



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1890-04-20

Letter from John Muir to [Robert Underwood] Johnson, 1890 Apr 20.

John Muir

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Martinez, April 20, 1890.

Dear Mr Johnson,

I have just received Yours of the 14th & make haste to answer it. I don't like Mack's last Times letter at all. The truth is, unless I am very much mistaken, he is with the adversary ^{as} an attorney. As long as he was dealing in generalities looking forward to what the present ^{Yo.} Management wanted most of all, the extension of the grant, he did well. But as I knew all along that he was with the Washburns or R.R. Co. I have been watching sharply for him to show his hand, as the gamblers say, & he has shown it in this letter opposing the Vandever Bill. What he wants & what the Stage & Hotel Co. want & the R.R. Co. want seems to me from Mack's letter to be just this, let the grant be extended under promise of reformation of the management, & let the present management be their own reformers. The legislature meets next year Mack tells us & will be sure to grant any desired reformation of the "wicked sinful management". This may sound well in the east, but we know here that whatsoever the

R.R. Co & Stage Co² want that will the legislature
controlled by Boss Buckley do, Hence as I have
said they will be their own reformers -
As for the reservation being controlled by the
Federal Government, This is of all things
what the present management most dreads.
In the Alta clipping I sent you yesterday
you will see that Irish has already commenced
to combat this possibility - by declaiming
against imaginary vandalism in Yellowstone
Park under Federal management. Federal
control outside & State control inside would
say Mack "lead to sure & endless confusion
in the arrangements for the transportation & other
accommodation of visitors", that is for the Stage
Co & Hotel Co. monopoly. Wouldn't suit Washburn
& Co. The whole letter is a mere jingling juggling
mass of words in which a vain attempt is
made to hide his motives. While seeking to
secure both the valley & its surrounding
region to the present Company as a monopoly.
What the present Company is to gain by

3
The extension of the grant I can only guess
in part. Washburn & Co built a road into
the valley from Warrona. Last year they
made out to sell that portion of it that
lies within the Jo. grant, ^{to the Commission} for a large sum
\$10,000 I think. Should the grant be exten-
=ed they would probably sell the rest
of it for 30,000 or more while still
~~obtain~~ retaining control of it. But
anyhow. That Mack letter is traitorous
unless I am blundering ^{more} than ever before in
my life. Stand up for the Vanduser bill
I on no account let the extension
be under state control if it can
possibly be avoided.

You perhaps noticed that in his reply ^{to}
the Governor's charges Mack skipped ^{the}
^{of the} Uncle Olmsted part entirely while elaborating
in every other direction.