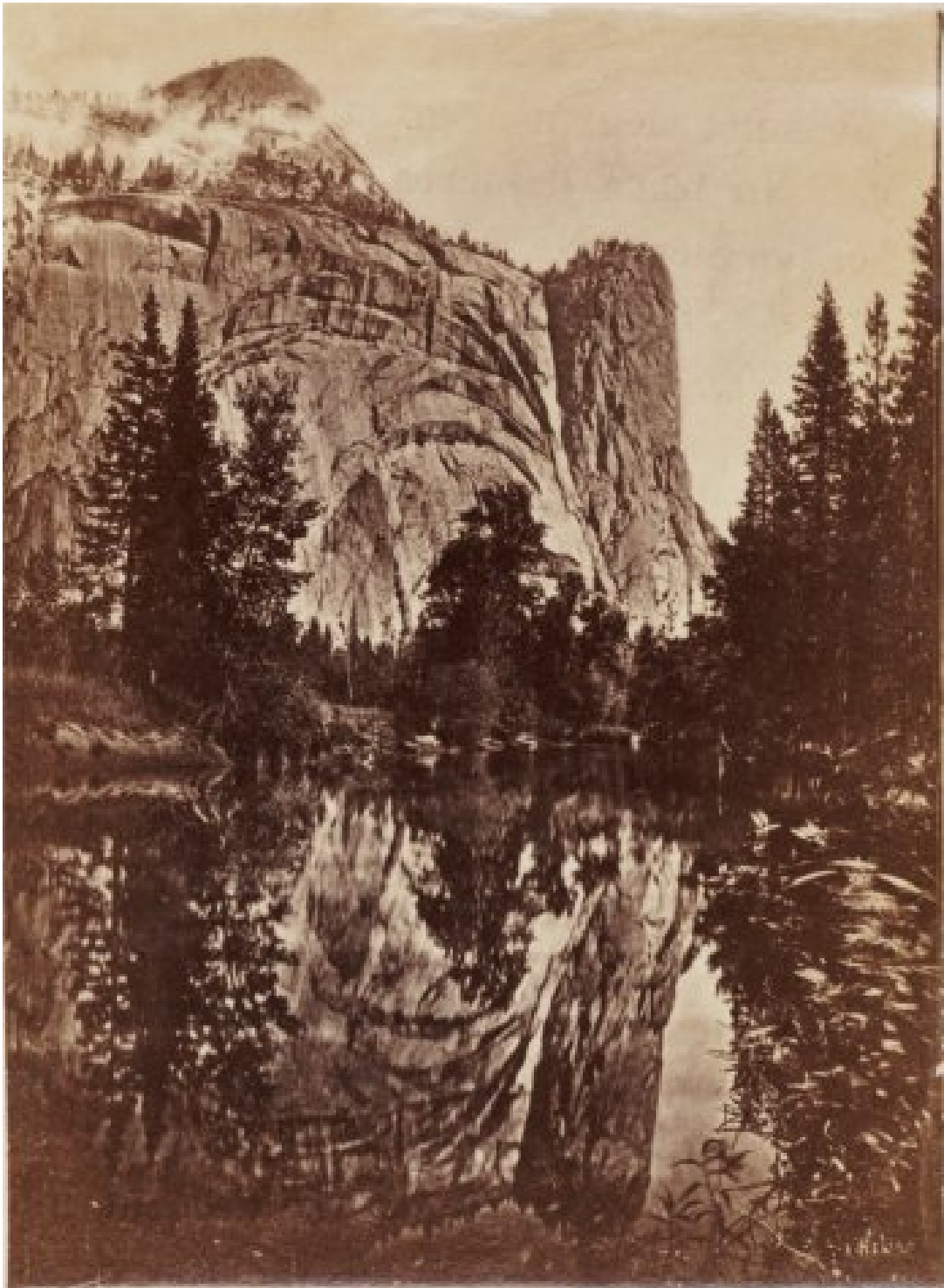
On the north side, and eight miles from the lower end of the valley, is Hunto, (the Watching Eye) or the Royal Arches, a wall of rock nearly vertical, from the side of which a large mass has fallen down, leaving several arches several hundred yards long, horizontally, the brows or arches projecting out in some places seventy or eighty feet. Just east of Hunto is the Washington Column, a wall nearly vertical, 2,400 feet high. The photograph was taken a mile off, in a south-westwardly direction.

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NORTH DOME.

Half a mile north of the Washington Column is the North Dome, or Tocoya, (the Shade of the Baby's Basket) 3,568 feet high, above the valley. The summit can be reached easily from the north side.



XII. Tocoia, (Shade to Indian Baby Basket) North Dome, 3,568 feet above the Valley. **Washington Column**, 2,400 feet high.

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MIRROR LAKE.

A mile south-eastward from the North Dome, in the valley of Tenaya Creek, is Mirror Lake, called also Kekotooyem, (Sleeping Water) and Awiyah. The area is eight acres, and the depth from eight to twenty feet. The water is remarkably clear and placid, and the reflection of the Washington Column and of the South Half Dome on its surface is so nearly perfect that photographic views of them are frequently mistaken for upright views taken directly from the objects themselves. The photograph of the lake is from its western shore.



XIII. Kekootoyem, (Water Asleep) Mirror Lake, from the western bank.

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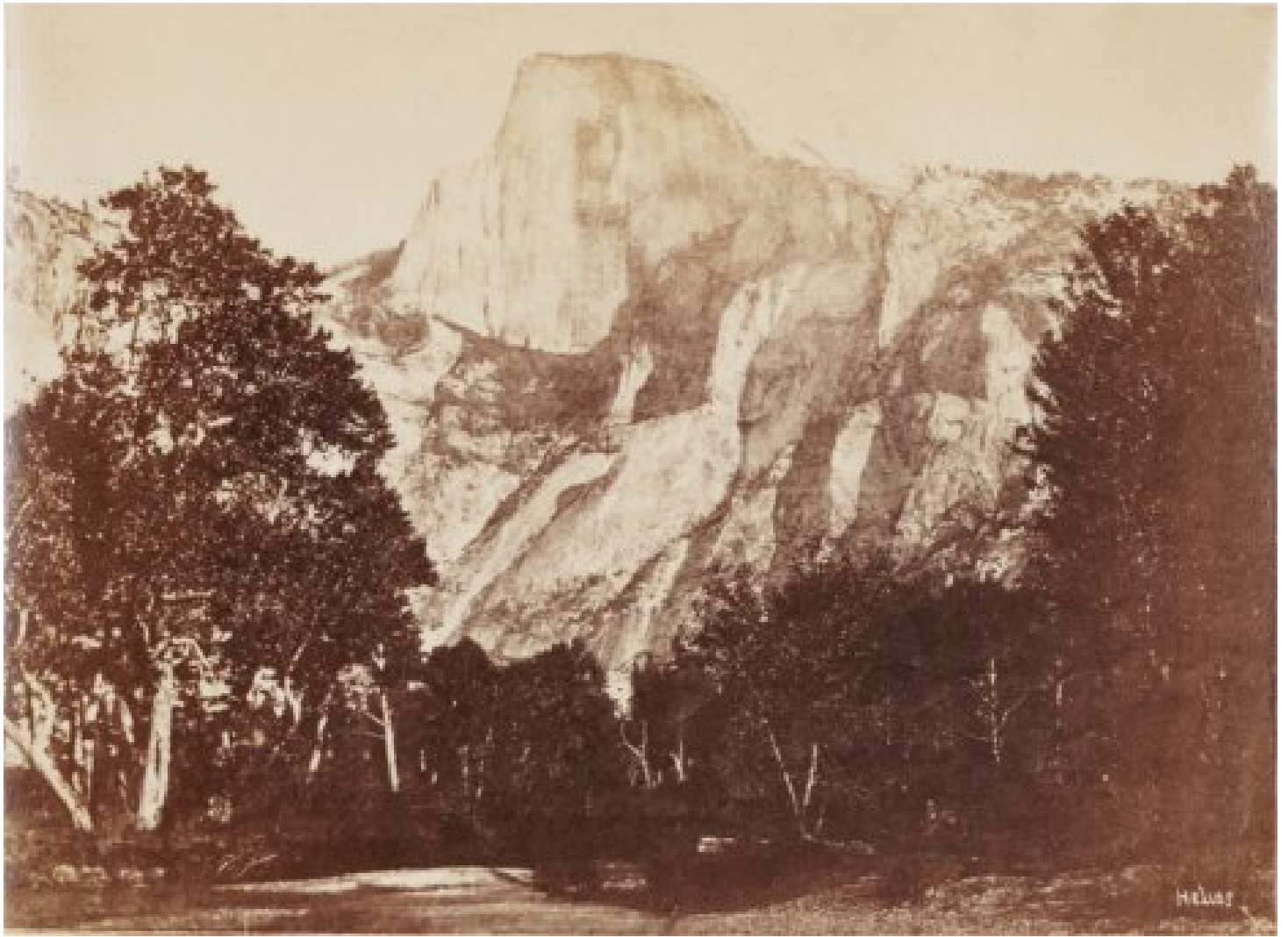
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THE HALF DOME.

