

## CHAPTER XIV.

## A TRIP TO THE YOSEMITE.

THE Yosemite valley is in a straight line about one hundred and fifty miles from San Francisco. The direction is a little south of east; by any road that can be traveled the distance is about two hundred and fifty miles. It is near the center of the State, taking it lengthwise, and near the center of the Sierra Nevada range of mountains, taking it from east to west. The range in this place is about seventy miles wide.

We, a party of nine, took our seats in the cars, at the end of the ferry across the bay from San Francisco, on the afternoon of a June day, when June days are longest. Modesto was the terminus of the railroad, and we spent the night there, and took the stage at five o'clock the next morning. We had our first look at the Tuolumne river just after starting.

All the morning our road was through the San Joaquin valley. A more dreary, desolate, forsaken-looking region cannot well be conceived. One of the most fertile and fruitful parts of the State when blessed with a plentiful supply of water, it now, in consequence of excessive drouth, seemed to have the very pith and marrow dried out of it. When we came to Snelling, on the Merced, we looked eagerly at the river. It was our first chance to see this "river of Mercy." It was running along quite demurely on its way to find the San Joaquin, and seemed altogether

unconscious of the wonderful interest it excited further up and nearer its source.

After passing through Bear Valley we entered upon the celebrated Mariposa tract and crossed it diagonally. Everywhere there were signs of gold-digging, which makes sad havoc with a country, whether looked at from an æsthetic or agricultural point of view.

This Mariposa grant originally comprised seventy square miles, and at one time was said to make John C. Fremont the richest private citizen in the world. The lawyers have probably reaped the greater part of the golden harvest it has produced. Litigation in regard to it has been constant and continued for many years.

As the day wore on we had more interest in the way of scenery. There were valleys with oaks and pines scattered here and there, and hills the sides of which were covered with *chaparral*, or "devil's acres," as it is somewhat profanely called. *Chaparral* is a generic term used somewhat in the sense of thicket. A *chaparral* is generally made up of bushes of various species, such as the California lilac, grease-wood and other shrubs.

It was ten o'clock when we reached White and Hatch's. Pleasant haven of rest! The blessing of many a weary traveler has been bestowed upon this house, in consideration of the comfort and refreshment enjoyed within its walls. How clean and cool everything looked! Were there ever beds so restful! It was worth while to be so tired in order to know the blessedness of repose so delightful.

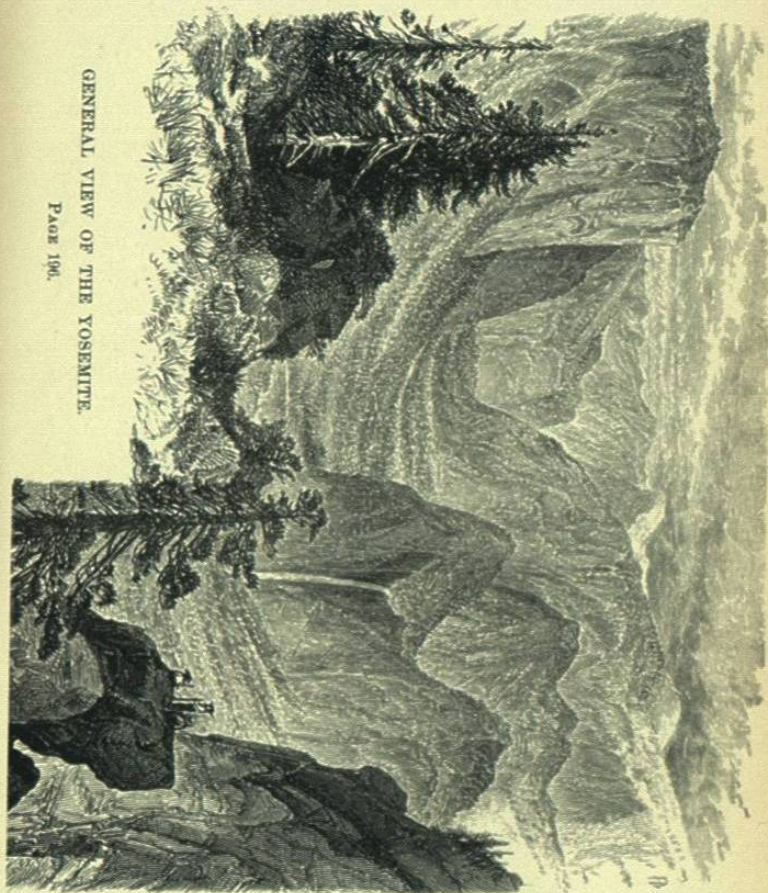
In the morning we had a chance to appreciate the sylvan beauty of the place. There was a hill near, on



