

# Yosemite National Park



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**YOSEMITE**

**NATIONAL**

**PARK**

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**- CALIFORNIA -**





## THE YOSEMITE VALLEY

Among the great mountain peaks of the Sierra Nevadas, one hundred and fifty miles east of San Francisco, is chiseled out a wonderful gorge—the most wonderful gorge in the world. Not elsewhere in the world is one chasm walled in almost completely by cliffs of such sheer general ascent as to make almost true the statement that the valley is hemmed in by precipices rising from three thousand, three hundred to six thousand feet above its flat floor.

In the swift, first look at the valley two impressions are vivid, and their life in the recollection is due to their great contrast. One is of a level floor of land seven miles in length and varying from a half mile to a mile in width, a floor covered in green with the most delicate of Nature's tracery, ferns, flowers and grasses, amid which are scattered groups and groves of the famous conifers of the Sierras, red cedar, silver fir, tamarack pine, sugar pine and yellow pine, together with the lesser trees and shrubs of deciduous growth—the black oak, alder, quaking aspen, cottonwoods and dogwood. This pretty sylvan scene, made homelike by a cluster of white-topped tents, a group of cottages or the smoke of the Indian camp, this quiet beauty that soothes the sight, is in vivid, almost startling, contrast with the other impressions. For, lifting the eyes, one beholds this charming rural stretch of meadows and groves to be surrounded by stupendous walls, reaching to cloudlike heights and carved along their tops and sides into such domes and spires and pinnacles and points and arches, that the memory is taxed with the enumeration of merely the most striking, and the sight overwhelmed and confounded in an attempt to comprehend such as come at a single glance within the range of the vision.

Blending these two impressions, we have a pretty little valley floor walled in by heights that fairly lean over it in places, by heights that permit the center of the valley in winter but two hours of sunlight; and these great cliffs, though varied in color and varied in form, have such a correspondence in their tremendous flights that they present homogeneous walls about the

valley to the eye of the observer who has as a view-point a central point on that floor.

The walls of the floor of the valley are quiet save for the rushing water, and it is this rushing water that makes a third vivid impression. In the spring time it comes leaping down from cliff-tops in a half hundred places, and then such delicate, gossamer-like falls as the Ribbon Fall, the Staircase Fall, the Widow's Tears (which dry up so early) are most charming. The Ribbon Fall, leaping two thousand feet unbroken, is called by the Indians "The tall and the slender one." But the great falls are the majestically beautiful ones.

Approaching the valley by the stage roads, the Cascade Fall, plunging down five hundred feet in a series of leaps, first attracts attention. A little further down, to the right, is the Bridal Veil Fall, perhaps the most beautiful of all in the world. Thirty feet wide, it leaps over a precipice nine hundred feet high in a magnificent column seemingly cut out of marble with its surface everywhere marvelously fluted. The Bridal Veil is so situated that the wind seizes it unexpectedly and sometimes lifts it almost clear of its course, swaying it from one side to the other.

In the center of the valley, just opposite the hotel, is the great Yosemite Fall which, in a series of three leaps, descends two thousand, six hundred feet. It is from thirty to forty feet in width and the first leap over the precipice involves an unbroken descent of sixteen hundred feet, then a short distance of cascades to the edge of another precipice and a leap of five hundred feet further down. It pauses there but for a moment, as if to gather breath, and then takes its final plunge for yet another five hundred feet to the floor below. Nearly every visitor to the valley remarks that the Yosemite Fall resembles nothing so much as innumerable sky-rockets set off together over the edge of the cliff, overtaking one another, disappearing, reappearing, independent and yet held in union by some invisible tie.

Farther yet up the valley is Vernal Fall, where the Merced River, eighty feet wide, drops three hundred feet into the chasm below. It is so situated as to catch the sunlight, which makes of it a magnificent cataract of diamonds.