A mile south-eastwardly from Mirror lake is the Half Dome, or Tissayac, (the Goddess of the Valley) which is shaped like half an egg bisected longitudinally, mid set on end. The height of the summit is 4,737 feet above the valley, and for 2,000 feet down from the top, the face fronting the north-west is straight and plumb, and below that point the mountain or the talus slopes down at an angle of forty degrees to the horizon. The peak is in no place more than 1,500 feet through horizontally, from north-west to south-east, the height being considerably greater than the width in that direction. The view of the dome given by photograph was taken from the west, at a distance of three miles.

Professor Whitney speaks thus of this “truly marvelous crest of rock:”

“From all the upper part of the valley, and from the heights about it, the Half Dome presents an aspect of the most imposing grandeur; it strikes even the most casual observer as a new revelation in mountain forms; its existence would be considered an impossibility if it were not there before us in all its reality; it is an unique thing in mountain scenery, and nothing even approaching it can be found except in the Sierra Nevada.”



XIV. Tissayac, (Goddess of the Valley) Half Dome, from the West, three miles off, 4,737 feet above the Valley.

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THE HEAD OF THE MAIN VALLEY.

Hunto on the north, and Sentinel Rock on the south, are the last promontories or projecting cliffs as we go eastward in the main valley, which, beyond them, divides into three branches.

The Tenaya Valley, the stream in which is very small, comes from the northeast, is very rugged, and has no attractive scenery near the main valley. Twenty miles above Mirror Lake, in the mountains, is Tenaya Lake, which is a mile and a half long. The Piwyac Cañon, formed by the main fork of the Merced River, comes in from the east. The Toloolewack Creek, or South Fork of the Main Fork, comes in from the south.

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VERNAL FALLS.

The Vernal or Piwyac Fall, in the Piwyac Cañon, is a mile and a half east-south-eastward from Glacial Rock, on the main Merced, and it is four hundred and seventy-five feet high, though there is so much spray that the bottom cannot be distinctly seen from any point from which a measurement is possible. The stream here is thirty yards wide, and it shoots over quite clear of the rock. The water near the top is green, and the name Vernal was given to distinguish it from a very white fall a mile beyond. Piwyac is in a very, rough canon, impassable for horses. The top of the fall is reached by ladders, and a natural battlement of rock, just high enough to lean upon, offers a convenient place for looking over the cataract. Those who approach the fall from below, on a clear afternoon, can always find rainbows, and frequently can have them forming nearly a complete circle, closing in to the beholder's feet. Piwyac is interpreted to mean a shower

of crystals. The photographer placed his camera within a few hundred yards of the fall to take the view given in this collection, though the fall is also represented in another taken a mile to the west.



XV. Piwyac, (Cataract of Diamonds) Vernal Fall,
475 feet high.

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KAHCHOOMAH FALL.

From Piwyac to the Nevada Fall, a distance of a mile, the river descends two hundred and fifty-five feet, rushing swiftly down, with numerous cascades, over smooth rocks, showing glacial polish in many places. About half-way between them is the Kahchoomah or Wild Cat Fall, 30 feet high. There is also a small lake, a couple of hundred feet wide. The photograph was taken just below the fall.



XX. Scene from Toloolweack Canon, or South branch of the Merced.
The Half Dome, Wild Cat Fall, Mount Broderick, and
Vernal Fall.

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NEVADA FALL.

The Nevada or Yowiye Fall is six hundred and thirty-nine feet high, and it is rather a slide or chute than a fall, for the water runs down a rock which has a slope of eighty-five degrees for about half its height, and seventy-five degrees the other half. The friction of the rock breaks the stream into a white froth, and hence the name of Nevada or Snowy. At some time, the Merced ran to the east of Yowiye, and cut a deep cañon there in the cliff, so that the fall was not more than four hundred feet. The old channel was choked up by a raft or accumulation of trees and dirt, and so the river was turned into its present course, The view was taken within a short distance.

Mr. Bowles says of the Nevada:

“This is the fall of falls; there is no rival to it here in exquisite, various, and fascinating beauty; and Switzerland, which abounds in waterfalls of like type, holds none of such peculiar charms. Not a drop of the rich stream of water but is white in its whole passage ; it is one sheet—rather one grand lace-work of spray—from beginning to end. As it sweeps down its plane of rock, every drop all distinct, all alive, there is nothing of human art that you can compare it with but innumerable and snow-white point-lace collars and capes ; as much more delicate, and beautiful, and perfect, however, as nature ever is than art.”



XVII. Yowiye, Nevada Fall, 689 feet high.

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THE CAP OF LIBERTY.

North of Yowiye is a magnificent dome which rises two thousand feet above the top of the fall, and four thousand six hundred feet above the valley. It resembles a cap of liberty and bears that name. It is also called Mahta and Mt. Broderick. This dome is shown in the photograph as it is seen from the west at a distance of a mile.



XVIII. Mahta, (Cap of Liberty) Mount Broderick.
4,600 feet above the Valley. **Yowiye**.
Nevada Fall, at the right.

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KAHCHOOMAH ROCK.

Half a mile northward from the Cap of Liberty is Kahchoomah or Wild Cat Rock, which rim to a hight of about four thousand two hundred feet above the valley. Its southern face is a cliff nearly perpendicular and about sixteen hundred feet high.



XVI. Kahchoomah Wild Cat Fall, 30 feet high,
on the main fork of the Merced.

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THE SOUTH DOME.

