

the younger sons. The tuition is usually low; the ability to live at home instead of having to board brings the education which the college has to offer within the means of any boy who has in him the stuff of which a real man is made. Thousands of American boys have paid their way through these colleges by teaching school and by various kinds of manual labor in vacation time.

Of course the education afforded is limited. It bears no comparison with that obtainable in the largest American colleges, to say nothing of that to be had in the great European universities. But between it and no college education at all the distance is enormous. In some respects the quality of it is inferior to none which is given anywhere. The personal contact between teacher and pupil is closer in the small college than in the large, and wherever there is found in one of them a true teacher, a man of large soul, quick sympathies, and high ideals, who has the indescribable and invaluable gift of touching and opening the minds of youth—wherever there is a college with such a man there is a great university in the highest sense of the word. One such teacher, it matters little what he teaches, can make a college a power in the land. It is our conviction that there are many of these teachers scattered throughout the 345 colleges which we have in the United States, and that there is not in the land a more potent influence for the highest good of the nation.

Statistics show that our colleges, great and small, contain about 70,000 students, and that more than 10,000 degrees are conferred each year. There are thus sent forth into the world 10,000 young men—the statistics given do not include women—in whose minds a love of learning has been kindled. It may be that in the majority of cases there will be little growth towards higher learning after the college precincts are abandoned; but in all cases some influence has been exerted. These 10,000 men will not be so easily misled by false doctrines and fallacious theories as they would have been had they never gone to college. In every community in which they pass their lives their influence will be exerted on the side of progress and in favor of the more liberal ideas which find the light there. Among the 10,000 there will be a few in whose larger and more fertile minds the seed of knowledge will continue to grow until it bears fruit. Among them there may be one whose voice or pen shall prove of highest value to his fellows for many years to come.

There never was a time when our country needed the services of these college-bred men so much as it does to-day. We shall always have in this land of inexhaustible resources enough of men who will devote all their energies to the accumulation of wealth and to the increase of our material prosperity. To counteract them we need and shall continue to need the restraining influence of those who are willing to devote themselves to what Lowell calls the "things of the mind." The country must have some men who can resist the temptation to devote their lives to mere money-getting, not because they would not like to have the freedom and power which money gives, but because they love knowledge more. Our colleges alone can supply these men, and they are supplying them, and are thus of inestimable service to the Republic.

The Care of the Yosemite Valley.

A COMPETENT judge has characterized the announced policy of an active member of the Yosemite Valley Commission to "cut down every tree [in the valley] that has sprouted within the last thirty years" as a policy "which, if it were carried out, would eventually result in an irreparable calamity—a calamity to the civilized world." This member is represented as declaring that his policy has the support of the commission: it remains to be seen whether his associates will follow such fatuous leadership. But the history of the Yosemite makes it only too probable that a crisis in its management is near at hand.

The American people are probably not aware of their proprietorship in the Yosemite. In 1864, by act of Congress, the valley and the grounds in the vicinity of the Big Trees of Mariposa were granted to the State of California "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; shall be inalienable for all time," etc. Thus is recognized by law the moral claim of all humanity to an interest in the preservation of the wonders of the world. A citizen of New York is as much one of the owners of the Yosemite as a citizen of California, and his right to be heard in suggestion or protest is as undoubted. There are, unfortunately, few resident Californians who are well acquainted with the valley. An actual count has indicated that one-half of the visitors are foreigners, chiefly Englishmen, while one-fourth are from the Eastern States. The opinion of these "outsiders" might be supposed to have a special value, being disconnected with the local dissensions which have gathered about the valley. And yet disinterested endeavors made in a private and respectful manner to arouse the authorities to the destructive tendencies which are evident to people of experience and travel are denounced by certain members of the commission in the most violent and provincial spirit. This spirit has been widely remarked by travelers, and is candidly recognized by many Californians and deplored as doing much to retard the growth of the State.

It is unfortunate that the first public presentation of the subject and the resultant investigation by the legislature of California were complicated by personal, political, and commercial considerations to such an extent as to obscure the important point—Has the treatment of the Yosemite landscape been intrusted to skillful hands? We have before us the report of this investigation, together with a large number of photographs showing the condition of portions of the valley before and after the employment of the ax and the plow. Without going into the details of the alleged abuses, monopolies, rings, and persecutions, it is easy to see in the above testimony and photographs abundant confirmation of those who hold that the valley has not had the benefit of expert supervision. In saying this we are not impugning the good faith of past or present commissions or commissioners, appointed for other reasons than their skillfulness in the treatment of landscape. They are certainly to be acquitted of any intention to injure the valley: that would be unbelievable. It is no reproach to them that they are not trained foresters. Their responsibility, however, does not end

there: it is, in fact, there that it begins; for, in the absence of knowledge of a professional nature, it should be their first aim to obtain the very best man or men available to do this work. No such expert is too good or too expensive, and no claim upon the budget of California should have precedence of this. If the commissioners have not money enough for this expenditure, it is part of their duty as holders of a great trust to arouse a public sentiment which shall procure the proper appropriation. The press of the country, which is never backward in such matters, would lend an effective support to the demand for funds for this most necessary expert care.

Here, however, is the crucial point. The commission may follow the leadership of those who see no need of experts and have no faith in them. They may think it more desirable to improve a trail than to preserve the sentiment for which the trail exists. Perhaps, in their interest in safe and rapid transportation, they may even carry out the project attributed to the governor of California, of building a tramway along the valley! We prefer to believe that, aware of the endless trouble, confusion, and clashing of one commission with another, and of the members of each with their associates, they will awake to the necessity of procuring from a competent person a definite plan for the treatment of the landscape and artistic features of the valley. It is fortunate that there are several such men now living. A large part of the business of their profession is to contrive expedients for lessening the misfortune into which gentlemen of education and culture, supposing themselves to have a special aptitude for the work, have carried themselves in undertaking what they have regarded as very simple improvements. To contrive means and methods by which that which is most distinctly valuable to the

world in the Yosemite can be perpetuated, and to provide means by which the world can conveniently and effectively make use of it,—which means shall be in the least degree possible conspicuous, incongruous, and disturbing to the spirit and character of the scenery,—is a problem that no amateur ought to dabble with.

Should the commission not be inclined to this obvious duty, the better sentiment of California might well be organized to procure the amendment of the law by which the commission is appointed. Eight men named by the governor,—none of them for attainments in the profession of forestry,—meeting but twice a year, serving without pay and liable to removal, are not likely to constitute a commission of skill and responsibility. What is needed, after a definite plan, is fitness of qualification and permanence of tenure in its administrators. We believe a large sentiment in California would support a bill for the recession to the United States with an assurance of as capable administration in government hands as now characterizes the Yellowstone Park. Among the chief of California's many attractions are the Spanish missions, Lake Tahoe, and the Yosemite and Big Grove grant. The missions are dropping into a needless decay, the ravages of the lumberman are spoiling the beautiful shores of Tahoe, while the Yosemite, which should be the pride and nursling of the State, finds in her neglect and doled expenditures the indifference which popular tradition ascribes only to a step-mother. It is to the interest of the valley, the commissioners, the State, the nation, and the world that California should adopt an intelligent and generous policy towards the Yosemite with a view to placing it in skillful hands and devising a permanent plan which shall take it, once for all, out of the reach of the dangers by which it is now seriously threatened.