Just before reaching Vernal Fall may be seen in a branch of the valley off to the right the Illillouette Fall, which is as much cascade as fall, dropping a distance of five hundred feet.

Farther up the Merced River, above Vernal Fall, is the Nevada Fall, which in volume of water exceeds all others of the valley, the main Merced River dropping a distance of six hundred feet. Its surroundings are wildly beautiful with great domes, peaks and precipices.

A fourth impression is that of the great domes and spires and pinnacles, of the great formations that give variety to the immense cliffs, that make the valley a gigantic sculptured chasm, set about by wonderful statuary. Nor is this impression fourth in order to those who, from the valley floor, see the great burnished Half Dome like a cloud of gold overhanging the vale, or follow with the eye up the three-quarters of a mile height of El Capitan, that great rock with a facial area of five hundred acres on its two exposed sides, with walls that overhang the perpendicular from ninety to one hundred feet. But since the pictures are to tell the story, it is not necessary to catalogue these features; yet it may be well to have an introductory familiarity with such names as Inspiration Point, Artist's Point, Cathedral Rocks and Spires, the Sentinel, the Three Brothers (Eagle Peak), Rocky Point, Enchantment Point, Glacier Point, Union Point, Sentinel Dome, Columbia Rock, Yosemite Point, Eagle Tower, the Lost Arrow, the North Dome, the Royal Arches, the Half Dome, Grizzly Peak, the Cap of Liberty and Clouds' Rest. These names include the majority of the most remarkable of the sculptured forms of the valley, but to enumerate here all worthy of naming is out of the question.

On the valley floor the prettiest, loveliest picture of all, Mirror Lake, must be classed by itself. It is a perfect mirror and the heights above it are reproduced as clearly to the sight as are the original cliffs, domes and mountains, and are so idealized in the lake as to be much more beautiful.

It should be noted that the view-point is taken from the floor of the valley; of the changing pictures presented in the series of magnificent panoramas that follow upon the higher planes

successively attained in climbing the valley walls, it is hopeless here to try to speak adequately.

The view widens as we go upward. There are eight thousand, four hundred and eighty acres between the granite walls of the valley. But the area of the Yosemite National Park is thirty-six thousand, one hundred and eleven acres, and this includes only an additional area back from the verge of the cliff walls that possesses great interest. Many entrancing journeys are necessary among the higher fastnesses to see all the wonders of this marvelous gorge.