Two miles south-south-east from the Cap of Liberty is the South Dome or Mt. Starr King, the summit of which is said to be five thousand six hundred feet above the valley.

Professor Whitney says of it:

“This is the most symmetrical and beautiful of all the dome-shaped masses around the Yosemite; but it is not visible from the valley itself. It exhibits the concentric structure of the granite on a grand scale, although its surface is generally smooth and unbroken. Its summit is absolutely inaccessible.”

Starr King is visible from a considerable distance in the valley near the base of the Yosemite Fall.

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TOLOOLEWACK FALL.

Three-quarters of a mile below the Vernal Fall, Toloolweack Creek enters the Merced from the south, and a mile from its mouth it enters the valley by a fall, the height of which is variously reported from two hundred and fifty to seven hundred and fifty feet, the former figure being probably nearer the truth than the latter. The creek does not fall at the head of the cañon but at one side; and the tourist who goes past the fall finds, when he is nearly on a level with its top, a cavern two hundred and fifty feet high, one hundred feet wide across the month, and one hundred and fifty feet deep horizontally. In Toloolewack Cañon there are many cavern-like places among the piles of immense rocks. The picture of the fall was taken near by.



XIX. Toloolweack Fall, in the South Canon of the Merced, 300 feet high.

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CLIMATE.

The summers in the valley are warm, both night and day. One blanket is required, and is sufficient for comfort towards morning in July nights. The days are seldom oppressively hot; and the winters, notwithstanding the snow, are not very cold. Snow lies every winter for four or five months in the valley, the deepest in the open bottom being seven feet. Along the sides of the valley, however, and especially in the tributary cañons about the falls, where the mist falls and freezes, there are accumulations and drifts a hundred feet deep or more. Avalanches down the steep slopes are common. The snow lies under the shade of the southern wall till July, but it is usually gone from the bottom land before the middle of April. South-east of Sentinel Rock there is a large drift of snow every winter, and it does not disappear altogether till late in the summer. The bottom is marshy in wet seasons till the end of May. Dew falls every night, and it becomes heavier as summer advances, so that persons cannot walk about much with dry feet early in the morning.

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VEGETATION.

The bottom is covered with a luxuriant growth of grass, and the greater part of its surface is a beautiful prairie. Trees and bushes abound near the streams. The timber consists of deciduous oaks, evergreen oaks, pitch pine, sugar pine, willow and cottonwood. The bushes are of many different varieties. The wild strawberry vines and raspberry, thimbleberry, blackberry and gooseberry bushes are abundant. The manzanita is not found in the bottom, but grows on the talus and in the mountains. The pasture is good. Previous to 1864, herds of cattle and sheep were driven into the valley every summer, but they are not admitted now.

The sun is visible about three hours in December and eight hours in June. There are large areas which the sunlight does not strike at all in the winter, and for only a couple of hours daily in summer. The vegetation is a month earlier along the northern than along the southern wall.

Rains visit the valley every summer, but seldom last more than a day. In winter there are terrific thunder storms.

There are deer in the mountains, and many robins and a few quail in the valley. Trout are abundant in some of the streams, but they are very shy of the hook. The Indians catch them in traps, and frequently supply travelers at twenty-five cents per pound. Ground squirrels, ants and mosquitos are very numerous; the last, fortunately give no trouble at night, and for some unexplained reason, are not found within an area of several hundred acres near Hutchings' Hotel.

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ELEVATIONS OF CLIFFS AND FALLS.

The following are the elevations of the principal peaks, points and falls:

	Above the valley. (Whitney.)	Above the sea.
Yosemite Valley		
Capitan		3,300
Bridal Veil Fall		1,000
Cathedral Rock		3,000
Three Brothers		4,000
Top of Upper Yosemite Fall		2,550
Base of Upper Yosemite Fall		1,050
Top of Lower Yosemite Fall		434
Cliff east of Yosemite Fall		3,030
Sentinel Rock		3,000
Sentinel Dome		4,150
North Dome		3,568
Half Dome		4,737
Vernal Fall*		475
Nevada Fall*		639
Cap of Liberty		4,000
Toloolewack Fall*		300

The elevations marked with asterisks mark height of fall without reference to elevation above the valley. All the elevations above the valley, save the last two, are quoted from Whitney; and the elevations above the sea are computed by adding the altitude of the valley, 4,000 feet, in round numbers, though 4,060 is the figure given in the State Geological Survey Report. It is in many places difficult to ascertain the precise heights of cliffs and falls, on account of the variations consequent upon taking measurements from different points. The valley may be lower on one side of a cliff than on the other; the summit may be fixed at the edge of the precipice by one observer, and on a higher point back by another; and the bottom of a waterfall may be hidden by dense spray, so that its position is fixed by conjecture, and not by clear sight.

The general elevation of the country about the valley is 6,500 feet above the sea.

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SURROUNDING PEAKS.

Yosemite Valley is about thirty miles from the summit of the Sierra Nevada in a direct line. From various high points about the valley we can see a number of peaks that are covered with snow until late in the summer. The following is a list of these peaks:

Peaks.	Elevation.	Distance.	Direction.
Mt. Hoffman	10,842	15 miles.	E.N.E.
Cathedral Peak	11,000	20 "	N.N.E.
Mt. Dana	13,227	30 "	N.E.
Mt. Lyell	13,217	40 "	E.
Castle Peak	13,000	50 "	N.N.E.
Mt. Brewer	13,386	80 "	S.E.
Mt. Silliman	11,623	80 "	S.E.
Mt. Whitney	15,000	100 "	S.E.
Mt. Williamson	100 "	S.E.
Mt. Tyndall	100 "	S.E.
Mt. Kaweah	100 "	S.E.
Mt. Bullion	5,000	20 "	W.
Mt. Hamilton	4,449	100 "	W.
Mt. Diablo	3,876	130 "	W.N.W.

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THREE DAYS' PROGRAMME.

The movements of tourists should be governed to some extent by the time that they have to spend in and about the valley, and if they intend to remain a long time, by their ability to climb and their fondness of adventure. Nearly half of the visitors do not spend more than three days in the valley; those who remain more than two weeks are very few.

If the stay is to be three days, the party should spend the first day at the Yosemite Fall, going to the base and summit of the Lower Fall, and even to the base of the upper one. It requires two hours for a man of ordinary strength and endurance to reach the latter point. The ascent is made on the east side of the creek. After reaching the base of the Lower Fall, which is well worth a visit, it is necessary to come back and pass round a high bluff half a mile to the east, and pass over the talus to reach the summit of the bench from which the Lower Fall pitches down. The approach to the base of the upper cataract is over a wide, sloping, and slippery shelf, upon which people usually walk with confidence when going up, but when coming down, many of them sit down and use their hands as well as their feet to keep from slipping.

On the second day, the party can go to Mirror Lake, get excellent views of the North Dome, Half Dome and Washington Column on the way, cross over and ascend the talus about a mile south-east from Glacial Rock to a point commanding a beautiful view of Vernal Fall, the Cap of Liberty, Mt. Kahchoomah, and the Half Dome, and between the two last, near the horizon, the top of Cathedral Peak about twenty miles distant, and then ascend Toolewack Cañon to see the fall and cave.

The third day would be spent in going to Vernal and Nevada Falls.