OPEN LETTERS.

Destructive Tendencies in the Yosemite Valley.

LETTERS FROM VISITORS.

I.

AT the meeting, in June last, of the commissioners who manage the Yosemite Valley, a project was set afoot to obtain from the National Government the grant of a large addition to the land now held in trust by the State of California under the act of 1864, deeding to that State the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove. The plan to extend the grant is at this writing not worked out in detail. There is, however, a most pertinent and important question which offers itself *pari passu* with the general idea of a widening of the limits of the grant. It is this: Has the past management of the Yosemite Valley been good or bad? has it been characterized by a fit appreciation of the dignity and beauty of the subject to be treated? or has it been conceived and executed on a low plane, either of intelligence or of taste?

Until that question shall have been answered with candor and impartiality it will scarcely be worth the while to suggest or discuss the details of any plan for an extension of the grant. During the year now gone the management of the valley has been most bitterly

criticized in the columns of some of the California newspapers. If such utterances were to be accepted as conclusive evidence, there would be but one judgment to be rendered—that the management of the valley was in hands wholly vile, and that to increase the power for harm held by such hands, by enlarging the domain submitted to their control, would be an act of criminal folly.

Fortunately and unfortunately for the peace of mind of those who know and love the greatest treasure of our national scenic gallery, many of the newspaper comments have been of an exceedingly ill-advised description—fortunately, because it is a comfort to know that the situation is not nearly so bad as it has been represented to be; unfortunately, because there are in truth good reasons for vigorous protest against certain parts of the management of the valley, and those reasons have been buried almost out of sight in the newspaper columns under a mass of intemperate, indiscriminate, and sensational denunciation, to no small extent incited by business rivalries and personal jealousies.

Brushing away the impeding rubbish of abuse, one comes to the solid and salient fact that the management of the Yosemite has been a woful failure in respect

of the preservation of the natural loveliness of meadow and woodland. It is not necessary to agree with the sweeping assertion that "the valley has been converted into a hideous hay ranch"; but it is too evidently true that the artistic instinct—if it has ever existed in connection with the management of the valley—has been sacrificed to the commercial, and the conservation of natural beauty has been outweighed too frequently by the supposed necessity of providing mules, horses, and horned cattle with pasturage and hay at the least possible cost to the owners of those beasts.

But the work of the plowshare and of other aids and abettors of commercial agriculture is of less serious import—being primarily less objectionable and also more easily rectified when harmful—than is the absolutely shocking use that has been made of the wood-chopper's ax—deadliest foe, in reckless or ignorant hands, of woodland beauty; deadly unless guided by a mind of most rare attainments in the craft of artistic forestry. There are places in the valley where one is forced to wonder why the axes themselves did not turn and smite the men who were putting them to such base uses. This stupid application of the woodman's tool is not a thing of yesterday. It began with the white man's occupation of the valley. It has been continued under all administrations. During the last year it received a check; but under the system by which the Yosemite is governed there is no saying when the work of the devourer of beauty may not again flourish.

No intention herein exists of decrying the use of the ax, or even of fire, within limitations. Nature indeed is the sole truly great artistic forester; yet the conditions of nature in the Yosemite Valley are such that human agencies must, for human convenience and enjoyment, tamper to some extent with nature's work. But active and unnecessary aggressions have been made on the charms of both woodland and open meadow of a sort that admit of no variety of opinion or taste. The offenses thrust themselves with violence upon the notice of the most transitory observer, and become positively burdensome to one who prolongs his stay in the valley. So far, then, has the administration of the grant been a failure, and the inevitable inference is that any extension of the grant should be made with caution, and not at all unless accompanied with a radical reform in the system of control.

It is simply a waste of time to attempt—as was done last winter during an investigation of the affairs of Yosemite by committees of the California legislature—to fasten upon individuals the blame for the past desecration of the valley's beauty. The roots, trunk, branches, and foliage of the wrong are in the system of management. The individual wrong-doers—whether commissioners, guardians, wood-choppers, stable-boys anxious to feed their mules cheaply, or whoever else—are merely the natural fruitage of such a system. Let us see what that is.

The valley is managed by a board of commissioners, of which board the governor of California, whoever he may be, is ex-officio president. There are eight other commissioners, each of whom serves during four years; but they are appointed four at a time, biennially, the appointment being made by the governor of the State. The commissioners serve without

pay other than a small allowance for actual expenses when attending meetings of the board. The meetings are semi-annual, and one of them must take place in the valley. Under the commissioners is a guardian, who receives a small salary, who has no right of initiative, and who is practically merely a watchman and foreman of laborers. It would appear that the bare announcement of such a system would be enough to secure its condemnation as unwieldy, unjust, and totally ineffective to fix responsibility in any certain place. The wonder is that the results of the system have not been tenfold worse than they are.

A small commission, well salaried, and of which one member might with advantage be a man eminent in the profession of landscape gardening and artistic forestry, could fairly be expected to do away with the present causes of complaint—or at least to apply remedies where the evil is not past remedy. There is, however, no need for entering through this letter into a definite and detailed plan of reformation. If the active interest of the clientele of THE CENTURY can be aroused,—and that body comprises an exceedingly great proportion of visitors to the valley, past, present, and prospective,—surely that influence should be able not only to enforce its demand for reform, but also to procure the adjustment of a wiser system of management for the Yosemite than any that the present writer claims to be able to offer.

George G. Mackenzie.

WAWONA [BIG TREE GROVE], CALIFORNIA.

II.

I ENTERED the Yosemite Valley one Sunday afternoon in June, 1889, and rode immediately to the Stoneman House, at the farther end of the valley. My impression on arriving at that point was far from agreeable. At my left was the Yosemite Fall; at my right was the hotel with its expectant waiters; while in front and near at hand was a long, low, frontier-town saloon, vulgar and repulsive in every detail, and so out of harmony with its grand surroundings as to shock the dullest sensibilities.

