1-1-1872

[Quotation from Muir.]

Samuel Kneeland

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/jmb

Recommended Citation
https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/jmb/96

This Contribution to Book is brought to you for free and open access by the John Muir Papers at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in John Muir: A Reading Bibliography by Kimes by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact mgbney@pacific.edu.
(though having none, as the region had not been surveyed), have been busy the past winter in endeavors to have their titles legalized. If those persons have made what they regard as improvements, let them be paid amply therefor; build a golden bridge for them to pass over, and let them carry at once and forever by this pathway, cheap at any price, all supposed claims to this part of the national domain. True, it has no gold, nor fertile land, nor available forests, to tempt the cupidity of individuals, or in any way to increase pecuniarily the value of the State; but it has that which no money can purchase—the sublime and beautiful in nature—what will render the State more famous than her mines and her grains, and will do more than her institutions of learning, noble as they are, to elevate and cultivate her people. Every lover of his country, and of her grand scenery, is interested to prevent the acknowledgment of all claims, under whatever pretence advocated, of private individuals, or of corporate bodies, to any part of the Yosemite Valley and its surroundings, as fixed by the Act of Congress alluded to in the preceding pages.

Let the "American Association" speak the united demand of the sciences they represent, at the meeting of 1873, and put a stop forever to the vandalism which has assumed such threatening proportions. Let the State assume the responsibility of the roads, the new trails, the bridges; let her forbid the erection of any more shingle houses for trading or drinking purposes, and level with the earth many now existing, the continued building of which will make the Valley look like the cloth-covered shanty villages which appear and disappear as a new railroad progresses on the plains—a sort of house-cancer, which follows the avenues of travel, carrying in its course gambling, whiskey, and riot, and remediable only by the strangulating surgery of "Vigilance Committees."

Let the cutting down of trees be stopped by more stringent measures, the present law not being strictly enforced. Let no man fence up meadows belonging to the State, and charge travellers pasturage for their horses on the public domain. The beautiful wild flowers and thickets, classed by the soulless improvers as useless chaparral, are trampled by cattle and destroyed by the plough. But fortunately, in the language of one who knows whereof he speaks, and is filled to overflowing with the beauty of Californian nature, "By far the greater portion of Yosemite is unimprovably; her trees and her flowers will melt like the snow, but her domes and her falls are everlasting."

Let not the Golden State permit her own and her sister populations to regard the Valley of the "Great Grisly Bear" (Yosemite) rather as the valley of the "Golden Fleece."

Every traveller, coming from the East, should stop at Stockton, California, and make that city the point from which to start on the tour of the Calaveras Grove, Yosemite Valley, and the Mariposa Grove, all of which, if time permits, should be included in the trip. Presuming that the traveller wishes to avoid, as much as possible, horseback riding, and avail himself of railways and stages where practicable, Stockton is the proper base of departure. Various routes are open to the traveller, and very eloquent and pertinent advocates