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TEN DAYS' PROGRAMME.

A party prepared to camp out, with ten days time, might make the following programme:

The first night would be spent in camp at the Bridal Veil Meadow, and the first day in seeing that fall, and in riding about the valley on the south side to the Sentinel Rock, at the foot of which would be the camp.

The second day would be given to the ascent of that rock, a difficult task, but possible.

On the third day, the base and summit of the Lower, and the base of the Upper Yosemite Fall would be visited.

On the fourth, the party would go to the top of the Upper Yosemite Fall, ascending, if the water is high, through Indian Cañon, a mile east of the fall, and if the water is low, passing under the Upper Fall at its base, and going up a cañon to the west. On the summit, an extensive view is obtained. The marks of the glaciers a few hundred yards above the fall, are worth looking at.

On the fifth day, Mirror lake and the adjacent scenery would deserve our attention; and we might find time to visit the orchard of Mr. Lamon and give fifty cents each for the privilege of picking the strawberries, raspberries, peaches, or such other berries or fruits as may be in season, as many as we can eat.

The sixth day should be devoted to Toloolewack Cañon, and upon reaching the point for dismounting, the horses should be sent, in charge of a guide, by way of Inspiration Point, round to the head of the Nevada Fall.

The seventh day would be occupied with the Vernal Fall and the cañon below it, and our camp would be Kahchoomah Falls.

The eight day would be given to the Nevada Fall and its vicinity.

On the ninth morning the party would mount at the summit of Nevada Fall, go to Glacial Rock, and look down upon the valley, and then ride up to the summit of the Sentinel Dome, and camp there to get the benefit of the sunset and sunrise. The camp should be on the west side, so as to have a little shelter against the wind which usually blows from the east at night, and is quite cold on the high peaks.

Parties having more than ten days time might go eastward from the Nevada Fall on the Mono trail. In forty miles they would reach the summit of the mountains, and ten miles beyond is Mono Lake. This, however, would not yield so much pleasure as a trip to the summit of Mt. Hoffmann, which is four miles from Porcupine Flat on the Mono Trail. The view from the mountain-top is very extensive, and it is the best to be obtained within three days, the time taken in going from the valley and returning to it.

There is, however, abundant occupation in the valley for those who do not like the toil of climbing the mountains. There are scores of beautiful ravines and nooks which present an endless variety of views. With pleasant company a month can be well spent without going ten miles from the Yosemite Fall.



X. View on the Merced River, looking up the Valley from the base of the Three Brothers.

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HISTORY.

The valley was first seen by white men in March, 1851, when a party of volunteers, under the lead of Major Savage, went out to punish the Indians for various murders. In the early part of May, Savage headed another expedition again in pursuit of Indians, all of whom surrendered and promised peace, and kept it until a year later, when they murdered two miners named Rose and Shurbon, who had gone with some companions on a prospecting expedition. A month later some troops and volunteers went to the valley and shot five of the red men, who were dressed in the clothes of the murdered miners. The other savages fled to Mono Lake, where they remained till the next year. Dr. L. H. Bunnell accompanied all these parties into the valley, and he inquired of the Indians the name of the fall, and they called it Yosemite, although their pronunciation was various, some calling it Yosoomite, Oosoomite, and Oosemite. The name of the valley was Ahwahnee, and of their tribe Ahwahnechee. The tribe has now died out, and the red men in the valley are stragglers from other places, mostly of the Mono tribe.

Several parties of hunters and prospectors visited the valley in 1858 and 1854, but so little was said of the place that, in 1855, many intelligent persons in Mariposa County had never heard of it. In the spring of that year, J. M. Hutchings and Thomas Ayres went to the valley, the former to take notes, and the latter to take sketches. They soon gave notoriety to it, and the next year it began to be a place of resort, although the visitors were few. Several years later, a shanty was erected on Crane Flat and another in the valley, and Lamon, a bachelor, planted an orchard in the valley near its head. This orchard now produces fine fruit. Lamon, and afterwards Hutchings, spent the summers in the valley and the winters elsewhere, but the family of Hutchings remained through the winter of 1867–8 in the hotel, thus showing that the valley may be inhabited throughout the year, though its residents are cut off from all communication with people elsewhere for weeks or months at a time.

The number of visitors to the valley in 1864 was two hundred and forty; in 1865, three hundred and sixty; in 1866, six hundred and twenty; and in 1867, four hundred and fifty.

On the 30th of June, 1864, Congress gave the valley to the State by the following act:

An Act Authorizing a Grant to the State of California of the Yo-Semite Valley, and of the Land embracing the Mariposa Big Tree Grove.

Be it Enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be, and is hereby, granted to the State of California, the cleft or gorge in the granite peak of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, situated in the County of Mariposa, in the State aforesaid, and the headwaters of the Merced River, and known as the Yo-Semite Valley, with its branches or spurs, in estimated length fifteen miles, and in average width one mile back from the main edge of the precipice, on each side of the valley, with the stipulation, nevertheless, that the said State shall accept this grant upon the express conditions that the premises shall be held for public use, resort, and recreation, [and] shall be inalienable for all time, but lessees not exceeding ten years may be granted for portions of said premises. All incomes derived from lessee of privileges to be expended in the preservation and improvement of the property, or the roads leading thereto; the boundary to be established, at the cost of said State, by the United States Surveyor General of California, whose official plat, when affirmed by the Commissioner of the General Land Office, shall constitute the evidence of the locus, extent and limits of the said cleft or gorge; the premises to be managed by the Governor and eight other Commissioners to be appointed by the Executive of California, and who shall receive no compensation for their services.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That there shall likewise, and there is hereby, granted to the said State of California, the tracts embracing what is known as the Mariposa Big Tree Grove, not to exceed an area of four sections, and to be taken in legal subdivisions of one-quarter section each, with the like stipulation as expressed in the first section of this Act as to the State's acceptance, with like conditions as in the first section of this Act as to inalienability, yet with same privilege; the income to be expended in preservation, improvement, and protection of the property; the premises to be managed by Commissioners as stipulated in the first section of the Act, and to be taken in legal subdivisions as aforesaid; and the official plat of the United States Surveyor General, when affirmed by the Commissioner of the General Land Office, to be the evidence of the locus of said Mariposa Big Tree Grove.

The language of this statute deserves no commendation; it is not elegant in grammar nor correct in topography. No place deserves to be called "the granite peak of the Sierra Nevada;" Yosemite is not situated in a peak; it is not a cleft, and the name is not spelled properly "Yo-Semite." In the first clause of the second sentence the subject noun in the nominative has no verb agreeing with it in number and person as it should. However, its faults are mere trifles.

Under the authority of the Act, the Governor appointed J. D. Whitney, Wm. Ashburner, F. L. Olmstead, L. W. Raymond, E. S. Holden, G. W. Coulter, Alexander Deering, and Galen Clark, Commissioners, but as no funds had been provided for paying expenses, and as the Legislature had given no instructions in regard to their duties, they did nothing till the summer of 1866. The survey, however, was made in 1866, and the Yosemite tract, as surveyed, is about sixteen miles by three wide, and includes the descent into the valley and all the points from which the best views of it can be obtained.