I was anxious to look upon the valley alone, and therefore took a saddle-horse, and without even a guide rode over it and climbed its trails, standing upon the highest summits and visiting the most concealed recesses. As I rode over the floor of the valley I was more and more impressed with the lack of design or even of ordinary skill in its laying out and management which was everywhere apparent. The drives are as good as can be expected; no fault can be found with their construction, if the shortest route between two points is all that is desired. But this is not all. The floor of the valley is so level that no special skill in road-making is required. What is needed is a cultivated taste; an eye which can take in the grand frame of carved and etched rock and the beautiful picture which nature has spread between the imposing walls; and a trained taste which can combine the latter with the former, so that each shall enhance and contribute to the grandeur and beauty of the other.

Apparently no effort has been made in laying out the drives to reveal by unexpected turns the startling beauties of rock or river or waterfall. A few bridges cross the swiftly flowing river, but these are

bridges of convenience. They are not placed where they will furnish the finest views, and architectural merit or harmony with the surroundings evidently had no place in the mind of their builder.

As to foot-paths, there were none. The visitor can "cut across lots," unless fences prevent; but as for walks, or paths laid out with artistic design, to afford pleasant surprises by openings through which delightful views may be obtained, or leading to shady nooks among the giant pines, or to rare points of observation, they do not exist. The impression is forced upon the mind that pedestrians are not wanted, and this is further demonstrated by the fact that in all this valley there is no seat, nor arbor, nor place of any kind where the visitor may sit and enjoy the wonderful scenery, unless perchance he sit upon the stump of some giant tree which has been felled by ignorance or folly.

The decaying stumps of magnificent pines and oaks, standing alone or in groups in so many and such peculiar places, so impressed me as representing successive stages of destruction, and useless and wanton destruction, that I made a special visit to the guardian of the valley to inquire why it was so. The explanation was simple: "There is no plan for the improvement or care of the valley: each guardian has his own idea; each board of commission has some idea, ill defined, that something ought to be done, and often individual members of the commission have their own ideas in regard to what should be done in the way of trimming, cutting, etc. New commissioners appoint new guardians, and each guardian follows in the footsteps of his predecessor by doing as his own judgment dictates."

This was the explanation of the guardian, and in the light of this explanation I can see how giant trees could be felled to suit the taste or convenience of hotel keepers, how guardians could trim shrubs and lop the branches of trees, or even fell and destroy giant trees as they are moved by the spirit.

In one part of the valley I saw a large piece of ground, entirely cleared of trees, which had been fenced in and was used as a pasture for horses. If this cleared spot could have been used as a park, where natural grasses and wild flowers of the valley should be encouraged to grow, it would have been a source of constant delight to both educated and ignorant visitors. At the last meeting of the commissioners this fence was ordered to be removed at the expiration of the lease now in operation. But why should a considerable fraction of a public reservation of hardly more than eight square miles ever have been given over to the raising of hay or to be trampled by horses?

In another part of the valley wild azaleas were growing and blossoming in such luxuriance as to excite the attention of the most commonplace observer; and yet I saw a number of cows tramping through them and feeding on the tender shoots. Venturesome ladies came to the hotel with arms full of the beautiful blossoms and branches. If this be permitted, in a little time cows and tourists will entirely destroy these rare plants, as so many have been destroyed.

Now what can be done, and what ought to be done? Anything desirable can be done, because the valley is absolutely in the control of the State. First, there should be a carefully prepared plan adopted by the commission and having the force of law, and which

should be followed by commissioner and guardian, and not a limb should be cut, nor a tree felled, nor a path made, nor a road graded, except as this plan should prescribe. In this way river and rock, trees and shrubs, walks and drives, would gradually grow into perfect harmony. Every stump should be dug up, every fence in the valley should be removed, and pigpens, saloons, and tin cans placed where they will be rarely seen, and not allowed to occupy conspicuous places in the valley.

Not an animal of any kind should be allowed to be at large in the valley, and not a fence should be allowed as a cottage inclosure. Animals are necessary, but they should be fed and cared for in stables and not allowed to run at large. There must be cottages for those who live in the valley, but cottage-gardens need not be inclosed if there are no animals to destroy them, and if uninclosed they would add variety and picturesque-ness if properly cared for on a definite plan.

There were nearly one hundred visitors in the valley at the time I was there, most of them persons whose taste had been cultivated by travel and observation. I heard many criticisms from them in regard to the management of the valley. The rocks cannot be removed and the waterfalls cannot be defaced; but the floor of the valley, with its beautiful trees and rare shrubs and blossoming plants, can be so injured by improper cutting as to render the natural features less beautiful and destroy to a great extent the pleasure of the views.

A class of people known as "campers," that is, people who travel with their own teams, enter the valley in large numbers, and this class, being unwatched, are the source of a great deal of damage to shrubs and smaller trees, both by cutting, by hitching their teams, and by the careless use of fire. This class cannot be excluded, and it would not be well to exclude them if it were possible; but the strictest rules should be made in regard to them and the most careful watch should be kept over them. To do this it might be necessary to have a small force of mounted police, but the result would more than compensate for the outlay.

If the commissioners could be made to see what an immense advantage and relief to them a carefully prepared plan of improvements would be, I feel sure they would secure the services of some competent man and have such a plan prepared at once.

If the present system be continued, the complaints which are now whispered will be spoken with such force and volume as to ring in the ears of the public and literally compel the National Government to retake what it has placed as a trust in the hands of the State of California.

Lucius P. Deming.

[JUDGE OF THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS.]

NEW HAVEN, CONN.

III.

IN June, 1889, in company with Mr. John Muir, the well-known California naturalist, I made a visit of eight days to the Yosemite Valley, to the upper Tuolumne Cañon, and to the peaks and meadows of the high Sierras which form the headwaters of these parallel gorges. The wonders of the Yosemite—confessedly supreme in American scenery—are hardly more unique and

marvelous than the little-known cataracts of the Tuolumne River, in one of which, along a sloping descent a thousand feet in length, the force of the torrent, striking the pot-holes of the granite, throws up not fewer than a dozen sparkling water-wheels from fifteen to twenty-five feet in diameter. This cañon, now impassable to all but the mountaineer, and with great difficulty traversed even on foot, is but eighteen miles, as the crow flies, from the Yosemite, and must eventually become easily accessible to the visitor to that region. The trip from the valley to the head of the Tuolumne series of cataracts occupies a horseman two days, part of the way by the old Mono trail, and is a continuous panorama of wild and lonely beauty of cliff and forest. The only sign of the depredations of man is seen in the barren soil fairly stippled by the feet of the countless herds of sheep which have denuded these mountain meadows and forests of the luxurious flowers, breast-high, which overspread them but a few years ago.

Fresh from the impression of the beauty of nature in its wildest aspects, and of how that impression can be impaired by the intrusion of man, we descended again to the level floor of the Yosemite to see once more from below the wonders we had seen from above. What most impresses one in the valley is the close congregation of its wonders. Here, indeed, Ossa is piled upon Pelion. Along a winding gorge, less than ten miles in length and from half a mile to two miles in width, between walls rising almost sheer to the height of three thousand feet, is a series of wonders, the sight of any one of which would be compensation for the uncomfortable and fatiguing trip from the foothills. Lake, river, forests, waterfalls, headlands — there is nothing that is not unique, nothing that is not great.