which were huge rocks overgrown with moss. There were dark pines and fir trees on every side, which seemed to emulate each other in trying which could reach its head nearest to heaven. The sky wore a much more benign look than it did the previous morning. Why should it not? We were lifted three thousand feet above the fogs and miasmas that infest the face of mother earth.

At eight o'clock in the morning we started for Clark's. The trees on every side as we went our way were of grand size and proportions. They quite cast into the shade those we had seen and admired the day before. We continued to ascend until we were twenty-eight hundred feet above White and Hatch's, and more than a mile above the level of the sea. We were certainly on the road to an apotheosis. But we were not to take our seats among the gods yet. After crossing the divide between the Chowchilla and the south fork of the Merced we began to descend, and before we reached Clark's had gone down seventeen hundred feet. At Clark's we were on the same level with the Yosemite valley, four thousand feet above sea-level, and only twelve miles in a direct line from the goal of our hopes. Had we the wings of a dove we could have flown there by making just that distance. As we had not we were obliged to ride twenty-four miles, and go up and again down in order to reach the place. The first ceremony at the end of each ride was to be swept down. Somebody, broom in hand, was always in waiting to make free again the soil that had settled upon our garments. Clark's is a very comfortable place, where pleasant rest may be enjoyed. We stayed over a day here in order to visit the big-trees.

When the news of the wonderful big-trees of Califor-



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nia reached England, the botanists who investigated the matter decided that they were *sui generis*—not belonging to any known genus. Therefore, without a very nice appreciation of the claims of the country that produced them, they bestowed upon them a name derived from that of the "Iron Duke"—Wellingtonia. Subsequent examination proved them to be so like the already known redwood as to have a legal right to be included in the same genus. The specific name *gigantea* was added, and the name stands *Sequoia gigantea*. The age of these trees would seem sometimes to have been greatly overestimated. One of the largest and apparently oldest in the Calaveras grove was cut down and the concentric layers counted, by which it was proved to be thirteen hundred years old. The height is not so great as that of some of the eucalyptus trees in Australia, which often reach the altitude of four hundred feet, and one of which is reported to measure four hundred and eighty. The tallest of the big-trees which has yet been measured in the Calaveras grove, the Keystone State, is only three hundred and twenty-five feet high. But, taking height and thickness both into consideration, no tree has ever been known to equal the big-trees. They are always found in groves, but they are not exclusive—they allow other species to grow among them. Pines, spruce and cedars seem to feel no embarrassment at being found in the company of their betters, to which they in fact serve as a foil to set them off and show how much bigger they are than common trees. The *Sequoia gigantea* has as yet always been found within two degrees of latitude thirty-six and thirty-eight north, and at an elevation of from six to seven thousand feet



