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

George G. Mackenzie

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[1]  
Raymond, Cal., Dec. 7, '91.

Dear Mr. Johnson.

I mailed a Yosemite letter to the Chicago Inter Ocean yesterday and one to the N. Y. Times today. Look out for them, and if either be published please be sure to send me several copies. The bearing is the same <sup>in</sup> both, and some of the material similar, but the Times letter is probable the better of the two for the purpose. I asked the editor of the Times, in case of his not wanting the copy, to send it to you so that you could read it "for fun." If these letters be published, it will be a cheeky Congressman who will fight us in Congress.

I received a note today acknowledging arrival of my article "Canal Builders" &c. Since writing it I have rec'd a number of replies to my circular, all of the same tenor: i.e., approval of the reservation. I have some from Fresno City which cause me to think I was mistaken as to the opposition there. One of the very men whom I supposed was against the reserve writes me in favor of it at every point, and offering to write his ideas in full if I want them. He is an influential real-estate man, lawyer, banker &c. &c.



[2]

Another person, Judge Harris, of Fresno Co. Superior court and a man of ability and popularity, also writes today that while he would not venture to ~~give~~ <sup>give</sup> detailed views he is in favor of the reserves "provided they are limited to the objects named by you [me]; but care should be taken that the territory be <sup>not</sup> wholly withdrawn from the enjoyment of the people."

The sheep-men of Kern and Tulare counties are, of course, opposed to the reservation. I am assured by a Tulare correspondent that portions of the land could be used for sheep pasture without injury. This I doubt myself, but it is ~~a~~ point which can only be determined by actual inspection of the land.

I think without <sup>doubt</sup> that the intelligence of the community is almost solidly for the reservation if properly administered. There would be no harm whatever in pasturing cattle, some choice places being reserved for "resorts." Thence would accrue a large revenue. I have made some inquiry as to what the cattle-men herearound think the pasture would be worth, and they say that in the country of the Yosemite Park a fair price would be \$2.00 per head for the season.

[3]

I am making more inquiries as to the number of cattle that might be expected to pasture, etc., etc., and after a while I will write the details for publication. Also I want to find out what chances of selling "stumpage" there are.

It is clear that to be acceptable there must be an orderly system - a simple matter to devise - and that the only doubts now entertained ~~concern~~ the possible management of the reserve. If the Park is to be, this Congress ought to provide a system and money to run it. <sup>a continuance of the soldier business</sup> will mean war to the knife.

If a <sup>Yosemite</sup> investigation is coming it ought to take place this winter. Next year the Presidential election, then the World's Fair, &c. and so on, and the thing will be forgotten. Action at once is necessary for us, if at all. The investigation should include the acquisition of the town-site of Raymond - a very bad case - and other lands on the road to Yosemite, <sup>and the Little Yosemite</sup> Between it all, we can prove a conspiracy, morally if not legally to use the word, to steal Yosemite.

I had almost forgotten to say that in Wright's letter quoted by me, the words "if all conserved" should be italicized. Among my correspondents

There is some difference of opinion about the sufficiency of water, but in main it is that "if all conserved" there will be enough, but none to waste.

I will try a few more Yosemite letters to eastern papers. I don't know what those of California except the Examiner and Chronicle, have been saying about Nobles report. I haven't been able to see the report in full.

Yours Truly  
Geo. G. McKenzie,

I have just seen an editorial in the Times of Nov. 20 concerning the alteration of the boundaries of the Yosemite Park. I do wish that that paper would find out what it talks about, or wants to talk about. The Mariposa neighborhood does not, as the Times appears to suppose, form part of the Yosemite watershed, unless water runs up stream. And the other proposed cut-offs are in the same condition. It don't matter any to me, but it looks silly. And the talk about compensating owners is useless. Congress will never make such an enormous appropriation as would be necessary. It is just such blundering that has brought on the whole Yosemite trouble. The papers are always getting things mixed. The Times speaks of "experts who laid out the lines?" Who were they? John Muir drew a line across a map. These things are on a par with the soldier stupidity. This summer showed that up, but the facts have not yet been published. However the Times got its Captain, and now should stand by her recommendations.