On the second of April, 1866, the Legislature of California passed an Act accepting the donation and organizing the Governor and the eight Commissioners whom he had appointed, as a Board, to be styled "The Commissioners to manage the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa, Big Tree Grove with full power to make and adopt all rules, regulations and by-laws for their own government, and the government, improvement and preservation of said premises, not inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States, or of this State, or of said Act making the grant, or of any law of Congress or of the Legislature.

The preamble, enacting clause, and first section of the Act are as follows:

“Whereas, by Act of Congress, entitled ‘An Act authorizing a grant to the State of California of the Yosemite Valley and of the land embracing the Big Tree Grove,’ approved June 13th, 1864, there was granted to the State of California in the terms of said Act, said valley and the lands embracing said grove, upon certain conditions and specifications therein expressed; now, therefore, the people of the State of California, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows: Section 1. The State of California does hereby accept said grant upon the conditions, reservations and stipulations contained in said Act of Congress.”

The fifth section says:

“The State Geologist is hereby authorized to make such further explorations on the said tracts and in the adjoining regions of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, as may be necessary to enable him to prepare a full description and accurate statistical report of the same, and the same shall be published in connection with the reports of the State Geological Survey.”

The sixth section provides that:

“Any person who shall cut down or girdle any tree, deface or injure any natural object, set fire to any wood or grass, or destroy or injure any bridge or other structure on the premises, shall be deemed guilty of misdemeanor, and be liable to a fine of five hundred dollars, or imprisonment for six: months, or to both.”

Soon after the passage of this Act, the Board entered upon their duties, and took charge of the valley. But they were not received in the most friendly manner by some of the occupants. Hutchings and Lamon held each one hundred and sixty acres under the preëmption law, by titles which, as they claimed, had vested in them before the passage of the Congressional Act of June 30th, 1864. Besides these claims to land, there were ferries, bridges and ladders, on which tolls were charged without license from the State. The Commissioners claimed that in some ones the tolls were too high, and that in others, the persons in possession had no right of property in the improvements, which had been erected by travelers and dedicated by them to the public. The Commissioners and these claimants could not agree. The valley was surveyed, several bridges were erected, (though carried away since by the extraordinarily high water of 1867-68) and leases for ten years were offered to the settlers at nominal rates. These offers were rejected, and suits were commenced to eject them. Before they came to trial, however, the Legislature, notwithstanding the Governor’s veto, passed an act granting to Hutchings and Lamon the lands which they had claimed, respectively, one hundred and sixty acres each, subject to the condition that Congress should consent to the alienation. A memorial was also adopted praying Congress to consent. Congress has taken no action in the matter as yet, and it is generally supposed never will consent to the alienation.

H. W. Cleaveland has been appointed Commissioner, in the place of Olmstead, who has left the State, and no one has been named yet to succeed Whitney, who has also gone.

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EMINENT VISITORS.

Among the visitors to the valley have been a number of eminent men, but no list of them has been kept. In August, 1859, Horace Greeley made the trip, riding through from Bear Valley at one beat, a distance of fifty-seven miles. He did not reach the cabin opposite the great cataract till one o’clock in the morning. After breakfast, he rode up to Mirror Lake, rode back to the cabin, took dinner, and at two o’clock started back. He has never been accused of lounging about Yosemite. In August, 1865, a party, including Schuyler Colfax, Samuel Bowles, A. D. Richardson, F. L. Olmstead, W. D. Bross, and William Ashburner, entered the valley, and spent four days there. Thomas Starr King was in the valley in the latter part of July, 1860. F. C. Ewer, who wrote the first long description of the scenery, in 1859; J. D. Whitney and W. H. Brewer, members of the State Geological Survey, and the former, for a time, one of the Commissioners, Fitzhugh Ludlow, Dr. Bellows, Dr. E. S. Torrey, and Gen. McDowell have also been at Yosemite.

The most noted artists who have visited the Yosemite, have been Albert Bierstadt, Virgil Williams, E. W. Perry, Thomas, Hill, and F. A. Butman, and each took sketches, from which he has since painted pictures that have been sold in San Francisco or New York. The largest and best Yosemite pictures in California are those in the dining-room of the Lick House by Thomas Hill. Bierstadt’s paintings of the valley were all finished in the Eastern States or Europe, and none of them has reached the Pacific Coast. The first pictures of Yosemite were painted by Thomas Ayres, who was there in 1855, but these have since been eclipsed by others.

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THE NAME.

The name of the great fall was given to the valley, and it is now universally accepted. The meaning of Yosemite, in the tongue of the Ahwahnachee tribe which formerly dwelt in the valley, according to Dr. Bunnell, the best authority, is grizzly bear; according to others, big grizzly bear. Some Fresno Indians said the proper name was Yohamite, which means big fall in their tongue, and a number of writers used that title for a number of years. Others wrote Yohamity and Yoamity. A few persons now write Yo-Semite and Yo-sem-ite; but

the majority of the authorities, including the State Statutes, the State Geological Survey, Greeley, Bowles, Richardson, Cronise, and Bancroft's map, say Yosemite; and the Federal Statute and Hutchings say Yo-Semite.

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FORMATION OF THE VALLEY.

It is evident that most of the great cañons of the Sierra Nevada have been formed by erosion—that is, by the wearing influence of stream of water, and of the matter which they have carried down. But the Yosemite Valley is an exception. These vertical walls, half a mile deep, with numerous sharp angles, could scarcely have been formed by water, and the narrowness of the cañon below shows that there never has been any sufficient outlet for a large stream. Besides, it is evident that, since the main chasm was formed, great masses of rock have been split off, in many places, from the sides, and if the valley had been the result of erosion, these masses would have made mountains in it. The most probable explanation of its origin is the theory that it was formed by a great convulsion which tore apart the mountain to a depth very much greater than that now perceptible, that vast masses of rock fell down into the chasm, and that after a time they were covered up by the washing of the waters, leaving a level valley over them.

Professor Whitney, in the State Geological Survey Report, says:

“It appears to us probable that this mighty chasm has been roughly hewn into the present form by the same kind of forces which have raised the crest of the Sierra and moulded the surface of the mountains into something like their present shape. The Domes and such masses as that of Mount Broderick, we conceive to have been formed by the process of upheaval itself, for we can discover nothing about them that looks like the result of ordinary denudation. The Half Dome seems, beyond a doubt, to have been split asunder in the middle, the lost half having gone down in what may truly be said to have been ‘the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds.’ * * * If the bottom of the Yosemite ‘did drop out,’ to use a homely but expressive phrase, it was not all done in one piece or with one movement; there are evidences in the valley of fractures and cross-fractures at right angles to these, and the different segments of the mass must have been of quite different sizes, and may have descended to unequal depths.”

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GLACIERS.

Wherever snow falls in large quantity and lies from year to year, there glaciers are formed in the ravines and valleys. Although made up of snow, they are almost as compact as ice, and pressed upon by the frequent accumulations at their head, they move downward, even over ground that is for considerable distances nearly level, though the movement may be only a foot or two in a year. With a great depth, sometimes more than a quarter of a mile, they have immense momentum, and they sweep the earth and stones before them, and they polish the general surface of the bed-rock and scratch deep parallel ruts in it. Where they stop, either with the end or side, they leave a ridge of their stones, called a moraine.