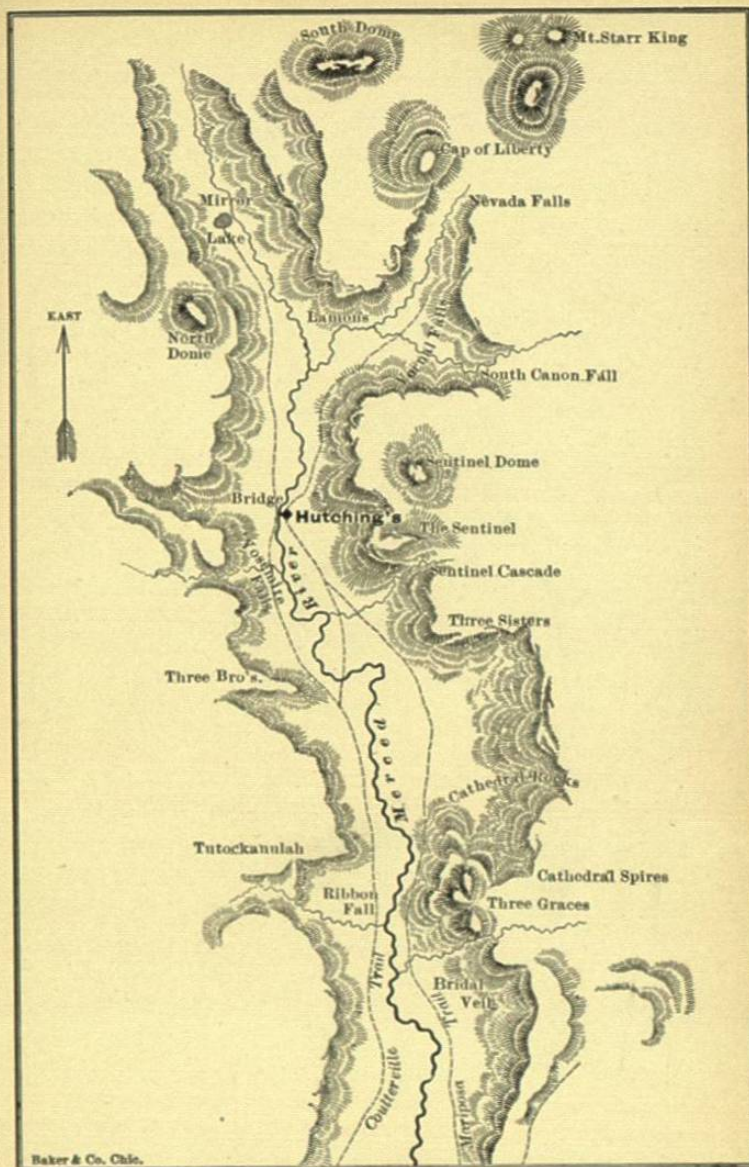
above the level of the sea. There are three groves north of the Mariposa, and four south of it. The Mariposa grove was discovered in 1857 by Mr. Clark. There are about six hundred trees in the grove, or groves, for it is in two divisions. There are trees in the Calaveras grove that exceed any in this in height, but in diameter some in the Mariposa carry off the palm. The Mariposa grove alone belongs to the State of California. The grant comprises a tract two miles square, and was given by the United States Government to the State; this, "together with the Yosemite valley, with its branches and spurs, an estimated length of fifteen miles, and in average width one mile back from the edge of the precipice on each side of the valley, with the stipulation, nevertheless, that the State shall accept this grant on the express condition that the premises shall be held for public use and recreation, and shall be inalienable for all time."

So much in the way of preliminaries and elucidation of matters in general. Through the greater we come to the less and reach the account of our own particular experiences and impressions. After reaching Clark's we were to say good-bye to wheels and trust ourselves to the tender mercies of horses, holding the reins of government in our own hands, though in my case they proved to be rather the symbol of power than the real thing. As soon as breakfast was over the horses were brought out, and we prepared to mount. This was a trying time to me. It was the one particular event that had been before me as a dread and an uncertainty ever since the journey was decided upon. I had bespoken a gentle horse. When my turn came to mount, a smooth brown mustang was brought

up and formally introduced as "Alek." He belonged to that class of sovereigns for whom one name is sufficient. In a few minutes the impossible was accomplished; I was fairly mounted. Whether I could maintain the eminent position assumed was the problem which the future was to solve. By holding on to the "horn" with an intensity that knew no relaxation I remained seated when Alek started, and we at once took the place which henceforth knew us in all our journeyings,—in the rear. Alek was determined to let his moderation be known, and we were in danger of either retarding the progress of some gentlemen benevolently inclined, or being left quite to ourselves in the background. I could not spare enough energy from the continued effort to "hold on" to give him any persuasive touches of the whip, and he seemed intuitively to divine the true state of the case. It was a rarely beautiful morning; the sun was clear and bright, and would have been too warm had we not been shaded by the trees that overhung the trail. We were above all fogs and miasmas, and breathed a most exhilarating atmosphere, which of itself would have sent hope and delight tingling through the veins. Our way led us up higher and higher until we were more than a mile above the level of the sea, and then we found the Big Trees! We entered the upper grove, and on the west side. Our first halt was made when we reached the Prostrate Monarch. The first feeling upon seeing the trees was that of disappointment; but when we had clambered up the side of this prostrate monarch and found ourselves standing thirty feet in the air, higher than the eaves of most two-story houses, while the tree lay flat upon the ground, we began to think that