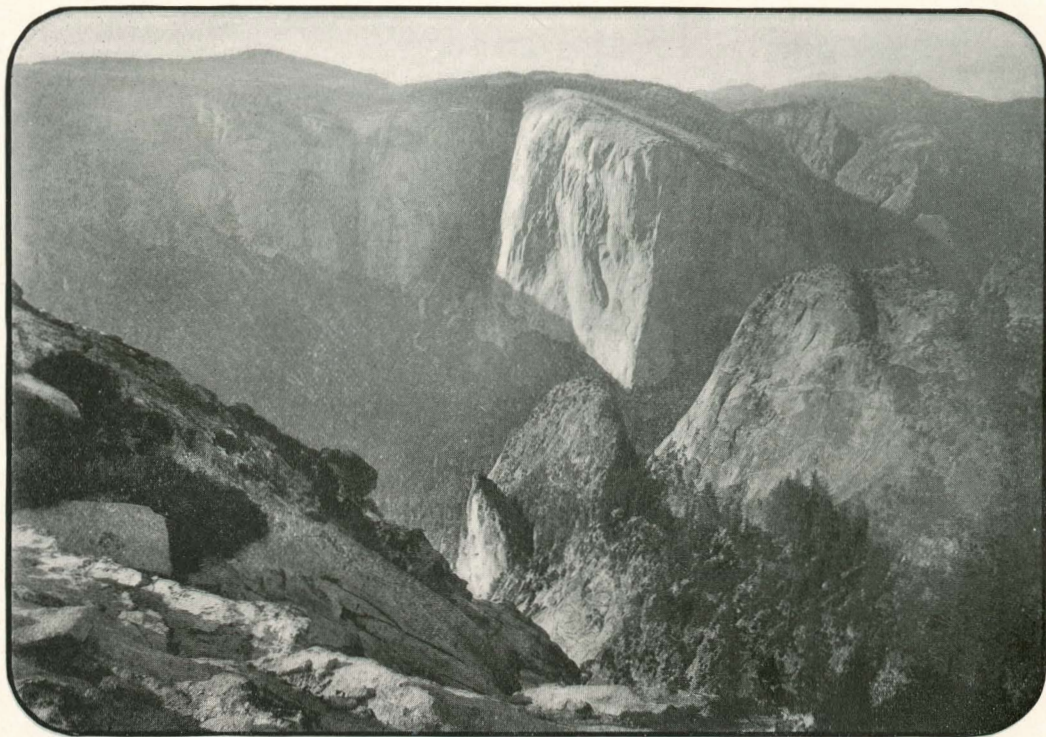
The general trend of the valley is northeasterly and southwesterly, and the stage routes both enter at the southern or southwestern end, coming down from the heights by a series of masterly zigzagging curves. One of the stage lines extends from Raymond, the terminal rail station of the Southern Pacific, via Ahwahnee and Wawona to the valley, passing the famous Mariposa Big Tree Grove en route. The trip by this beautiful line may be made in a day, but Wawona and the Big Trees possess so many attractions that usually a day and a half is taken and the schedule is arranged accordingly. The other route leaves the Southern Pacific at Oakdale, passengers being taken thence to Chinese on the Sierra Railway where a stage ride of about the same length as that via Raymond begins. The Oakdale route passes directly through the Tuolumne Big Tree Grove en route, and possesses many attractions. These are the two main ways to the valley, and agents of the Southern Pacific Company are fully supplied with the data concerning both, so that it is an easy matter to arrange for one's journey.

The trip need not be expensive; reasonable hotel rates are made for those who have the time to tarry, while the camps recently established in well-furnished, well-supervised tent villages make living as cheap as at home. And so delightful is the summer weather in the great valley that one may wrap himself up in his blanket beneath the clear stars and ask for no other protection from the dry summer nights.

Language is woefully inadequate to describe the Yosemite Valley; in the series of pictures following it is hoped a truer idea is conveyed than would be possible to any description.



*THE VALLEY FROM DEWEY TRAIL*



**The Sunlight on El Capitan—A Striking View from a Cloud-like Height of One of the Mightiest of the Great Rock Castles of Nature.**

*VERNAL FALLS*



**A Beautiful Stream of Silver Amid a Charming Environment. So Sparkling, So Radiant Are Its Falling Waters  
That the Sunlight Seems Imprisoned Therein.**