Glaciers were once abundant in the higher portion of the Sierra Nevada, as numerous moraines, ruts and polished surfaces testify. That was in some remote age, when the climate was much colder than it is at present. The Yosemite valley had its glacier, and Mr. King, of the State Geological Survey, thought it was a thousand feet deep. The glacial polish and grooving are found in all the cañons leading into Yosemite valley, and especially in the little Yosemite cañon at the lowest place where it can be crossed, and also on the rocks at the Nevada Fall. One moraine runs from the base of the South Dome to the Washington Column, extending from each side in a curve down the valley. Another begins at the western end of the South Dome and runs down the valley. A third marks the boundary between the glaciers that come down from the Little Yosemite valley and Toloolewack cañon. A fourth starts just below the Bridal Veil Fall, on one side, and a quarter of a mile below the Capitan on the other, and runs down to a point in the middle of the valley.

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HETCHHETCHY.

The Yosemite valley is not the only great chasm in the State. From latitude 35° 80', where Kern river rises, to 38° 30' near the head-waters of the Tuolumne, the higher peaks of the Sierra Nevada—and they number more than a hundred—reach an elevation of 13,000 feet above the level of the sea; and there is an area of three hundred square miles, more than 8,000 feet high. This alpine region was raised to its present altitude by great natural convulsions, and its sides are worn down by fierce torrents. Prof. Brewer, of the State Geological Survey, says:

“Similar valleys or cañons occur on the other rivers south, in the same belt of granite, having the same general features, which are most probably of the same origin. Some are even deeper than Yosemite, but no other one possesses so much to interest the tourist, or is nearly as accessible. Those in the King and Kern rivers are especially deep and grand, but they lack some of the striking features of the Yosemite, especially the immensely high. waterfalls.”

The most accessible of the other grand chasms of the State is the Hetchhetchy or Tuolumne Valley, twelve miles north of Yosemite in a direct line, but forty-seven miles distant by the only trail. It is three thousand eight hundred feet above the sea, three miles long and is cut in two near the middle by a hill which comes down to the edge of the stream. The direction of the valley is east and west; its width, at the widest, half a mile. Near the middle on the northern side, is a perpendicular cliff thirteen hundred feet high above a talus five hundred feet high; and in the spring, while the snow is melting, a large creek makes a splendid cataract over the precipice. Before the end of summer, the stream ceases to flow. Half a mile further east, on the same side, is the Hetchhetchy Fall, seventeen hundred feet high, but not vertical. The stream is constant, and when large the roaring of its cascades can be heard a long distance. There is very little talus in the valley except under the falls. There are numerous marks of glacial action in the valley, through which, according to Professor Whitney, the big glacier that headed at Mt. Dana and Mt. Lyell, made its way. The valley can be reached from Big Oak Flat, by going eighteen miles on the Yosemite trail to Hardin’s fence; then turning to the left seven miles to Reservoir or Wade’s Meadows; crossing the Middle Fork of the Tuolumne to the Hog Ranch, five miles; thence up a divide between the Middle Fork and the main river two miles to the Cañon Ranch; and six miles down through the rocks to Hetchhetchy Valley. The total distance from Big Oak Flat is thirty-eight miles.

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HINTS TO TOURISTS.

A party intending to go to Yosemite should make special preparation. Those who do not know how to ride should learn; those who know should take a ride every day for a week before starting, so as to be hardened to the saddle. The trip is a hard one, and it can be a very uncomfortable one for those who do not undertake it in the right manner. Both men and women need heavy, thick-soled, calf-skin boots, leather gloves, and stout dress of cheap material. The boots should be well greased with linseed oil thickened with beeswax, as a protection against the water with which the grass is filled every night by the dew. Men who intend to remain long or to climb about much should have duck trowsers. The shirts should be of flannel. Coats are unnecessary. Every lady should have a bloomer dress, or at least a pair of blue drilling pants, and should have the company either of a husband or of another lady. Many ladies ride astride in and near the Valley, and they find it much more comfortable. There is no laundry or laundress at Yosemite, and every tourist washes his own clothes, that is, if they are washed there at all. Ladies who clamber about much usually find their clothes fit only for throwing away by the time they reach Coulterville or Mariposa, and it is well to take a suit that can be thrown away. Clothing should be carried to Coulterville or Mariposa, in a trunk or valise, which can be left there until the return.

Most of the tourists who go from San Francisco stop at one of the hotels, but those from the interior of the State generally camp out, and there are decided advantages in being independent. If the party stay long in the valley, the expenses are less; and there is a great convenience in being able to stop at points remote from the hotel, so as to go further the next day. No tent is necessary; the night air is not dangerous, and abundant protection against the dew can be found under the trees. It is easy to make brush huts if needed. Campers should have a pair of blankets apiece, tin plates and cups, knives, forks, and spoons, a tin bucket or pot, suitable for making coffee or tea, a frying-pan and gridiron, and provisions suited to their tastes. Canned fruits and meats are prized at such times. Trout can frequently be bought of the Indians, and deer meat of hunters, at very moderate prices.

The traveller from San Francisco starts at 4 o’clock in the afternoon on the Stockton boat; reaches Stockton about 3 a.m., and remains on board till 6 o’clock, when he takes the stage for Coulterville or Bear Valley, and arrives there about 8 p.m. The next day he takes horse, and if he starts from Coulterville, rides seventeen miles to Black’s, and the next day rides into the valley, forty miles. A stage starts for Coulterville every day, but only every other day for Mariposa, so the tourist must inquire for the day if he prefers that route. Sometimes the stage runs through to Mariposa on one day, but usually stops at Bear Valley or Hornitos. It is necessary to make inquiry upon this point. From Mariposa, the traveller gets through in two days on horseback. The expense of the trip, at the very lowest, is eighty dollars, but no one should start with less than one hundred dollars for a three days’ stay in the valley, and at least five dollars must be estimated for every additional day—three dollars for board and two dollars for the horse. The steamboat fare is seven dollars; the stage to Coulterville or Bear Valley, including meals, eleven dollars; supper, lodging, and breakfast, at Coulterville, one dollar and a half or two dollars; same at Black’s, two dollars; horse, two or three dollars per day, according to circumstances, such as scarcity and quality of horses and length of stay; and guide, five dollars per day, including his horse. His board in the valley, like that of everybody else, costs three dollars per day. The larger the party, the less the expense of the guide to each. The horses are picketed out in the valley and their food costs nothing. The guide takes care of the horses and is a general servant, but his services are hardly necessary, if the men of the party are able to take care of the horses properly. The trail is so plain that there is little danger of losing it; and, in fact, it can scarcely be lost by keeping to the right after leaving Black’s on the Coulterville route, or to the left after leaving Clark’s on the Mariposa side. The safe plan, however, is to take a guide.

It is a common practice with tourists to enter the valley by the Coulterville route and to leave it by the Mariposa trail. On the former they see Bower Cave; on the latter, they get the general view of the valley from Komah and Inspiration Points, and they can also visit the Mariposa Grove. At Mariposa, they can either take the stage to Stockton, or ride across to Coulterville by way of Bear Valley. Near the latter place are the celebrated quartz mills of the Fremont estate, and these are well worth a visit. The distance by the road from Mariposa to Coulterville is twenty-two miles.

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DISTANCES.

