

However, at six o'clock one beautiful July morning, three four-in-hand coaches, each of which comfortably seated eleven persons, left Raymond (where the four days drive through the immense forest began) for the dustiest drive ever taken by any of the party; such was the general confession at the end of the first day's journey. With the exception of myself, all the tourists were Americans; and in each coach, as a rule, there were representatives from seven or eight States. Despite the great amount of dust raised, and the disagreeable jolting as we sped up and down the mountain sides, the party kept up their spirits well. Rabbits, squirrels, quail and exquisitely beautiful blue birds were seen in goodly numbers as the coach kept winding round oak-studded and shrub-garnished ridges, and across low knolls and flats, on the way to the Gambetta Gold Mines. We left a well-filled mail bag at Grub Gulch Post Office. After passing King's Gulch, where a rich quartz lode is being profitably worked by electricity, we reached Ahwahnee, where we partook of lunch. Continuing our journey, we ascended the Chowchilla Mountain, and were taken through an almost unbroken forest of stately pine and fir trees, from 200 to 400 feet high, which formed magnificent vistas, not only up to the crest of the mountain, but all the way down past Fishing Camp to the picturesquely situated hotel, Wawona, which was reached about 6.30 p.m. Here we remained over night.

Next morning between six and seven o'clock, we left Wawona for Yosemite. We kept winding and ascending a mountain among vistas of deep forest till we arrived at Eleven-Mile station, a short distance beyond which we attained the highest point on our route, 6,160 feet above sea level. From Chinquapin Flat, constant scenic changes took place, from forest shadows to open glades, until about eleven o'clock, we rounded a sharp precipice on the edge of the forest and came suddenly to the glorious panoramic view at Inspiration Point, where the wonders of the Yosemite burst upon us as they had burst upon the astonished gaze of the first white man in 1851. Here we remained for some time spell-bound. Deep down in the mountain gorge before us lay the peaceful, famous valley, about seven miles long, and from half a mile to a mile broad, with its beautiful avenues, its sparkling river, its heavily timbered slopes and its grass-carpeted meadows, hemmed in by encompassing walls of granite, and surmounted by domes and

spires, and peaks and crags, from 3,000 to 5,000 feet in height, over which bounded leaping waterfalls from 900 to 2,000 feet. On the left hand side stood El Capitan, that monarch of vertical mountains, with its two immense faces of pearly cream-colored whiteness, each of which is three-quarters of a mile across, then came in order named the Ribbon Fall, the Three Brothers (the highest of which is called Eagle Peak), the Canyon of the Yosemite Falls, Yosemite Point, Indian Canyon, the Royal Arches, the Washington Tower and the North Dome, the latter rounding upwards immediately over the Royal Arches and Tower. On the right hand side were the Bridal Veil Fall, the Cathedral Rocks and Spires, the Sentinel Rock and Dome, Glacier Point and the Wall of the Tooloolaweack Canyon. Away in the distance loomed up Grizzly Peak, the Half or South Dome, Cloud's Rest and Mount Watkins.

The main features by which the Yosemite is distinguished from all other known valleys are: "First, the near approach to verticality of its walls; secondly, their great height, not only absolutely, but as compared with the width of the valley itself; and, finally, the very small amount of talus or *debris* at the base of these gigantic cliffs." We descended into the valley and were driven to the Pioneer or Sentinel Hotel at the little village of Yosemite through giant pine, fir, cedar and oak trees. At every turning of the road, some new picture of majesty or beauty presented itself. The picturesque, the sylvan and the magnificent have their realms here; and their territories blend into each other so often, and so gradually, that our eyes never wearied. Tents were then scattered all over this ideal valley. The Guardian's Office, where the Great Register is kept, stands near the Sentinel Hotel; and amongst the other erections in the vicinity are a general merchandise and drug store, a butcher's shop, a photographer's gallery and a printing office, from which *The Yosemite Tourist*, a small four-page paper, is occasionally issued. Close to the base of the Sentinel Rock, that central and impressive landmark, stands the Yosemite Chapel, which was built mainly from the contributions of California Sunday-school children. This was the only religious building I remember having seen during the four days' drive.

About 6.30 on the morning of the third day, fully fifty ladies and gentlemen left the snug valley hotel in coaches. A few who had five-day