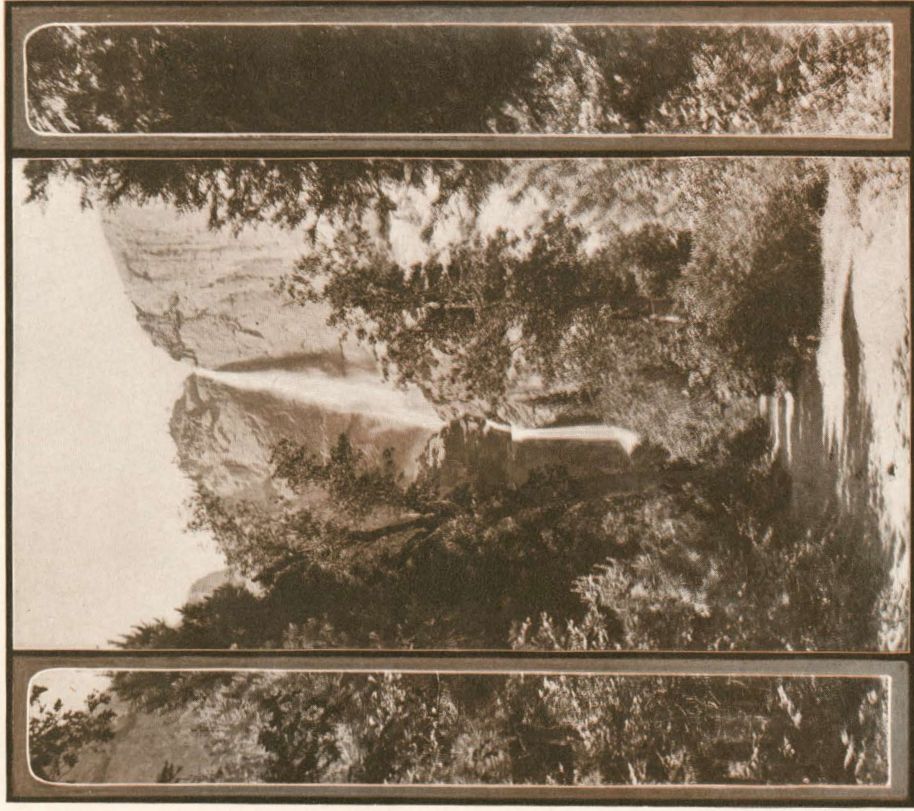


*HALF DOME FROM THE ROADWAY*



**A Wonderful Picture—The Road Shaded by Pines and Firs, the Clear River by Its Side; Ahead, the Great Half Dome.**

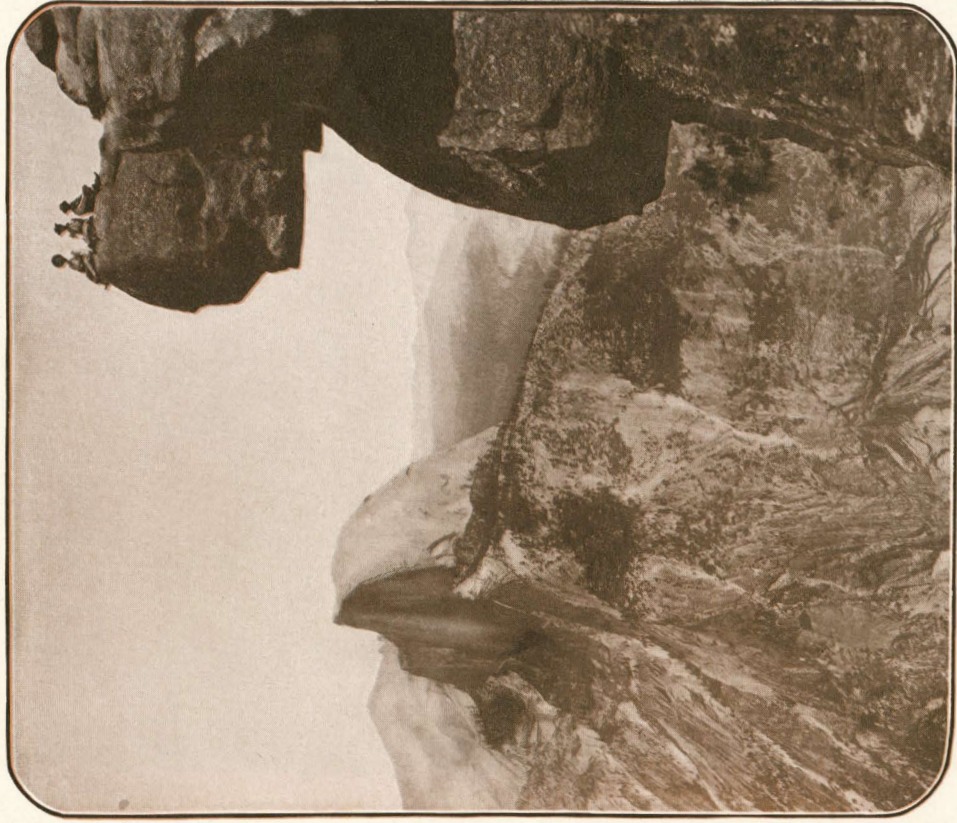
*UPPER AND LOWER YOSEMITE FALLS*



*As Seen from the Footpath, an Enchanting Vista.*



*THE OVERHANGING ROCK AT GLACIER POINT*



*It Is Like Sitting on the Edge of the Universe' and Gazing on Eternity with Its Limitless  
Compass and Limitless Variety.*