The distances from San Francisco to various points on the steamboat route to Stockton are the following in miles:

Angel Island	4	Benicia	29
Red Rock	10	Martinez	30
San Quentin	11	Mouth of San Joaquin river	45
Two Brothers	12	Antioch	59
Son Pablo Point	12 1/2	Mouth of Mokelumne river	74
San Pedro Point	13 1/2	“ “ middle channel of	
Two Sisters	13 1/2	San Joaquin	80
Pinole Point	17	“ of Stockton Slough	110
Maw Island Strait	25	Stockton	119
Carquinez “	26		

The distances by the railroad route from San Francisco to Stockton in miles, are as follows:

Oakland	5	Kottinger's	37
San Leandro	15	Livermore Pass	49
Hayward's	19	San Joaquin river	69
Vallejo's Mill	27	Stockton	79

The following are the distances, according to Mr. Hutchings, from Stockton to various points on the road to Coulterville, in miles:

12-Mile House (Breakfast)	12	Crimea House	48
25-Mile House	23	Don Pedro's Bar	60
Foot Hills	30	Coulterville	71
Knight's Ferry (Dinner)	37		

The Stage leaves Coulterville about one o'clock in the morning, and the traveler reaches Stockton in time to take the boat of the same day for San Francisco. The following are the distances from Coulterville to various points on the Yosemite trail, in miles:

Bower Cave	12	Valley View	44
Black's Inn	17	Cascade Bridge	46
Deer Flat	23	Foot of Trail	51
Hazel Green	29	Sentinel Hotel	56 1/2
Crane Flat	35	Yosemite Hotel	57

It is generally said now that the distance from Coulterville to Black's is sixteen miles, and from Black's to the valley, thirty-five miles; but this may mislead people who think they have found a stopping place as soon as they get into the valley.

The distances from Stockton to various points on the Mariposa road are the following, in miles:

Morley's, on the		Hornitos	69
Mokelumne			
river	45	Bear Valley	78
Snelling's	57	Mariposa	90

The distances from Mariposa to the different points on the Yosemite trail are thus given by Mr. Hutchings, in miles:

Beech & Co.'s store	1 1/4	Forks of road, trail turning	
Bertken's	1 7/8	to left	14 1/2
Spring House	3 1/2	Hogan's, Fork of	15 1/2
		Chowchilla	
Sebastopol	4 1/2	South Fork—main Chow-	
Rockwell's	4 3/8	chilla	17 1/2
Persian's (first Fork of		Upper Crossing	18 1/2
Chowchilla)	5 1/2	Spring, near top of Chow-	
Second Fork Chowchilla	6 3/8	chilla ridge	19 1/4
Boleton's (third Fork of		Bridge on Big Creek	21 3/8
Chowchilla)	8 1/8	Clark's Ranch, South Fork	
Thompson's	10 7/8	Merced	23 3/8
De Long's	11 1/2	Camp Placido	27 1/4
White & Hatch's	11 3/4	Coldwater Creek	28 3/4
Fourth Fork Chowchilla	12 1/4	Alder Creek	29
Short cut-off—across	13 1/4	Grass Creek	29 7/8
creek			
Spring (south of road)	13 3/4	Dogwood Creek	30 3/8

Empire Camp	31 1/8
Owl Camp	31 5/8
Shallow Creek	32 1/8
Crystal Creek	32 7/8
Green Spring Flat	33 5/8
Westfall's Meadow	34 3/8
Forks of Mono trail, and Ostrander's	34 1/2
Mountain View, or Big Meadow	35 3/8
Highest Point on trail	37 1/4
Wild Parsnip Gulch	37 1/2
Boundary of Yosemite grant	37 3/4

Last Meadow	38 1/4
Willow Brook	38 3/4
Inspiration Point, turn-off	39
Spring Gulch	39 1/8
Grouse Gulch	40
Hermitage	40 3/8
Komah turn-off	41 3/8
Kern Spring (foot of trail)	42 3/8
Bridal Veil	43 3/8
Cathedral Spires	44 3/8
Sentinel Hotel	46 3/4
Yosemite Hotel	47 3/8

The distances from Stockton to Yosemite, by way of Big Oak Flat, are the following, in miles:

Crimea House	48	Crane Creek	90 1/4
Chinese Camp	52	Divide	94 3/4
Jacksonville	56	Tamarack Flat	97 3/4
Big Oak Flat	64	Top of Ridge	100 3/4
Sprague's Ranch	73 1/2	Foot of Trail	103 1/4
Golden Rock Flume	77	Sentinel Hotel	108 1/2
Harden's Ranch	84	Hutchings' Hotel	109

Instead of going by way of Crimea House, the tourist can go by way of Copperopolis to Chinese Camp, where the two stage lines from Stockton meet. The distance from Stockton to Chinese Camp, by way of Copperopolis, is fifty-seven miles. The Golden Rock Flume, (which was formerly a sight worth seeing) an aqueduct two hundred and sixty-four feet high and 2,200 feet long, has been blown down, and will not be rebuilt. The Big Oak Flat route is the shortest from Stockton, the most picturesque, and is generally preferred by camping parties, but it lacks the accommodations for travelers to be found on the other routes. When those are provided, it will grow in favor. The trip can be made from Big Oak Flat in one day.

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CALAVERAS BIG TREES.

Those who desire to see the Calaveras Big Trees can go from Stockton to Murphy's, seventy-one miles, in one day, fare in the stage, eight dollars. The distance from Murphy's to the grove is fifteen miles, and there is a good wagon road, so the round trip, spending four or five hours in the grove, can be made in one day on horseback, or by stage, or private carriage. From Murphy's there is stage communication to the Crimea House, the distance being about thirty miles where a stage runs direct from Murphy's to Sonora, and six miles further when it goes by way of Angel's.

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SAN FRANCISCO TO COULTERVILLE.

The trip from San Francisco to Stockton is usually made by steamer, starting from the former place at 4 p. m..

Tamalpais or Table Mountain, which is twelve miles from San Francisco, rises to a height of two thousand six hundred and four feet, one of the landmarks of the Bay district, and is beautiful as well as conspicuous. Twenty-seven miles from the metropolis, and twelve miles at the nearest point from the route of the Stockton steamers, is the summit of Monte Diablo, three thousand eight hundred and seventy-six feet high. It rises nearly half a mile higher than any of the ridges or peaks within twenty miles of it, and it commands a view of San Francisco, Stockton, Sacramento, the Sierra Nevada for a length of two hundred miles, and of the districts inhabited by three-fourths of the population of the State. Its conical shape and isolated position, the amphotheatrical character of the Sierra, and the fertility, commercial advantages, and populousness of the centre of the State, give great comprehensiveness, variety, and interest to the view from the summit.

Professor Whitney says:

"It is believed there are very few, if any, points on the earth's surface from which so extensive an area can be seen as from Monte Diablo. * * * The area spread out can hardly be less than that of the whole State of New York."

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BOWER CAVE.