the Titans had left their representatives behind them, and that the trees had not been overestimated. The bark is tan color, and from fifteen to twenty inches in thickness. It is of a loose, spongy texture, and when cut transversely is used sometimes for pin-cushions. There was pain always mingled with wonder and pleasure in looking at these monsters, for not one of them all is perfect. The fire has scathed them and more or less injured their appearance. This was done before the groves were known to white men. The Indians were accustomed to kindle fires in order to burn the underbrush, and so facilitate their hunting operations. It is a sad pity that they are so marred. We found a spring at the very roots of one of the largest trees, and the water was deliciously cool and refreshing. We spread our lunch near by, and ate under the shadow and protection of one of these great kings of the forest. Like most of the coniferous trees on the Pacific coast, the big-tree sends out no branches for a great distance from the ground—sometimes one hundred feet or more. The tops of many of them were broken off, showing that decay had already begun. There was something almost fearful in the stillness that reigned in the grove. No note of bird or hum of insect was heard. The silence was as profound as that when the primeval earth, all dressed in beauty and arrayed in glory, waited in silent expectancy the coming of its lord—the creation of man! Our guide was a backwoodsman, accustomed to roaming the forests and camping out for weeks in the wilderness; but he said he would rather stay alone through the night anywhere he had ever been than in one of these groves. There was something awful in the solitude. Oc-



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asionally, when a breeze suddenly woke up, there would be heard a sighing among the pines, and the big-trees with their hoarser wail would supply the bass, and make such a chorus as the ear might listen for in vain anywhere else in the world.

After lunch we mounted our horses and started for the other grove. On our way we rode from end to end through the trunk of a tree, that had been burned out and was lying on the ground. Through another, that was standing and had also been burned out, we rode in regular procession. The Grizzly Giant outranks all others in the grove in magnificent proportions. It is ninety-three feet seven inches in circumference, and sends out a branch ninety feet from the ground that is six feet in diameter. This tree is, like the rest, much injured by fire. There were ten of us in the company. We arranged ourselves around the Grizzly Giant, sitting on our horses and bringing them head and tail together as closely as we could, and thus we reached about half way round the tree. The Queen of the Forest is less injured by fire than most of the other trees, and is great and grand enough to deserve the name it bears.

The trees seemed to grow in size every hour that we spent in looking at them. The first disappointment soon gave place to wonder that increased constantly. Before we came away, they by their actual presence surpassed all expectation or imagination. There are no words that can worthily describe them; for before they came in view there was a want of language to express the feelings of awe, of wonder, of might and majesty that were awakened.

The wood is of a color like our eastern cedar, though



somewhat lighter. It is inodorous, at least when dry, and is said to be very durable. In the groves further south the young trees are cut, taken to the mills and sawn into boards. The Mariposa grove is protected by a very watchful guardianship. Our guide did not dare so much as peel off a piece of bark, being forbidden by his oath of office; but one of the men with us had no such impediment in his way, and helped us to wood and bark. Mr. Clark is the guardian appointed by the State to take care of the grove, and also of the Yosemite valley. Other men, called commissioners, are united with him, but he is the acting quorum.

The sun had gone far on its way toward the west when we set out on our return. What a day it had been! What new sensations had been awakened! What surprise, what wonder, what admiration! A new element had come into our lives, to be separated from them again nevermore. Here we first saw the wonderful snow-plant. This beautiful thing does not derive its name from its color, for that is in strong contrast to white, but from the fact that it pushes its way up through the snow, as though that was its native element. The whole plant is a bright red — not flame color, not blood color, but sometimes one and sometimes both. It is veined and shaded in its hue; it grows from eight to twelve inches high, and, like the goddess who burst upon the world full-armed, it comes up out of the ground equipped and perfect. The growing seems to be all done in the secret places of the earth, before it exposes itself to view. First the head or top pushes up and presents itself; then it keeps on rising, rising, till it stands up erect, a full-grown plant. The

little florets are arranged around the stalk like the flowers on mullein. When it first appears above the ground there is a long, narrow leaf, which is also red, wrapped carefully around each floret, to protect it while pushing its way up into the free air. This official duty done, the leaf twists itself about the stalk so as not to obscure the beauty of the flower and let it have a fair chance to be seen. This was the most curious plant that we saw during our trip. It seemed to grow abundantly all around the valley of the Yosemite, but we found none in it. At Peregoy's a dozen could be found under a single pine tree. The botanical name of the plant is *Sarcodes sanguinea*.