Common sense would seem to dictate that in making this wonderland accessible to visitors, the treatment of the floor of the valley from the start should have been put in the hands of the very best experts, with a view not only to preserve and enhance the composition, unity, and natural charm of the pictures presented to the eye, but to see that nothing be done to disturb the rare sentiment of the scene. The unthinking may sneer at sentiment, but in such matters the sentiment is everything — the first consideration, the only "sense." Without encroaching upon it, there is still abundant room for practical and necessary adjustments, and that these may not clash with the sentiment is the chief concern of the expert who has to make nature esthetically available by man.

Now let us see what has been done to disturb the sentiment of Yosemite Valley. In the first place the situation and surroundings of the chief hotel, the Stoneman House, are strangely commonplace and repellent. At one side, within a stone's-throw, is a marshy field of stumps; in front is an uninteresting stretch of badly treated open forest, the floor of which, said to have been once covered with beautiful flowers, is now nearly bald with thin weeds. Unfortunate as is the situation of the hotel, the services of a landscape expert would very much have reduced the offensiveness of this view. The building itself is of the cheap summer-resort type, and was so badly constructed that it has recently been declared dangerous by the new commission. It is perhaps well that it is not more conspic-

uously placed, though it has been so highly thought of that trees have been injuriously trimmed up that it may be seen by approaching stages, and that these in turn may be seen by its guests. Much worse features of this neighborhood are a saloon at one side of it and on the line of its front, and a pig-sty in the rear of the house, which is sometimes so offensive that guests of the hotel have been forced to leave the piazzas.

In walking and driving over the valley, one's feelings of awe at the unspoilable monuments of nature are often marred by the intrusion of the work of unskillful hands upon the foreground of the picture. The importance of the foreground is increased by the narrowness of the gorge and the multiplicity of grand views in every direction, which are enhanced by agreeable foregrounds. In several conspicuous places are fields of rank ferns thickly dotted with stumps — once, according to photographs and the work of disinterested witnesses, spots of singular beauty. Many acres were thus transformed, fenced in and converted into hay-fields and leased to a transportation company, to the exclusion of the public; and though the removal of these fences has wisely been ordered by the commission, nature must be long in repairing the damage already done by the trampling of pasturing animals. Near the Yosemite Fall an unnecessary swath has been cut through the forest, to the sacrifice of some of the noblest oaks in the valley, the boles of which lie where they were felled. The object of this is represented to have been to open a vista from the bar-room of Barnard's Hotel, to rival the natural view of the same fall from the Stoneman House. Indeed much cutting of trees seems to have been done to open up artificial vistas, especially by trimming off the lower limbs of young conifers to one-third or one-half their height. It is idle to say that no trees should be cut in the Yosemite, but it is well known that the cutting of a tree is one of the most delicate operations of the landscape artist, and one does not have to look twice to see that in the valley the cutting has not been guided by expert advice. How much more the need of intelligence and skill when whole vistas are to be opened, and especially when the effect of the grandest scenery is part of the problem. In a number of places where thickets had been trimmed up I saw piles of dry branches lying under the deformed trees, thus exposing the valley to the danger of fire — a more remarkable sight since in general the commission seems to be fully alive to the danger of injury to the valley by fire.

The visitor to the Yosemite finds much to praise in the arrangements for reaching the points of interest. The trails are uniformly good; the guides, so far as I could learn, are sober, careful, and intelligent; the horses and mules are trustworthy for mountain work. One may not be wanting in appreciation of these and other excellent features of the valley management and still feel, from the evidence of his eyes, that in failing to enlist expert assistance the present commission and all previous commissions have exposed to serious danger the trust which they have in charge not only for themselves and for California, but for the world of to-day and of all time to come.

ciate of Major Savage, and his reply only serves to show the errors into which the old pioneers had been led. Mr. Cunningham said, "Boling's and Kukendall's company's first trip to Yosemite Valley, according to Mr. M. B. Lewis's adjutant's report, was early in April, 1851." The fact is, Kukendall's company was never in the Yosemite, but was on duty on King's River and in the Kah-we-ah, or Four Creeks country. I had, previous to this correspondence, been induced to take up the subject of the discovery by seeing numerous errors concerning it, and had written to Adjutant-General L. H. Foot of California for any records in his possession. The reply of General Foot was, "The records of this office, both written and printed, are so incomplete that I am not aware, from consulting them, that the organization to which you allude [the Mariposa Battalion] had existence." This reply decided me to record the events which led to the discovery of the valley, and my book, "The Discovery of the Yosemite," is the result.

In his valuable work, "In the Heart of the Sierras," Mr. J. M. Hutchings, after giving me full credit in the preface, says, "I have been able to supply the missing links needed for the completion of the historical chain of events so much desired and so unavailingly sought after by Dr. Bunnell concerning some of the valley's earlier history." Mr. Hutchings then introduces some valuable documents obtained from the journals of the California legislature, and quotes from Elliot's "History of Fresno County," with the idea of being accurate in his historical work. On page 56, referring to our first entrance into the valley, he says, "This was on May 5 or 6, 1851, although Dr. Bunnell incorrectly gives the latter part of March as the date."

An old California pioneer, as Mr. Hutchings is, should have remembered that the rainy season is over by May 5 or 6, and that with the exception of mountain storms no severe or long-continued ones occur so late. Our waiting on account of the rain at our camp in the foothills below Mariposa could scarcely have occurred in May, or have been forgotten by any of the expedition. Our major was talented, but unlettered,

and was dependent on his adjutant for all written communications, and these were frequently made long after the events to which they related. At the date of the discovery of the Yosemite our adjutant was not with us. As we were broken into scouting squads, an adjutant would have been no more useful in hunting Indians than would have been a drum-major, and consequently he was left at headquarters. Viewing the valley under snow and through a clouded sky, disappointed in his search for Indians, the only one found being an old squaw, our major seemingly had no appreciation of the Yosemite. Adjutant Lewis was a most genial, kind-hearted gentleman, but I never knew of any duties he performed in the field. The character of Major Savage's reports may be judged by his official estimate of the number of Indians engaged in hostilities (23,000).

Mr. Hutchings says, "The Mariposa Battalion was mustered out of service July 1, 1851." I have, however, an official statement from the War Department, Washington, D. C., that it was mustered out of service on July 25, 1851.

On page 272 the Mariposa Indian war is represented as the war of 1851-52. The first attack upon James D. Savage was made in May, 1850, his men were killed at the Fresno, in December of that year, and hostilities ceased with the capture of Ten-ei-ya and his band in June, 1851. Lieutenant Treadwell Moore, U. S. A., caught and executed five Yosemite murderers in 1852, but no war followed.