Leaving Coulterville we mount, and canter off to the eastward, along a plain wagon road leading up over a mountain. The ascent is a gentle slope in some places, and a steep one in others. Upon reaching the summit, we find ourselves on a pleasant table land, with an abundant growth of green grass and fine timber. The landscape is in remarkable contrast with the dry, brown plains and low hills over which we rode yesterday. There are neat farm-houses and good fences. The landscape would not be recognized as Californian, except by those who have seen it, so different is it from the typical scenery of the State. We pass several houses and sawmills, and ten miles from Coulterville we reach Marble Springs, near which is Bower Cave. We dismount and go down into the cave, about one hundred and time feet deep from the surface to the surface of the water, which is, in places, forty feet deep. The water is so clear that the bottom can be seen in the deepest spots, and it is very cold. The cave is a crevice one hundred and thirty-three feet long and eighty-five feet wide at the widest, with a slope of about sixty degrees to the horizon. About forty feet from the surface there are three large maple trees which reach up to the mouth of the cave, and give it a singular appearance. We can go to the bottom of the cave with the help of some ladders, and there we find a boat, in which we can row a little for the sake of variety. There are no fine stalactites, stalagmites, crystals, or extensive chambers, and we soon return to the surface and continue our journey. After riding six miles, we reach Blacks Hotel at Bull Creek, and here we stop for the day. We have had a wagon road all the way to Black's, and might have ridden in a stage from Coulterville, but it is better to come on horseback, so as to be prepared for to-morrow's ride.

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TUOLUMNE BIG TREES.

The next morning we start at five o'clock, as we have forty miles of hard riding before us. The road is up hill for a considerable distance. Black's is two thousand eight hundred feet above the sea, and near Hazel Green we cross a ridge that has an elevation of its thousand six hundred and sixty-nine feet, commanding a very extensive view of the San Joaquin Valley. The flats are little better than swamps. After riding eighteen miles we reach Crane Flat—a beautiful place to camp. We rest here, and then turn off to see the Tuolumne Big Tree Grove, for it is in Tuolumne County. The trail leads up over the hill from the head of the flat, and then down a very steep and rugged pitch on the right of some chaparral, and in less than a mile reach a collection of two dozen big trees, the largest thirty-six feet in diameter, and a dozen of them exceeding sixteen feet. The trees occupy an isolated position, and appear much larger relatively than those in the Mariposa and Calaveras groves, where they are surrounded and partly hidden by other timber. This Tuolumne grove was discovered on the 11th of May, 1859, by a party of Yosemite tourists from Garrote.

Nine miles beyond Crane Flat we reach Valley View, from which we get a glimpse of Yosemite, but the view is far less impressive than that on the Mariposa trail from either Komah Rock or Inspiration Point.

The last two miles before reaching the valley are very steep, and those who can walk well, should go down on foot and spare their horses. Upon reaching the bottom, the tourist is, at first, disappointed, as the trees prevent him from getting a good view, but the disappointment soon ceases when he enters the open meadows.

Yosemite: Its Wonders and Its Beauties (1868) by John S. Hittell

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MARIPOSA BIG TREES.

From the Big Meadow on the Mariposa trail, a trail leads off to the Mariposa Big Tree Grove, five miles distant. This grove is, in many respects, superior to that of Calaveras, but it has the disadvantage of being much further from the centre of population, and from main routes of travel, of being inaccessible by wagon, and of having, no fine hotel for the accommodation of tourists. There are four hundred and twenty-seven trees in the Mariposa grove, the largest thirty-four feet in diameter; there are two of thirty-three feet; thirteen between twenty-five and thirty-two feet; thirty-six between twenty and twenty-five feet, eighty-two between fifteen and twenty, making one hundred and thirty-four over fifteen feet in diameter. The remainder are of various thicknesses, from one foot to fifteen. The Calaveras Grove has ninety trees over fifteen feet in diameter, and about half as many smaller. The largest is thirty feet through the trunk. Tourists are generally disappointed on first visiting either grove. The full impression of the size of the trees is not derived from the sight, but from the measurement, or the statement of the figures of the height and diameter.

Starr King thus describes his emotions when he entered this grove:

“I confess that my own feeling, as I first scanned it, and let the eye roam up its tawny pillar, was of intense disappointment. But then, I said to myself, this is, doubtless, one of the striplings of this Anak brood—only a small affair of some forty feet in girth. I took out the measuring line, fastened it on the trunk with a knife, and walked around, unwinding as I went. The line was seventy-five feet long; I came

to the end before completing the circuit. Nine feet more were needed. I dismounted before a structure eighty-four feet in circumference, and nearly three hundred feet high, and I should not have guessed that it would measure more than fifteen feet through."

A proper appreciation of the great forests of the Sierra Nevada, requires some knowledge of timber, as the [j]ust appreciation of a poem or picture demands a special knowledge or taste. Many of those who look at the Big Trees, if not previously informed, would ride through a grove of them and not imagine that they were more than eighty feet high, or that they differed much in size from other trees about them, or were very remarkable in any respect.

Horace Greeley, who knew more about trees than any of the other California tourists, says:

"And here let me renew my tribute to the marvelous bounty and beauty of the forests of this whole mountain region. The Sierra Nevadas lack the glorious glaciers, the frequent rains, the rich verdure, the abundant cataracts of the Alps; but they far surpass them—they surpass any other mountains I ever saw—in the wealth and grace of their trees. Look down from almost any of their peaks, and your range of vision is filled, bounded, satisfied, by what might be termed a tempest-tossed sea of evergreens, filling every upland valley, covering every hillside, crowning every peak but the highest, with their unfading luxuriance. That I saw, during this day's travel, many hundreds of pines eight feet in diameter, with cedars at least six feet, I am confident; and there were miles after miles of such and smaller trees of like genus standing as thick as they could grow. Steep mountain-sides allowing them to grow, rank above rank, without obstructing each other's sunshine, seem peculiarly favorable to the production of these serviceable giants. But the summit meadows are peculiar in their heavy fringe of balsam-fir of all sizes, from those barely one foot high to those hardly less than two hundred, their branches surrounding them in collars, their extremities gracefully bent down by the weight of winter snows, making them here, I am confident, the most beautiful trees on earth. The dry promontories which separate these meadows are also covered with a species of spruce which is only less graceful than the fir aforesaid. I never before enjoyed such a tree-feast as on this wearing and difficult ride."

Yosemite: Its Wonders and Its Beauties (1868) by John S. Hittell

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CONCLUSION.

The time probably is not far distant when a good wagon road will be completed into, or to some point very near, the valley, so that the trip can be made conveniently from Stockton in two days, and at less expense than at present; and not until that is done will Yosemite attract a proper share of attention or offer the accommodations necessary to give satisfaction to travelers. The valley should and will become its favorite place, not only for hurried visits of tourists, but also for the prolonged sojourn of families who want to enjoy the mountain air amidst beautiful vegetation and sublime mountain scenery in a genial summer climate.

Yosemite: Its Wonders and Its Beauties (1868) by John S. Hittell

Advertisements

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Stockton, May 1st, 1868.

M. MAGNER.

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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

At the regular monthly meeting of the Photographic Society of Philadelphia, held March 4th, 1868, the Vice President, J. W. Hurn in the Chair, On motion of Mr. Guillou the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That this Society take great pleasure in attesting their high appreciation of the artistic skill in the selection of these Views, and the eminent talent evinced in their photographic reproduction.”—*Philadelphia Photographer*.

These Views are taken from fresh points, selected with a nice regard to artistic effect, and illustrating the valley and its cliffs and falls more variously than any previous series. There are effects in some of these new views which we have not met before. The plunging movement and half vapory look of cataracts leaning 1,000 or 1,500 feet at a bound, are wonderfully realized.—*Evening Bulletin*.

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