At eight o'clock the next morning we again mounted our horses. A ride of twenty-five miles would bring us to the Yosemite. Mentally, I was in a better condition than at starting on the previous day; because of the facility with which the mind becomes accustomed to danger, I could trust myself in my perilous position on the back of the horse with diminished trepidation and alarm. But physically! Ah, well! what boots it to tell of the wounds and bruises? Alek seemed by this time to have clear and settled convictions in regard to his rider. That I had not much will of my own was self-evident to him, and that I did not dare assert what little I had in the face of opposition was equally apparent. These first impressions were not effaced throughout all the ten days that we afterward journeyed together. Another conviction was equally well fastened upon Alek's mind. He was conscious of having the advantage on the score of that practical knowledge which was necessary for the



emergencies to come. I went over to his opinion before we had been fellow-travelers very long.

We—that is, Alek and I—always guarded the rear of the party, to see that no evil came upon them from behind. It is only another proof that good deeds are not always recognized and rewarded, that our services in this respect were not appreciated, or, if they were, it was with the silent thankfulness with which the earth receives rain from the clouds. There was nothing said about it!

There was no great exuberance of spirit in starting, such as there had been the day before. The damaging effects of the fifteen miles' ride of the previous day were rather sedative in their influence, at least so far as the spirits were concerned. We crossed the south fork of the Merced just after leaving Clark's. It is quite a respectable little river there. Then we took our winding way up the hill. Our party had gained three by accretion, so that with our guide and pack-mule we made quite a cavalcade. This pack-mule was a real character in his way, and deserves from a veracious historian more particular mention. He was a dumpy little fellow, compactly built and well put together. His strength must have been great in proportion to his size, for on his diminutive body was packed all the luggage that belonged to our party of twelve. To be sure, there were no Saratoga trunks, but there were in the company four ladies fully equipped for a trip of ten days.

The name of this enterprising mule was "Jocko." How he would grunt as bag after bag, satchel after satchel, was brought out and placed upon his back! The girth was with each parcel drawn more and more tightly. Such

long breaths as he would draw while the process was going on, as though he felt doubtful whether he should ever have another chance to inflate his lungs. But Jocko was very much of a philosopher, and submitted to the inevitable, when fairly proved inevitable, with great resignation. When he was once loaded, and matters were settled so that he knew what to depend upon, he accepted his burden and set off as briskly, and apparently in as good spirits, as though he were starting on a long-desired pleasure trip. He gave evidence of taste and cultivation in the course of the journey. Like the rest of us, he sometimes grew tired, his spirits flagged, and his steps became slow. But if the voice of our sweet singer was heard, charming us with some melody, Jocko pricked up his ears and started on with new life and courage, as much as to say: "If you would have a mule carry a pack and travel with ease and diligence, you must do something to keep up his spirits." He had judgment, too, and a mind of his own, as mules generally do.

On one occasion during the journey he chanced to be about midway in the procession. There was a narrow place in the trail, with large rocks on each side, through which those that were before Jocko passed without trouble. When he came to the narrow pass he made up his mind that there was not sufficient room for him, with his pack extending on each side like very substantial wings. So he stopped, and, putting on a most determined look, said, as plainly as he could, "You'll not get me through there till you have taken my pack off." He did not mean to jeopardize what was intrusted to him. Like all noble natures, he felt bound to be faithful to a trust.



The guide tried in vain to make him go through. Even the logic of blows was not sufficient to persuade him to make the attempt. It took the united strength of two or three of the party to conquer his will and get him through the pass.