Comrade Starkey, of our old battalion, was murdered in 1853. His murderers were pursued by Under-sheriff James M. Roan, also a comrade, and when overtaken three of them were killed, and the others put to flight. Mr. Moore was compelled to notice the criticisms of the press, and in doing so, in 1854, became the first to draw attention to the wonderful character of the Yosemite scenery.

In 1855 Mr. Hutchings first visited it, and since that date has done more to bring the valley into public and appreciative notice than any other man.

HOMER, MINNESOTA.

Lafayette H. Bunnell.

TOPICS OF THE TIME.

Amateur Management of the Yosemite Scenery.

THE articles by Mr. John Muir in the present and preceding numbers of THE CENTURY on the Yosemite Valley and the proposed National Park will have failed of their natural effect if, in addition to exciting the wonder of the reader at the unique beauty of waterfall and cliff effectively portrayed in Mr. Muir's picturesque descriptions, they do not also stimulate the pride of Californians to an active interest in the better discharge of the trust assumed by the State in its acceptance of the Yosemite grant.

Mr. Muir shows abundantly how desirable it is to reserve for public use, under national supervision, contiguous lands, only less rich in natural wonders than the Yosemite. The reservation is not only desirable for its intrinsic value, but also because incidentally it will attract attention to the valley itself, and especially to the dangers to which it is exposed from the lack of

skill and knowledge in the commission which should be its most intelligent guardian. On this point Mr. Muir, who in California is recognized as the best authority on matters relating to the Sierra, adds his testimony to that of many other unprejudiced observers and lovers of the valley. He says:

Ax and plow, hogs and horses, have long been and are still busy in Yosemite's gardens and groves. All that is accessible and destructible is being rapidly destroyed—more rapidly than in any other Yosemite in the Sierra, though this is the only one that is under the special protection of the Government. And by far the greater part of this destruction of the fineness of wildness is of a kind that can claim no right relationship with that which necessarily follows use.¹

One might multiply testimony as to the injury already done to the floor of the valley were not the later boards²

¹ See p. 667 of the present number of this magazine; also "Destructive Tendencies in the Yosemite Valley," THE CENTURY for January, 1890.

lack of respect for the plainest principles of the treatment of landscape already notorious in California through testimony before an investigating committee of the California legislature — testimony abundantly supported by photographs of the injury done.

These later sins of commission might long ago have been avoided were it not for the sins of omission of earlier boards. Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, the distinguished landscape forester, and a member of the first Yosemite Commission, was once officially invited to suggest a plan for making the valley available to the public. Mr. Olmsted's suggestions contemplated as little alteration to the natural growth as would be consistent with a public use which would not impair the sentiment of wildness and grandeur characteristic of the valley. His suggestions, however, though formally presented, were not only not adopted, but were never even printed in full. Had these been followed, visitors to the Yosemite in the past few years would not annually have seen the spectacle of the most phenomenal of the national pleasure grounds ignorantly hewed and hacked, sordidly plowed and fenced, and otherwise treated on principles of forestry which would disgrace a picnic ground.

Following Mr. Olmsted, another distinguished member of the first board, Prof. J. D. Whitney of Harvard University, for several years State Geologist of California, made further efforts to place the valley under systematic and proper supervision. Of his success Professor Whitney has lately written :

As chairman of the executive committee of the Yosemite Commission for several years, thwarted in every effort to carry out liberal, honest, and Christian ideas in regard to the management of the valley, finding my path blocked at all times by legislatures and courts, I have no confidence that anything could or would be gained by making any further conveyance of United States property to the State of California. If the Yosemite could be taken from the State and made a national reservation I should have some hope that some good might be accomplished. I have no idea that the State will ever manage the matter as it ought to be, and I should regret to see the limits of the grant extended.

A member of the present commission made very clear the issue between the friends and the enemies of reform when he said that he would rather have the advice of a Yosemite road-maker in the improvement of the valley than that of Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted. Since the Yosemite is unique among pleasure grounds, it is at one time assumed by this commissioner that Mr. Olmsted would make the valley a marvel of potted plants, and at another time that his love of wildness would lead him to import decayed and picturesque tree trunks; the fact being that no member of the commission has shown any conception of the principles upon which the modern treatment of nature in making it available to man is professionally carried on. The protest of the friends of reform is clear enough, and is not capable of being mistaken. It is simply that the Yosemite Valley is too great a work of nature to be marred by the intrusion of farming operations or of artificial effects.

Judging from the published reports of the meeting of the Yosemite Commission in the valley in June of the present year, steps are now being taken to put into operation a scheme to uproot and destroy the undergrowth, brush, and trees of the last forty years — a

policy which Mr. Olmsted has declared would result, if carried out, in "a calamity to the civilized world." It is difficult to believe the commission sincere in the exaggerated fear of a conflagration in Yosemite, which is given as the reason for this policy; for, as the reader will see by reference to the illustrations of Mr. Muir's article in *THE CENTURY* for August, there has been permitted a pernicious system of trimming up the young conifers to so considerable a height as to destroy the beauty of the trees, while the dry brush and the lopped limbs have been left lying upon the ground, where the writer of this article saw them in June, 1889. Assuming the danger from fire to be an actual one, it would seem to be better to spend one's energies in preventing the beginning of a conflagration than to destroy the beauty of the valley by cutting out what at most would be but a small part of the combustible material. But even if it were necessary to make extensive alterations by means of the ax, does this lessen to any degree the necessity for expert knowledge in the operation? Members of the commission have publicly discussed the matter as though the question to be considered were the stoutness of the axman, and not the effect of his work to the eye. After this, the qualifications of the "experienced foresters" whom they expect to consult in their avowed policy of slaughtering the young growth in the valley may easily be imagined; they are certainly not such as will commend themselves to the respect and confidence of the public.

So far *THE CENTURY* has confined its protest against Yosemite management in this matter solely to the lack of expert supervision of the scenery. As to the causes which lie behind, and have for years preceded, the lamentable condition of affairs in the valley, Californians have every reason to be intelligent. It is devoutly to be hoped for the good name of the State that it will not be necessary to transfer to the halls of Congress the scandals of California's capitol. If this shall not be necessary, it will probably be due to the fact that the next legislature of the State will be awakened to a sense of its responsibility in the matter. Meanwhile it is easy to see that the fire which endangers the Yosemite is not so much the unextinguished embers of the wandering camper as the all-consuming flame of politics, which nowhere burns with a fiercer or more withering heat than in the noble State of California.

Misgovernment of Cities.