*NORTH DOME, ROYAL ARCHES AND WASHINGTON COLUMN*



The View from the River; the Contours of the Great Arches and of Washington Column Are Impressive.



*THE VALLEY FROM BRIDAL VEIL MEADOWS*



One of the Most Beautiful of General Views; a Foreground of Nature's Prettiest and Most Delicate World Embroidering; Beyond the Most Sublime and Majestic of Her Creations.

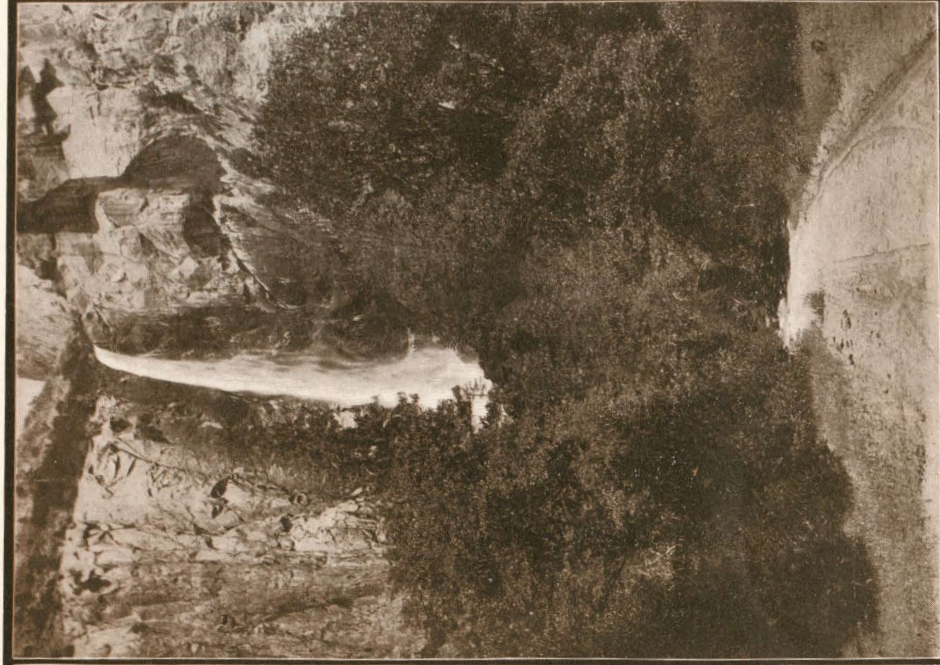
*FROM EAGLE PEAK*



A Central View of the Valley from a Height That Overlooks Clouds and Veils Littleness from the Sight.



*BRIDAL VEIL FALLS*



Poetry Laughing Over a Precipice — The Witchery, the Grace, the Beauty, the Inspiration  
That Moves the Heart of Man.