On we went in single file, winding our way up the hill—up—up. Still up our way led us, till we were on the divide between the South Fork and the main Merced river, seven thousand feet above the level of the sea. There we found only the tamarack and the noble fir, which grow nearer to heaven than any other trees. We had our pay as we went along for the fatigue we endured. What we saw and heard by the way would have been sufficient compensation had there been nothing beyond. We looked out over an apparently endless range of mountains. They stretched away off as far as the eye could reach, and the air was so clear and pure that the view seemed almost boundless. Range upon range, mountain upon mountain, rose up to point the thoughts heavenward, and everywhere they were covered with trees whose majesty and magnificence made the sight rarely beautiful. The sighing of the wind in the tops of the pine trees was something that affected me strangely. It stirred up all there was within me that was good and gracious, and made me wish to fall further and further in the rear, so as to be all alone, with "God o'erhead." I should never weary of this "harp of a thousand strings," played by an unseen hand, that knows so well how to touch it. Oftentimes there was a sort of refrain. The tune would be started on one hill-top, and the sound would spread and deepen and widen until all the trees on all the mountains joined in the chorus, and there

went up to heaven a universal anthem, harmonious and grand. There was room in my heart for only one regret—that I could not stop and look and listen till I was satisfied. I must hurry on or I should be left too far behind. At twelve o'clock we reached Peregoy's, the half-way house, and were fifteen hundred feet above the Yosemite valley. "Peregoy's" is a name that falls pleasantly on the ears of travelers to the Yosemite. Is it shockingly low and material to commend a place because you find nice things to eat there? Should pilgrims, on their way to worship at the shrine of the grand and the beautiful, stop and rejoice in cream pies and juicy steaks? There is a carnal body as well as a spiritual, and while we are of the earth we must be earthy enough to feed the bodies that would perish without eating; and if we must feed them, what harm in desiring the best to do it with?

The mountain-air, riding and the strangeness of the conditions wake up the servants of digestion and make them very clamorous. All sluggishness is gone. The office of food is magnified. Eating is an important fact. This is understood and provided for at Peregoy's. There is no style, there are no printed bills of fare or change of cloth at dinner, but everything is good and enjoyable. There never were such steaks and such mutton-chops; and as for the cream pies and wonderful cakes, they would be fit company for the nectar of the gods at the feasts in Olympus. The name of Peregoy lingers pleasantly in the ears of travelers. May the genius that presides over that kitchen feel the richness that comes from being blessed by thousands, who are made stronger and happier by the ministrations of her hands!



The air is so pure at this point, and so free from any corrupting influences, that meat can be kept ten or twelve days without any application of salt. But there was no chance to try any such experiment while we were there; we helped put all provisions beyond a peradventure as to their future. It was the original intention of our party to go no further than Peregoy's the day we left Clark's. But after dinner and a rest of three hours we were so much refreshed that there was a unanimous vote to go on and get into the valley the same night, and be there ready to celebrate our national birthday on the morrow. So we started on quite cheerfully and courageously. We had twelve miles before us, and to those of us who were unaccustomed to the saddle it was a large addition to make to the twelve already traveled. We went on still ascending till we were seven thousand four hundred feet above the ocean, more than three thousand above Clark's. In many places the trail led up the mountain as nearly perpendicularly as earth would stay; then it was rocky and rough, which seemed to add to the danger as well as the toilsomeness of the ascent. Something was gained by making the trail zig-zag, like a Virginia fence. I was interested in watching Alek, and seeing how thorough was his knowledge of the laws of gravitation and equipoise.

He would go to the very farthest verge of the angle, so that his head and almost his entire body sometimes would project beyond the path; then, making a fulcrum of his hind legs, he would turn himself with gravity and deliberation, go on to the next angle, and so repeat the process. At first, not having learned to confide entirely

in his wisdom and judgment, I pulled the rein to prevent his going out of the track, as I thought he intended. He never paid the slightest attention to my efforts, and I soon concluded it was better to content myself with being a shadow behind the throne and give up all power and authority to him, devoting myself with a single eye to the one business of keeping myself on his back. To this determination I adhered ever after. The appearance of the party was often very picturesque, viewed from the rear, which was always my standpoint of observation. The whole party wound their way up the hill one after another, some on one level and others on a higher, the different hues of the costumes distinguishing each from the other as they were now lost to sight and then appearing again, like the pieces in a kaleidoscope. The zig-zag of the trail increased the effect and strengthened the appeal to the imagination, making it easy to set one's self back in the stream of time to an era which antedates the birth of railroads and coaches, when brave knights went to the rescue of fair ladies, on gallant steeds, with spear and breastplate. Sometimes a song would be started, and one after another would join in until the chorus was swelled by the voices of all the company. The tones lingered in the valleys and were echoed by the hills, until Nature herself took up the refrain and seemed to complete the harmony. Brave little Jocko usually took precedence, as though the superior value of his cargo entitled him to that distinction. So we went on, rather flagging as the day advanced, till we came to Inspiration Point, where we were to have our first view of the remarkable place we had come so