WHY are American cities so generally misgoverned, and what is the remedy? These are questions which have been discussed almost constantly for many years, and the discussion has produced many plans for reform, some of which have been tried, but none of which has resulted in the establishment of anything more than a temporary and limited improvement. One set of reformers has maintained that the only way by which approximately good government could be secured was by the concentration of power in the hands of one executive, or at most of an executive and a few heads of departments. Another set has maintained that such concentration would lead surely to an aggravation of all our worst evils, and that the only road to reform lay in division of responsibility and power among the executive and legislative and administrative branches. Others have maintained that local rule was bad under

OPEN LETTERS.

Notes on Michelangelo.

I REMEMBER a picture by Gérôme that represents Raphael in his first visit to the Sistine Chapel—that stolen visit recorded by Vasari, and in which Raphael is shown to be shrinking to the ground as he steals along with his head raised to the stupendous creations above him. Something of this feeling of shrinking always comes over me when I go into the Sistine Chapel. I have been much impressed, while engraving the "Cumæan Sibyl," with the incessant movement of Michelangelo. It is endless, but most subtle. All is form with him—grandeur of form. Yet he has grand repose—the repose of the ocean, never at rest. If he should give way to the terrible within him! *But he is always contained*, and they are, to my thinking, mistaken in him who say he always "lets himself out." Where is there any such excess about him? It would be the height of all absurdity and weakness, found no doubt among his followers, with whom let those compare him who think he is "all blow," and they may then perhaps see or feel the profound depth and grandeur and forbearance he is possessed of, and the terrible inward power he suggests. Note the marvelous finish of his things, even to the minutest portions. His flesh is so highly finished that you feel its softness, and when he sets his hand to finish, he slights nothing, and it is amazing what delicacy he can give. He paints the twisted thread in his "Three Fates" with the utmost fidelity; you note its twisted character throughout, and the light upon it, relieving it from the drapery here and there, and then the bunch of flax in its sheaf, most remarkable for lightness and delicacy of touch. I could not reproduce, should I engrave never so fine, the amazing quantity of work he puts in, and the finish and delicacy he gives to everything.

Michelangelo's coloring is not what is generally known as rich, but it is perfection in the harmony and softness of tints. The frescos of the Vatican have darkened from dampness and the smoke of incense, but it is easy to see that they must have been light in coloring—painted in a very high key. The highest lights even now approach pure white, while the darkest portions are gray and soft. The scheme of coloring in the whole is very refined; nothing is pronounced or positive. The tints are laid in broadly, and float tenderly into one another. The backgrounds to the figures and the skies are gray, the lightest portions nearly pure white, while the coloring of the robes is sometimes blue of a fresh, pure, delicate tint, red of a fine, soft grayish tone, yellow inclining to old gold, and green of a most delicate soft gray tone; and then there are mixtures of these tones of fine subtle hues impossible to describe, but darkish and gray in tone. His flesh tints are finely worked, of a darkish warm gray tone. It is a grandeur and depth of coloring quite befitting the nobleness of the theme and execution.

I did not engrave the cracks in the "Cumæa," as I did in the "Delphica." You don't see them, or are not attracted by them, as you look up at the frescos.

T. Cole.

California's Interest in Yosemite Reform.

THAT the errors which have brought the management of the Yosemite Valley into disrepute should be excused, or even applauded, by an odd person or newspaper here and there in California, is in line with what was to be expected by those who have sought to effect an alteration of the policy which has had such regrettable results in almost every department of the control of the Valley. There is no cause so bad or so ridiculous that it may not procure encouragement from people of excellent conduct in their every-day affairs, but who are by nature or by lack of training incapable of discrimination in special concerns, or who, in dealing with public interests, allow personal sympathies or narrow local prejudices to hustle their better judgment unceremoniously out of doors. Were the good citizens of San Francisco to awake some morning to discover that their beautiful Golden Gate Park had been villainously desecrated during the night—that, for example, some of its fairest parts had been parceled off into potato patches or cattle corrals; that other extensive tracts had been withdrawn from public enjoyment and were occupied as hay-fields or pastures for hack-horses; that fine trees and shrubbery, so laboriously and expensively established, had been ignorantly hacked or burned; that, in short, the whole place had been turned over to the mercies of a management devoid of proper perception of what is attractive and lovely in landscape effects—then assuredly would be heard a great tumult of indignation. At the same time there would doubtless be audible some small percentage of voices wondering why there should be so much ado about nothing, or professing hearty admiration for the practical common sense under whose guidance the transformation had been evolved.

It would be a dim discernment that could make question as to which of these opposing sentiments would finally prevail. So also, despite the childish pamphletting and the unnecessarily vehement protests of the Yosemite Commissioners and their limited circle of apologists, no occasion has arisen, or is likely to arise, to doubt that the endeavor which is in progress to secure a reformation in the management of the Valley is regarded otherwise than with approval by all Californians not directly, or indirectly, under the sway of the influences which have been mainly responsible for the injurious courses that are the objects of complaint. To credit the people of California with any other opinion would indeed be to impeach their intelligent loyalty to their State. It is obvious that the honor and the interest of California, so far as they are at all affected thereby, are to be served much more efficiently by working out an improvement in the handling of so conspicuous a subject as the Yosemite Valley than by refusing to see, or denying the existence of, destructive tendencies which are most palpably in evidence. The press of the State has not been slow to recognize so reasonable a proposition. It has, in fact, contained many utterances certainly no less condemnatory of the Yosemite management than those which have found expression elsewhere.

Other indications of the sentiment of California were

observable during last winter's session of the legislature. A committee of that body, having to report on the advisability of abolishing the Yosemite Commission, explained in effect that they were not prepared to accept the responsibility of recommending such abolition, simply because the act of Congress which intrusted the Yosemite to California had prescribed the form of governments composed at present. To abolish the Commission before preparing to replace it by some other system of management would be to leave the premises without any ruling authority. Such a report was, of course, equivalent to an announcement that but for the obstacle presented by the act of Congress the committee would have recommended the abolition of the Commission as useless or something worse. It was noticeable, too, that while the Yosemite Commissioners had asked for the sum of \$50,000 to cover their expenses during the present year and the next, the legislature appropriated no more than \$15,000. That in this large reduction of the estimate there was no suggestion of close-handedness is proved by the appropriation later in the session of a sum of \$50,000 (afterward vetoed by the Governor) to pay for building a public highway to the Valley, and so to relieve travelers from the onerous demands of the system of private toll-roads by which the great resort is now reached. It is well understood in California that the controlling element of the Commission has been opposed to the establishment of a free public road, as such an institution would be contrary to the interests of the transportation companies doing business in connection with the Valley. The rejection of the Commission's estimate of expenditure, the appropriation of \$50,000 for a purpose not supported by that body, and the unavoidable interpretation to be given to the legislative committee's report concerning the abolition of the Board of Commissioners, are all instructive indices to the disfavor with which the management is regarded by the mass of Californians themselves.