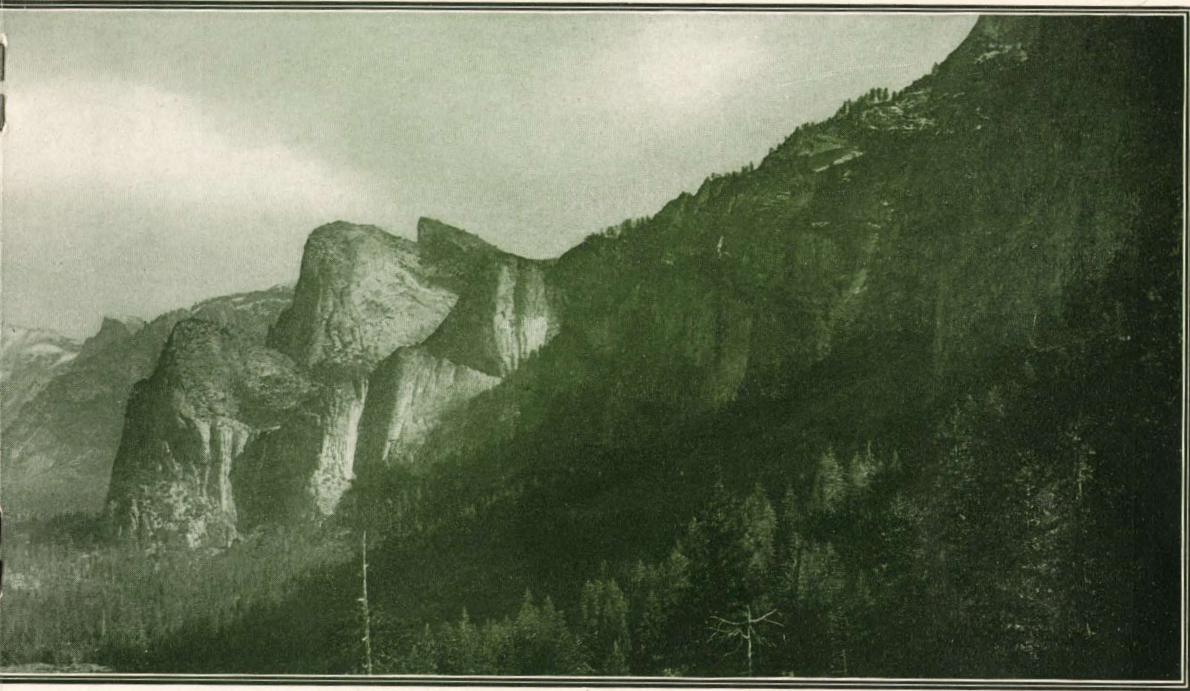
*YOSEMITE VALLEY*



**Look upon This Carefully, Not Distantly nor with Rapid Glance — For It Is of the Greatest Gorge of the World,  
the Thing Under Foot and of That Bending to the Touch**



*FROM ARTIST'S POINT*



if Harmony and Beauty and Sublimity, if Wealth of Wall and Waterfall, of Pinnacle and Dome, if Beauty of  
and of That Which Awees by Its Grandeur, Be Greatness.