far to see. As we neared the spot, silence fell upon the party—all were busy with their own thoughts. Faith was soon to be turned into sight. With our own eyes we should soon verify what had been told us of this wonderful valley, like which there was said to be no other. That supreme moment, desired so long, hoped for through years, was near at hand. Then there was, after all, a vague uncertainty as to what the sight would be to us individually. Would our hopes or our fears be realized? The veil would soon be lifted, and we should know for ourselves—no longer see through the eyes of others. We dismounted at a little distance, and were soon on the edge of the precipice. There it was—this trough hewn out of the mountains. Awe-struck I stood, mute, and almost immovable. I should have been glad to be all alone in this first interview with God manifest in so wonderful a way. The whole valley lay spread out like a map beneath us. El Capitan stood out most prominently, for it was exactly before us. The Half Dome also arrested attention whenever we looked toward the upper end of the valley. We did not know until afterwards all the different points. It was the grand whole that bewildered and overwhelmed us. Whatever of majesty that is made up of imaginable strength and massiveness was there. Whatever of sublimity, inconceivable height and unsounded depth can give was there.

But the sun was nearing the western horizon. We could not satisfy ourselves with looking, for we were yet six miles from our place of rest. Not six ordinary miles. One would have very little idea of distance in and about

the Yosemite who did not go beyond the common notions of miles and measures. Like everything else, the miles are on a scale of magnificence that dwarfs all common conceptions.

We began the descent of the mountain after leaving Inspiration Point. We had been climbing up nearly all the way from Clark's only to be obliged to descend again. The grade from the top of the mountain down into the valley was much steeper than any we had previously had. It did not seem possible for the rider to keep the center of gravity within the compass of the horse's ears. There was constant expectation of being required to describe a tangent or a parabola in falling over his head. These mustangs are wonderfully wise and skillful in their day and generation, and possess remarkable presence of mind into the bargain. Others might be thrown off their balance, but not they. They always know exactly where to put their feet and how to carry not only themselves but their riders. The sun had disappeared from the heavens and the moon taken its place when we reached the foot of the mountain and entered the valley; so we had our first near view under the witchery of moonlight. But alas for poetic phantasy! I was so tired that all power of emotion was gone. As soon as we reached the hotel I deposited myself upon the bed, supperless, and suffering in every joint and limb. Did ever sinews so ache or muscles feel such soreness? The very bones seemed to have found a way to make their grievances felt.

We had some celestial pyrotechnics and a nice shower in the morning in celebration of Independence Day. Some of our company joined in the services and contributed a patri-



otic song or two. We attempted no going abroad during the morning, but sat in the front porch and rested and watched the Yosemite fall, which seemed to be exactly opposite, as it does everywhere within half a mile above or below. We were too late in the season to see the fall at its best. The Yosemite creek, which forms it, rises in the Mount Hoffman group of mountains, about ten miles north of the valley. Being fed by snows, it does not retain its fullness long after this has done melting; but the great height of the fall makes it wonderful, even when the volume of water is not great. The whole descent is twenty-six hundred feet, but it is not all made at one leap. The water falls over a granite precipice sixteen hundred feet, where it meets a projecting ledge; then for six hundred feet, or what is equivalent to that in perpendicular descent, it falls in a series of cascades, and finally gathers itself up and makes its last plunge of four hundred feet. This, so far as is known, is the highest fall in the world, and is sixteen times the height of Niagara. It was very strange and curious to see the way the wind toyed with it. It was the uppermost sheet with which it seemed to like best to play. Sometimes the water was spread out, stretched from edge to edge, as if to see how wide it could be made; then it was brought close together, and looked like a film or mist—a something altogether supernatural. At times it was separated in the middle, and the divided parts hung down, with quite a space between, and danced hither and thither, one part chasing the other; sometimes coming almost together, and then separating again, as though a hand held each fast at the top, with the intention of showing it off, like a merchant displaying his goods to a customer. Then again the water

was gathered up and became all depth and intensity. Thus all the time, during the two or three days we were there, the fall kept changing, never looking twice alike, yet very beautiful in all its phases. The moonlight gave a new witchery to it, which was as beautiful as new. After luncheon we mounted our horses and retraced the steps of the night before, in order to see by daylight what we had seen so partially by moonlight.