The time would appear to be ripe for the formulation of a distinct scheme for an improved method of direction of the Valley. The longer a reformation is delayed the greater will become the hindrances to its operation and the more irreparable will be the consequences of inappreciative and unskilful management. It must be borne in mind that the present Commission has publicly announced its intention to cut down all the trees which have sprouted in the Valley within thirty years—a policy which Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted, the expert professional landscape architect, states would prove in execution "a calamity to the civilized world." An immense amount of damage may be wrought even with the reduced appropriation which the legislature felt compelled to concede in order to provide for the maintenance of existing roads, trails, and other necessary conveniences. The unwise expenditure of a few hundred dollars may destroy attractions that could be replaced, if at all, by no outlay of money, but only by the indefinitely prolonged lapse of time. Already—and while the Commissioners have been denying that the floor of the Valley has been injured by the official management—an insignificant sum in dollars has proved adequate to degrade the wild natural charm of Mirror Lake into the condition of a mere artificial irrigation reservoir, and the cheap and debasing "improvements" on exhibition at that once romantic tarn have their coun-

terparts in a long panorama of allied barbarities. To the end that such encroachments on the perfection of Yosemite may not become ineradicable, and on a continually spreading scale, procrastination in transferring the management to hands of the highest expertness will be one of those blunders that fall little short of constituting a crime.

Perhaps the readiest and most effective method of securing a reform would be found through the absorption of the district covered by the grant to California in the great National Park—a reservation as large as the State of Rhode Island—recently established by act of Congress, and which entirely surrounds the Valley, extending away for many miles on every side. Such an absorption would go far to hasten the arrangement of a thorough system of park control not yet advanced beyond the stage of a preliminary makeshift. The proposed absorption has been widely commended throughout California, the generality of whose people are endowed with sufficient acumen of mind not to be deceived by appeals to the contrary—appeals based on perverted notions of State pride, and instigated by purely selfish motives of personal vanity or pecuniary advantage. Californians are justly proud of their State, and are not likely to be satisfied with less than the best expert care of their wonderful scenic treasures. One can find an upland farm anywhere. The glory of Yosemite consists largely in its wildness, and this characteristic can be preserved only by intelligence and skill of the highest order.

George G. Mackenzie.

The Paris Opera.

THE French National Academy of Music was founded in the year 1669, during the reign of Louis XIV. Before being transferred to the splendid edifice erected by M. Charles Garnier, the opera was located in various parts of Paris—in the Rue de Valois at one time, on the Place Royale at another, and again in the Rue Le Peletier. Between its foundation and the year 1672 the opera only performed unimportant works, such as ballets. The first lyric work it presented was an opera-ballet by Lulli, entitled "The Fêtes of Cupid and Bacchus." For a century after 1672 a considerable number of operatic works by French and Italian composers of every kind and without any distinct characteristic were performed at the opera, and it was only when Gluck's "Iphigénie en Aulide" was produced in 1774 that dramatic music acquired a special form in France.

M. Arthur Pougin, a French writer well known as an authority on music, has written an admirable monograph on Gluck, who may be styled the founder of French music. His "Orphée" was produced at Paris in 1774, "Alceste" in 1776, "Armide" in 1777, and "Iphigénie en Tauride" in 1779. M. Pougin has justly said that the rôle played by Gluck in the revolution of French dramatic music was so preponderant that he originated a school of music which abandoned and destroyed the former repertoire of the opera. Gluck's genius was so powerful and so innovative that he overturned all musical theories which had preceded him. The only opposition he encountered was from the partizans of an Italian composer named Piccinni, whose "Roland" was performed at the opera in 1778

the apparel of a delicate, high-bred Friend. A plain gray dress sufficed for traveling, a black silk one was reserved for social and public occasions. A shawl or velvet mantle without ornaments she reserved for occasions when she was to meet persons of high social or public position. Her waving brown hair was brought over the temples, and carried above the ears, in the fashion of the period. Her soft, brilliant, blue-gray eyes, with pupils so dilating as to cause the eyes to seem black; the bright glow of her cheeks; her

shapely head set on a neck so long, flexible, and graceful as to impart an air of distinction to her carriage—all expressed the blending of dignity, force, and tenderness in her character. She was one of those who have greatness thrust upon them. She never sought nor proclaimed it, but bore herself with an endearing humility to the last, leaving the impress of a life inimitable, truly, in its proportions, but precious in its efficiency, in its absence of ostentation, and in its deep-seated but never cymbal-clanging piety.

Mary S. Robinson.

TOPICS OF THE TIME.

The Proposed Recession of the Yosemite Valley.

NO one who has beheld the glories of the Yosemite Valley can remain indifferent to the preservation and (so far as it is possible by the work of man) the enhancement of the attractiveness of this phenomenal scenery; and it is doubtless this penetrating impression in the minds of persons of taste which has led to the numerous and continuous protests against what are, to say the least, serious errors of judgment in the official conduct of the valley.

Remembering that the total effect of this colossal scenery is not dependent merely upon the unspoiled and unspoilable natural monuments and waterfalls, but upon the harmonious relation which these bear in the mind of the beholder to the beautiful groves and fields which form the floor of the valley, one sees the necessity of providing for this concord on the highest plane of expert intelligence.

That such intelligence has been sadly wanting, and that in the past six years respectful appeals to members of the successive boards of control for a reform of the amateur system have been contemptuously disregarded, are matters of abundant record. It will be remembered by the readers of *THE CENTURY* that in this magazine for January, 1890, we printed three temperate statements, made after personal investigation, calling attention to the "Destructive Tendencies in the Yosemite Valley"; and without taking responsibility for any exaggerated statements that may have been made elsewhere, we called special attention editorially to the question of greatest importance—"Has the treatment of the Yosemite landscape been intrusted to skilful hands?" This publication was not made in *THE CENTURY* until after the attention of an influential member of the Yosemite Commission of 1889 had been personally called to the evident necessity of reform; nor were we by any means the first to take this view of the matter, for so great had been the abuses resulting from the lack of intelligent supervision that, at the original instance of Mr. Charles D. Robinson, a previous investigation of the matter had been made by a legislative committee, which revealed, at least, that the landscape management of the valley was not on the high plane demanded by the character of the scenery.

In presenting to our readers at that time photographic views showing unskilful treatment of the landscape, we said:

Without going into the details of the alleged abuses, monopolies, rings, and persecutions, it is easy to see in the above testimony and photographs abundant confirmation of those who hold that the valley has not had the benefit of expert supervision. In saying this we are not impugning the good faith of past or present commissions or commissioners, appointed for other reasons than their skilfulness in the treatment of landscape. They are certainly to be acquitted of any intention to injure the valley: that would be unbelievable. It is no reproach to them that they are not trained foresters. Their responsibility, however, does not end there: it is, in fact, there that it begins; for, in the absence of knowledge of a professional nature, it should be their first aim to obtain the very best man or men available to do this work. No such expert is too good or too expensive, and no claim upon the budget of California should have precedence of this. If the commissioners have not money enough for this expenditure, it is part of their duty as holders of a great trust to arouse a public sentiment which shall procure the proper appropriation. The press of the country, which is never backward in such matters, would lend an effective support to the demand for funds for this most necessary expert care.

