8-23-1902

Expert Opinion. What John Muir Thinks of the Kern Canyon-He Tells of His Recent Trip to Mt. Whitney-There is no Grander Place for a Summer Outing Than in the Mountains East of Visalia

John Muir

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EXPERT OPINION

What John Muir Thinks of the Kern Canyon.

HE TELLS OF HIS RECENT TRIP TO Mt. WHITNEY.

There is No Grander Place for a Summer Outing Than in the Mountains East of Visalia.

There is no doubt but what John Muir is recognized as the best authority in California on all subjects pertaining to the High Sierras. He has spent a third of a century exploring the peaks and canyons of this greatest of coast mountains, and there is hardly a rock of any magnitude or a tree of extraordinary size from Shasta to Tehachapi with which he is not familiar. When he first began to explore the mountains more than thirty years ago he was not encumbered with "duncebags," blankets, guide horses or a variety of food. Some of his greatest trips were made through regions that had never known the face of a white man and his only luggage was a sack filled with bread, a tin cup and a small quantity of tea. Thus equipped he climbed the highest peaks, followed the big trees from Placer county to Tulare, and lived in the canyons until he became the greatest authority we have on glaciers.

Mr. Muir has written several books and a great many magazine articles on the mountains of California. He recently completed a description of the Grand canyon of the Colorado for the Century magazine, and will shortly tell about his visit to the Kern for the same publication. His article on the Kern will be illustrated by Wm. Keith, the celebrated artist. Mr. Muir is also writing a book on the Yosemite valleys of California and in this publication, the Kern-Yosemite will play an important part.

While in Visalia yesterday, Mr. Muir was asked by a "Times" reporter what he thought of the Kern river country and the trip to Mt. Whitney. The distinguished mountaineer had just returned from a visit to that region.

"We all had a delightful trip," said Mr. Muir. "We went from Giant Forest by way of Panorama Point, Bear Valley and Timber Gap to Mineral King and from that latter place across Farewell Gap and Coyote Pass to the Kern. We visited the lakes and then went up the canyon for twenty miles. The trail for the entire distance will average from 2500 to 3000 feet high on either side and for ten miles on the south wall there is hardly a break in the solid granite. There was not much water in Chagoopah, but we could see where there had been several pretty falls earlier in the season. We camped at the junction for several days and from there had several side trips that were highly enjoyed. We went up the river to where the canyon begins one day and the next took a ride up the Kern-Kaweah or west branch of the Kern. This is a beautiful country and one well worth visiting.

It is a delightful ride from the Kern to the top of Mt. Whitney. We made our last camp at Crabtree meadow and started from there to make the ascent of Whitney at 5 o'clock in the morning. We rode to Langley camp and from that point walked the rest of the way. The last one in the party reached the summit by 10 o'clock. We were all agreed that the trip to Whitney and along the Kern was the most enjoyable part of our summer outing. Even Mr. Gannett, the topographer of the geological department, and who has traveled over the Rocky mountain range and over much of the Sierras, said that he enjoyed the trip to Whitney better than any mountain climb he had ever made. He thought it excelled any other portion of the Sierras for magnificent scenery and I agree with him. The sculptured granite rocks from Crabtree meadow to Whitney surpass in beauty those of the Kings river. There are no individual rocks in the Kern canyon that equals the El Capitan in Yosemite valley or the Sentinel rock in the Kings, but the very magnitude of the country will make it the most popular spot.

"The trip down Whitney (Golden Trout) creek was highly enjoyed. We had all the golden trout we could eat and the trail was excellent. The natural bridge across Volcano creek was not made by volcanic action, but by a hot spring. The spring is gone and lava is all around but there is no doubt about how the bridge was made. In the Yawestone park the hot springs there are making just such curious things."

"The beauty of the trip we have just made is found in the magnificent Giant Forest, the splendid climb out of the forest and among the Baifour pines to the Alta meadows, the view from Panorama point where one can see some splendid sculptured granite at the head of the middle fork of the Kaweah and from where the Kaweah peaks loom a mile above and the stream in the canyon glisters three thousand feet below; the blue gentian meadows and magnificent flowers that are blooming where snow avalanches have destroyed the timber, the Redwood meadows where the last Sequoias are seen, the long ascent to Timber Gap through the Balfour pines and silver fir (abies magnifica), the long zig-zag down through one bed of flowers from Timber Gap to Mineral King, then up through the magnificent fields of the Green River valley, the view down the Lone Pine line, the Keyhole and the great wall of granite in the foreground; also theThroughout the entire trip from the top of Whitney to the base of the Kern there is not a single fence and it is a thrilling trip to see the wild country as it is from the summit of Whitney to the Kern, Kern Canon and Panorama Point, Bear Valley and Timyer Gap to Mineral King and from that latter place across Farewell Gap and Coyote Pass to the Kern. All the world can be seen and the Sierra can be seen from the summit of Whitney high above the Kern."

The Kern is a river of the Sierras and is appropriately called the Kern. It is a beautiful river and one of the finest in the world. It is a river of the Sierras and is appropriately called the Kern. It is a beautiful river and one of the finest in the world.