For the sake of clearness I will begin the description of the valley at the western extremity, where it is entered by the different trails. The valley lies nearly east and west, opening toward the west. The Coulterville trail comes in on the north side and the Mariposa on the south side of the valley and of the Merced river. This is the narrowest part of the valley, it being scarcely a half-mile wide, while the rocks on each side are more than that in height. In some places there is scarcely room for the narrow trail between the river and the mountains. Entering on the Mariposa trail, the first object that arrests and fixes the attention is "El Capitan." This is an immense mass of granite, more than half a mile high, which makes a sharply-cut, almost rectangular, corner at the beginning of the valley on the north side. No words can give any adequate idea of its majesty as it stands there, a solid cliff of stone, with its top three thousand four hundred feet above the valley. The front face is not quite perpendicular, as the top projects over the base about one hundred feet. We, standing at its foot and looking up to its summit, seemed the least of all little things. I felt like bowing down to the earth and saying, with hushed voice:



"Great God! how infinite art Thou,  
What worthless worms are we."

The granite is a light gray—lighter than the Quincy granite. The great face of the rock is bare, except that some trees were growing on two or three ledges at different heights. Seen from the valley, they were very diminutive, but are really good-sized pines. Near the corner of El Capitan there is a recess where the Virgin Tears fall is seen earlier in the season, but it was dry when we visited it. On the side of the rock facing southward and toward the valley there is drawn or cut the distinct outline of a man lying in a recumbent position. Some of our party having eyes saw not this image and superscription, but to the greater number it was a plain and real thing. Subsequently we learned whose these form and lineaments were, and why they were graven upon the rock. To assist in keeping the memory of Tu-tock-a-nu-lah in perpetual remembrance, I shall rehearse the legend, abbreviating the story as I find it in print:

This majestic rock was the throne of Tu-tock-a-nu-lah, who was a fit man for such a seat. Here he reclined while he administered laws to his people. Just and upright in all his ways, he allowed no oppression among his subjects. He was also strong and brave. No foot was so fleet as his; no arrow so true to its mark as the one sent from his bow. He could overtake the swift-footed deer in the chase, and his arrow found the heart of the bird in its flight. Even the grizzly bear was conquered by his strength, and forced to yield to its victor. Tu-tock-a-nu-lah lived so near to the Great Spirit, and was so loved

by him, that at his intercession rain was given to nourish the earth; the sunshine came to brighten the flowers and make the trees raise their heads every day nearer to heaven. So his whole care was for his people, and they were blessed under his reign. He was to them as a benefactor and a God. But to this mighty man there came a change. Stout as his heart was, there was in it a spot of tenderness. One morning, as he chased the deer from its cover, a vision appeared to his eyes—a maiden, fair as the morn, glorious as the sun and beautiful as the evening cloud, sat on the top of Tissyac, the Half Dome. Her hair was flaxen, with the tinge of gold upon it. She was not dark and swarthy, like the maidens among his people, but her face was like the white lily, with the blush of the rose upon her cheeks; her eye was the deep blue of the sky, and changeable as the clouds at evening—now deep, then pale it grew, as she looked down upon him from her high seat, four thousand feet above. To see her was to love her. He knelt down before her, as if to worship, and stretched his hand upward to entreat her favor. Love and pity were in her eyes as she regarded him. Then she spoke low, in a voice as sweet as the voices of the morning, and called his name twice: "Tu-tock-a-nu-lah! Tu-tock-a-nu-lah!" and was gone. To him the sun seemed to go out when she disappeared. After that he had but one thought, one care—to seek the lost Tissyac, his vanished love. Morning and night he sought her, and at noon he gave not up his quest. He forgot his people. He ceased to care for their interests. He no longer offered prayer and sacrifice to the Great Spirit. Offended at this neglect, the Great Spirit failed to send the rain