Evidence is not wanting that this and similar discussions of the subject were of use in bringing public opinion to bear upon the commissioners, and there is no doubt that in some respects the management of the valley has since been freer from causes of criticism. There is, however, no evidence of a fixed disposition on the part of the commissioners to recognize the crying need of expert supervision, and at their annual meeting held in June of the present year, a contract was let for the "underbrushing" of the valley at an expense of \$3000, and to a person with no pretension to the requisite skill. At the time of our publication the intention to "cut down every tree that has sprouted within the last thirty years" had been announced by an active member of the commission, and it had been declared by Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted (who, it need hardly be said, stands at the head of the profession of landscape engineers in this country) that this policy, if it were carried out, "would eventually result in an irreparable calamity—a calamity to the civilized world."

It will thus be seen that this danger, against which we protested when it was nothing more than a threat, has now been put on the highway to realization. How far it will be carried, who shall say? The following extracts from a letter from Eugene F. Weigel, Special Land Inspector, written from San Francisco, October 3, 1892, as part of his report to the Hon. John W. Noble, Secretary of the Interior, tells its own story:

As I already informed you, a good deal of underbrushing had been done near the Stoneman House in Yosemite Valley and around the stables of the Transportation Co., by direction of the State Commissioners, under the supervision of Galen Clark, the Guardian. Mr. Clark was formerly one of the commissioners, and, although 78 years old, is still active, and appears to be an educated, honorable man. He took me around to the places where the clearing had been done for the purpose of lessening the danger of fires, and which, it is true, at times partook of the nature of a mutilation of natural beauty. Guardian Clark was free to confess that he was no scientific landscaper, and that he carried out the orders of the board to the best of his ability. *He said that he had frequently importuned the commissioners to employ some expert landscape engineer to thoroughly study the valley, and make a systematic plan of improvements that might be carried out in the course of several years, but all to no avail.*

Mr. Clark's failure to obtain any attention for these suggestions recalls the reception given to our similar suggestion in the summer of 1889, when a member of the Commission of that year declared to the writer that in this matter he "would rather have the services of a Yosemite tree-cutter than of the best so-called Eastern expert, Frederick Law Olmsted, or anybody else."

In the face of such a policy, both passive and avowed, it clearly becomes the duty of Congress to consider whether this and other defects in the management of the valley do not invalidate the stipulation made in the act of cession of 1864, that the said State "shall accept this grant upon the express conditions that its premises shall be held for public use, resort, and recreation, inalienable for all time," etc. For this action a strong basis would be found in the opinion which, in response to a Senate resolution and after careful official inquiry, Secretary Noble has expressed, that the conditions of the grant have not been complied with.

There is good reason, however, to hope that such a course will not be necessary, but that the better judgment of public opinion in California will be operative to procure a voluntary act of recession of the valley. A prominent member of the Commission has denied that California is in sympathy with the reform sentiment; but Mr. Weigel, writing from San Francisco, says:

To judge by the utterances of individuals here, as well as in Merced, Mariposa, and Fresno counties, a large majority of the people would be in favor of letting the government of the Yosemite Valley revert to the National Government. I have been informed by different parties that an effort will be made in the next Assembly to accomplish this object.

An additional reason for this action exists in the fact that by an act of October 1, 1890, Congress created a new National Park, of which the old grant to the State of California is the heart, and which is almost equal in extent to the State of Rhode Island, but does not include in its jurisdiction the valley which it surrounds. It was the belief of those most active in procuring this legislation, that the establishment of the larger park was not only desirable in itself, but would be a stepping-stone to reform within the State grant. It is obvious that the two reservations should be under one control. Were the official management of the smaller such as to awaken public confidence, it is not improbable that there would be a movement to place the larger in the same hands. As it is, the continued disregard by the Commission of what is due to the American people in this matter, makes it all the more desirable that the consolidation should be under the Government.

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The sincere regard for the public interests shown by Secretary Noble in the matter of such reservations, and his vigorous and intelligent action in the management of the Yosemite National Park, in spite of the lack of an adequate appropriation for his work, are worthy of the highest praise. His demonstration of the efficiency of national control, and his conviction that recession is necessary, are strong arguments in favor of a policy which would, in the long run, prove to be vastly more beneficial to all the legitimate interests of California than the present policy of neglect and blundering.

Moreover, the granting by Congress during the past year of right of way to a free road into the valley makes it less desirable for the vested interests now virtually in control of the valley to oppose such a movement. Mr. Weigel says:

To the ordinary traveler the toll-roads in and outside of the Park are very annoying, and the free road to be built up to the valley from Merced this winter will be hailed with delight, besides possessing the advantage of enabling the tourist to visit the valley all the year round. It will reach Yosemite Valley on easy grades *via* Mariposa, and attain no high altitudes, so that it can be kept open all winter.

Mr. A. H. Ward, a prominent citizen of Alameda, California, writing October 5, 1892, says:

At present, as you are aware, the valley is only reached by a roundabout mountain toll-road that is open but six months in the year. This new road is to be free and open the year round. It will greatly increase the number of visitors, and, as a consequence, make the government of the park much more difficult. It will simply be impossible to manage it from a camp located on its extreme southern boundary. The headquarters should be in the valley. At present the valley is in the hands of a ring who run it for the number of dollars they can make, caring nothing for the public or their obligation to the State government. I strongly urge that the State of California be requested to return the deed of trust of the valley, that this valley ring be turned out, that the headquarters be established in the valley, and that a competent army officer be given full control.

It is to be hoped that Californians will not be misled by appeals to a false State pride in the cry that anybody is "attacking Yosemite" or the State of California, when the main point at issue is whether or not the servants of the State are exercising proper care of the wonders committed to their charge in trust for the people of the whole country. It is to be hoped that the legislature, at its coming session, will promptly pass an act receding the valley, and thus put an end once for all to the Yosemite scandal. Meantime Californians should organize to procure this action, remembering that eternal vigilance is the price of public parks.

New York and the World's Fair.

THE artistic and magnificent housing of the World's Fair at Chicago is in itself an exhibit more splendid and effective than any of its contents can possibly be. And yet the very worthiness of site, grounds, and buildings furnishes a new argument for the hearty and complete coöperation of the nation, and of the several States, in the preparation and presentation of the contained exhibits.

In this matter the State of New York has the greatest responsibility, and must put forth the greatest energy. But it is evident that the State appropriation is lamentably deficient. Especially is it deficient on the