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Letter from Geo[rge] G. Mackenzie to [Robert Underwood] Johnson, 1891 Jul 7.

George G. Mackenzie

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Raymond, Fresno Co., Cal.

July 7th, '91

[1]

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Owing to my infrequent calls at the postoffice, as I am now living several miles from that place, I only rec'd your letter of June 18 towards the end of last week. It found me busy at some orchard work which had to be finished - I have to turn my hand to anything at present to keep the pot aboiling - and I have only now been able to complete the article suggested by you for possible use in The Century. I am not at all posted as to this summer's doings in the Valley, and in preparing the enclosed screed have had to ~~rely upon~~ follow a general line of argument. I do not know anything about Gov. Markham's attitude, which has been a drawback to the satisfactory treatment of the subject. I believe there is a new Commissioner - one Kidder, of whose identity I am uninformed - but to whom he succeeds I don't know. I do not imagine that these changes have altered the Commission's policy, as the Executive committee is still composed of Irish, Chapman, Madden and the new man. I have ^{done} the best I could under my present light, ~~but~~ but would have felt much more free to write if I had been posted up to the latest movements. If you don't find use for what I have written I shall not expect pay, for there is nothing in it but what you might have written yourself as to substance, and with various improvements as to shape.

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I did receive the Boston Transcript's check, and so was informed of the publication of my letter. I will follow your advice and try Mr. Clement's clemency once more before very long on some subject or other. I had rec'd the hines check some time ago.

I see so few California papers now that I don't in the least know what, if anything, they have ~~had~~ to say concerning the Yosemite. ~~But~~ Your intimation was the first, and only, I have rec'd that the Call was favoring recession. I am very glad of that.

In a few days I expect to start on an extended trip either to the northern part of the State or across the mountains to the Nevada Side. A friend who intends making such a journey by wagon wants me to go with him, and I have consented. Our plans are not finally decided, but if we cross the mountains we will strike the southeastern part of the Nat'l Park before returning - a section new to me. At all events I hope to get material for newspaper stuff wherever we go. We expect to be gone two months or more, but have no time set other than the dictates of fancy. My address, however, will continue at Raymond. After my return I may get up to Yosemite for a few days.

The soldiers in the A. P. have made just such a blunder as I looked for. They arrested several trespassing sheepherders and turned their flocks loose to scatter over the country. The herders had, of course, to be turned loose, as a criminal action could not be brought against them. If I mistake not, we will hear more of this matter later on. The sheep-owners will be sure

to claim that they have suffered great loss - and serve 'em right, damn 'em - ~~but~~ the opponents of the Park will try to work up a cry of outrage. In fact some whispers of that kind have reached me in my seclusion. That there is a persistent endeavor to create ill-will to the Park scheme I have long been aware. It is, however, probably confined to Mariposa, Merced and part of Fresno counties, and will scarcely make any headway elsewhere in the State. The Yosemite stable-men and the sheep-men are the instigators, and I am suspicious of their influence with Caminetti, the Congressman-elect from the district including Yosemite. He is a native Californian of Italian parentage, and that's pretty much all I know of him, altho' I voted for him. If anything is to be done in Congress next winter it would of much advantage if somebody could bear a little on the California Congressmen some time in advance.

"Garden & Forest" has had a manuscript of mine for about four months and I can't get a word about it either from the editor or from my brother, through whose hands it passed. It was a very carefully written article, and, altho' treating of forest protection in California in general, it "did up" some of Mr. Irish's utterances in famous shape. If I can manage to get the Ms. back I will send it to you for another try for publication in some good channel. My brother wrote that the editor complimented the substance and style, but required time to consider concerning its length, and that ^{on 6/3/23} the last I have

heard about the "copy," altho' a month ago I wrote asking for the return of the article if it was not "available" or at least for a line informing me of the rejection. I have several other articles wandering ~~away~~ around in search of a resting place, all more or less devised to keep the Yosemite subject before the public, but they seem to have wandered until they have dropped over the edge somewhere, and I ^{have} ceased to waste time and good hard writing in such an unprofitable fashion.

I will inform you of my later movements from time to time.

I have not yet been able to lay hands on copies of the Biennial Report of the Commission. There must be plenty of them somewhere.

Yours Very Truly
Geo. G. Mackenzie

If I mistake not, the travel to Yosemite has been very light this season.