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The Yo Semity Valley.

The following description of Yo Semity Valley, we find in the *Mariposa Gazette*, of Thursday last, 11th inst. We have published descriptions before, of this interesting but isolated valley, but we do not remember of having seen any account so full and interesting as this. It will be read with interest :

The main valley is almost one continuous meadow. Grass will not flourish under the oaks, and wherever the oak is found, which is generally on the sterile soil, no grass, nor in fact any other vegetation scarcely is found.

This growth is near the base of the cliff, and grows on the barren soil made by the sand from the granite, mixed with such decayed vegetable matter as may be thrown upon it by winds, water, and other causes. Farther from the base, and in what might be called the central valley, grows grasses which might even surprise herdsmen of the most favored clime.

Large pines border the Merced river, and the small rivulets emptying into it. Other growths are common, but the several varieties of the pine predominate.

Fine timber for building or husbandry is abundant. Many varieties of berries are to be found, one of the principal of which is the strawberry. Acres and acres of the valley are covered with these. The wag of our party said that any man who would find three feet square in a space of six hundred acres, where we encamped, that did not have the strawberry on it, should have the pleasure of shooting through his old hat. The search was made for the space ; but our friend says his hat will never have a hole through it from

this proposition.

The valley is regular in width ; in some places it is nearly two miles wide, and in no place is the main valley less than three-fourths of a mile wide. From the entrance of the valley on the west end, to the forks of the river, it is ten miles, and the average breadth is about one mile and a quarter. The two valleys above, taken in connection with the main one, will embrace an area of ten thousand acres—eight thousand of which is good grazing land, and six out of the eight thousand good arable land, of the richest quality.

There are evidences that in high water the water runs from the main channel through sloughs into the valley; but I do not think that much land is overflowed at such times, but merely the channels which make the cut-off, and meet the river at a point lower down. Cupidity has induced persons to brave the dangers to be encountered in earlier times to prospect the valley and vicinity, but the "color" has never been found. Nature made the lovely spot, and kept from it the "dross" which alone induces man to despoil. Embowered in the mountains in its wildness and beauty, it seems desecration for civilization to intrude upon its loveliness. Even the poor Digger Indian, with all his apathy and ignorance, shows his love for the spot the "Great Spirit" has made so lovely, and hallowed as the hunting ground of his forefathers. But the restless Anglo-Saxon, or rather "inquisitive" Yankee, in his onward career, espies it, visits it, and squats upon it, and "reckons as how it'll prove a speculation." Nature's beauties are nothing to him. That noble pine falls beneath his ax ; soil which bears flowers in such profusion is upturned ; and that cascade which revels in the rainbow, and leaps with joyousness from cliff to cliff, must be perverted into the power which turns his mill to grind out his "notions."

After examining all, or rather as much of the beauties as our time would allow, our party proceeded up the South Fork of the river to see the main falls. We mounted our steeds and proceeded up some two and a half miles, where we dis-

mounted and proceeded on foot two miles more.

As you go up, the southern valley narrows by degrees until within two miles of the falls, when it assumes the form of a canon. Like the lower cliffs, the rocks have fallen, and the passage up the river is very difficult. We reached the falls about noon, and on nearing it, beheld the pool where the water collects on its descent. It is an ellipse, or nearly so, and about 100 feet in length. The water falling a distance of 350 feet, is broken into spray upon the rocks and collected in this pool prior to its tortuous passage through the canon. A constant mist spreads several hundred yards around, irrigating vegetation, which is remarkably green in the vicinity of the falls. Large boulders have fallen and been rolled up in huge masses by the water on either side of the river, and, apparently without any soil, is growing upon them the real Kentucky blue grass, covering the spaces and uneven surfaces between the rocks with mats, which render it dangerous to proceed, except on "all fours," otherwise the visitor might fall between the rocks and be lucky to escape with a sound neck-bone. Our party went around on the side of the falls and sat under the mist, while our draftsman passed some distance down the stream to sketch it. His effort was successful, and he produced a picture true to nature, as, indeed, were all the sketches he made in the valley.

The water is icy cold, and the spray as it would envelope us, caused us to draw tight our coats around us. After lunching, and allowing ourselves to take a lingering look at a sight so beautiful, we prepared for returning. Here allow me to state that our party made no effort to go beyond these falls; but I have learned that other parties have explored the river higher up, and they assert that above these falls is another, grander if possible, falling from a greater height, and that the vicinity is wilder and more picturesque than in the valley. I give the information for what it is worth, not having seen it myself. Our descent to our animals was slow and tedious. On our route we passed a large boulder which

...passed a large boulder, which from its appearance, has recently been detached from the mountains, and fallen nearly to the bed of the stream. It weighs many thousand tons, and on the lower side we registered our names, and for that reason it may be known as "register rock." I would advise parties visiting this fall, to keep near the boulders and timber. If they attempt to go too high up from the river they will be encompassed by rocks on the way side, and if they go too near the river, they will find themselves in a swamp, and in danger of meeting a "grizzly."

After reaching our horses, we mounted and went down that branch of the river until we came to the forks, when we turned up the other stream to explore it. Our guide informed us that the little stream we were then traversing was the channel, by which the Yo Semity Lake was emptied.

The lake is situated some twenty-five miles above the junction of the rivers in the valley. It is said to be about five miles long, by about a mile in width. In the vicinity of this lake is the headquarters or rancheria of the Indians. They live on the summit of the Sierra Nevada, and make excursions into the valley to lay in their supply of acorns and grasshoppers. The tribe which gave name to the valley, was nearly destroyed during the war with them in 1851; and the few remaining have been incorporated into other tribes. Poor Indian! for a while he struggles to defend the home of his fathers; but soon is his fate swallowed up in the destiny of the white man. The poor creatures are required to leave their homes, and settle on homes *reserved* for them, and as they gaze on the covetousness of their pale faced brother, they read the fate but too surely theirs. Awhile they linger, and readily partaking of the vices of civilization, they are soon carried off by death, and they are forgotten and their names are blotted from remembrance.

After passing up the north fork of the river, a very fine view of the peaks is to be seen. The most prominent object at this point is Capitol

ROCK. It is a large bluff surmounted by a dome, rising regularly to the height of one hundred feet. To the right is seen another dome, which is partially fallen away, and on the side next to the valley presents an uneven perpendicular appearance. In this valley are several small lakes or ponds, through which the river runs. They abound in fish, and are resorted to by every variety of water fowl.

There is some good land in this valley, and a large amount of good grazing. We penetrated some four or five miles up this valley, but were compelled to return on account of the rugged state of the canon. Like the other valley, it gradually narrows until the river passes through a narrow channel, hemmed in on both sides by high cliffs.

The next day being Sunday, our party rested from its labors. Monday was spent in a general hunt, in company with a party from Big Oak Flat, who came into the valley the day before. In the evening the song and jest passed right merrily, all seeming pleased with their visit. Next day we moved to the foot of the valley, preparatory to our final exit. We determined to try a new route home, and left the valley by the trail passing on the north side of the river. About a mile and a half below the valley the trail leaves the river and begins to ascend the mountains. The ascent is steep and dangerous, but after a great fatigue and some sweating we reached the summit.

The first days' travel was in sight of the river, but we soon learned that to procure grass we must go back to the main divide, between the Merced and Tuolumne rivers. We kept on the ridge as near as we could, and on the third day reached the settlements on Bull creek, a tributary of the North Fork of the Merced, and the next day reached home.

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QUESTIONS IN "MORALS."—There are some very great questions in "morals," that come up here, in these watering places, such as would puzzle philosophers, and metaphysicians even, to settle.—"Husband" came here the other day, all