



[John Muir Correspondence \(PDFs\)](#)

1890-09-20

Letter from R[obert] U[nderwood] Johnson to John Muir, 1890 Sep 20.

Robert Underwood Johnson

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Temporarily at Bay Shore, L. I. on a short vacation [17]

address
always



EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT
THE CENTURY MAGAZINE
UNION SQUARE NEW YORK

1890.
Sept. 20.

Dear Muir;

The combat thickens,
of John P. Irish being on the
war path. I have just
received two editorials from
the Oakland Tribune and
an intervening letter from Irish,
all which you've doubtless seen. Every
time he puts pen to paper he gives
an opportunity to the friends of
reform. I shall write a brief reply
and after it is written perhaps I'll
send it. You see the trick; to try
to make votes by pretending to defend
California's sacred honor & reputation
which privately he is besmirching. I
hope you'll go for him. In the next
Congress we shall probably have to
face the question of reversion of the
original grants and Irish could throw
unless your legislature does something

227
A good deal of dust in the
eye of the average M.C. I
hope you'll expose the game in such
a way as to defeat his election.
He is probably put up by the Washburns as a friend to do.
His letter is one of the funniest
pieces of pettifoggery I have ever
seen.

Did I tell you that I learned
the other day that Irish wrote to
the Editor of the Times a long letter
of abuse of Mackay & Robinson you
and me - which was thrown in the waste
basket, I believe. Of course he is
furious. Pixley is too shrewd to stand
and take the fire.

Now is the time to get ahead with
the King's River Cañon article. I've
written to stir up Robinson. Meanwhile
can you send me a description, by town
ships (from a Land Office map) of the
territory desirable to be included about
this cañon. I had a most vexatious time
getting the proper description for the present
limits of the new park - spent a whole morn-
ing at the Land Office studying it out
from the surveyor's notes. I got the Pub-
lic Land Committee to abandon the part
west of the ridge of the Sierra which forms

237
one in the L.O. had tacked on, for
convenience of description! I have today
received a letter from Judge Holman
of the House Committee saying that the bill
will be reported this week to the House.
The effort will be to put it through by
unanimous consent as the Tilden bill
was. In the Senate Plumb, Chairman
of the Land Committee, ~~will~~ will push it
along as soon as it comes over from the House.
So it is in good shape for passage at
this session.

I wish you could arrange to come
East this winter, you and your wife, and
pay us a little visit. Burroughs was
to have been here this week to visit us
but the wet weather detained him to
harvest his grapes. Come & you shall see
him & the Saugy Mrs. Johnston.

I am ~~very~~ to get a line from
you. I heard of you the other day
from Mrs. Rollins, whom I know.
I hope she won't anticipate your new
material. These literary people, you know!
Call your articles "Alaska Revisited".
Tilden is charmed with the Yosemite
sketches. Sometime you'll want to
collect ~~the~~ Yellowstone, Yosemite, Alaska &
others in a book of "Wonderland Sketches"

247
— By the way have you ever written
about the Yellowstone? Tell Mr.
Muir not to let you backslide from
the literary life. You have taken your
hand off the plow and should not
look back.

We want to print the King's
River Cañon + Swell's sketch of
you together, in a number of the
Century in which the '49 series is not
specially strong. Send us a lot of
photographs of you - not too much
"fried up" - to choose from.

Yours faithfully,
R. U. Johnston

I'll send you a copy of what
I write ~~at~~ in reply to Irish.