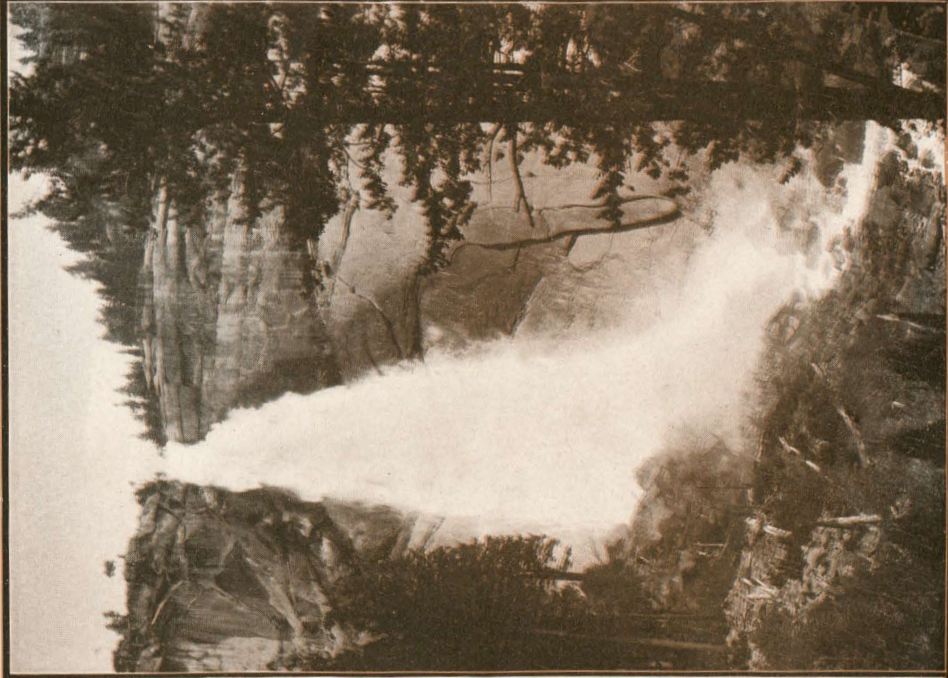
*EL CAPITAN*



A Profile View of That Wonderful Rock Three-quarters of a Mile High.



*NEVADA FALLS*



**A River Rolls Over a Precipice.**

*YOSEMITE FALLS FROM MERCED RIVER*



**Over Against the Valley Wall the Water Is a Torrent of White, Seething Spray; Before Us a Still, Clear, Green, Swift-running Stream.**

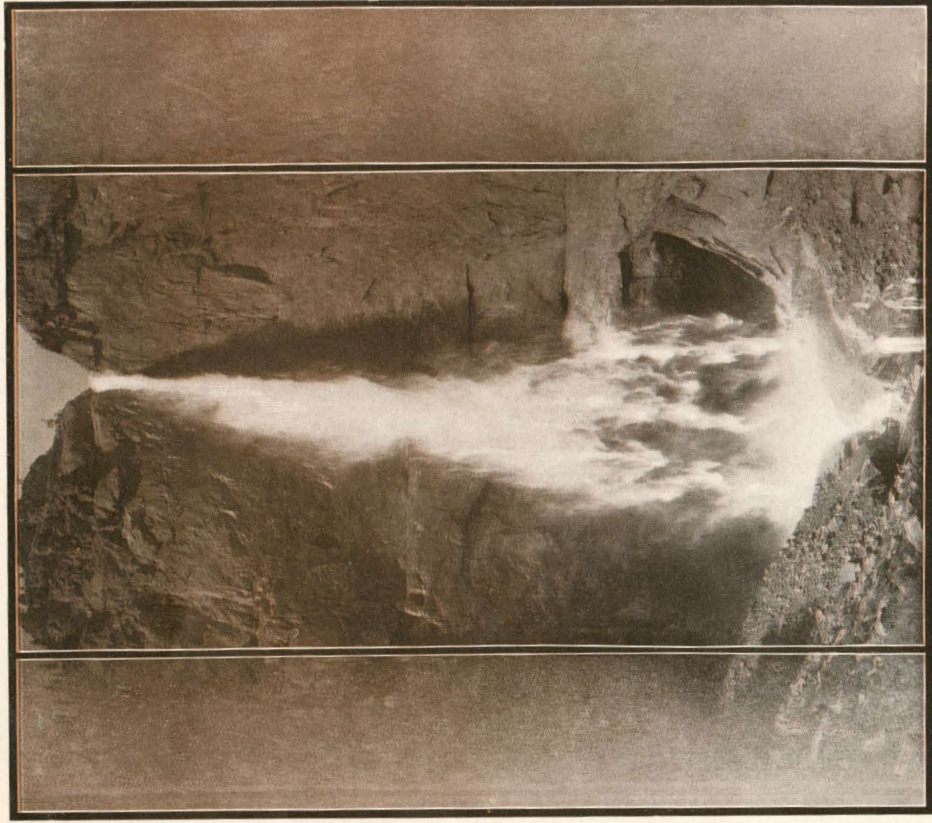


*FROM DEWEY TRAIL*



From a Height So Commanding That One Seems Gifted with the Power to Overshadow the Entire Valley.

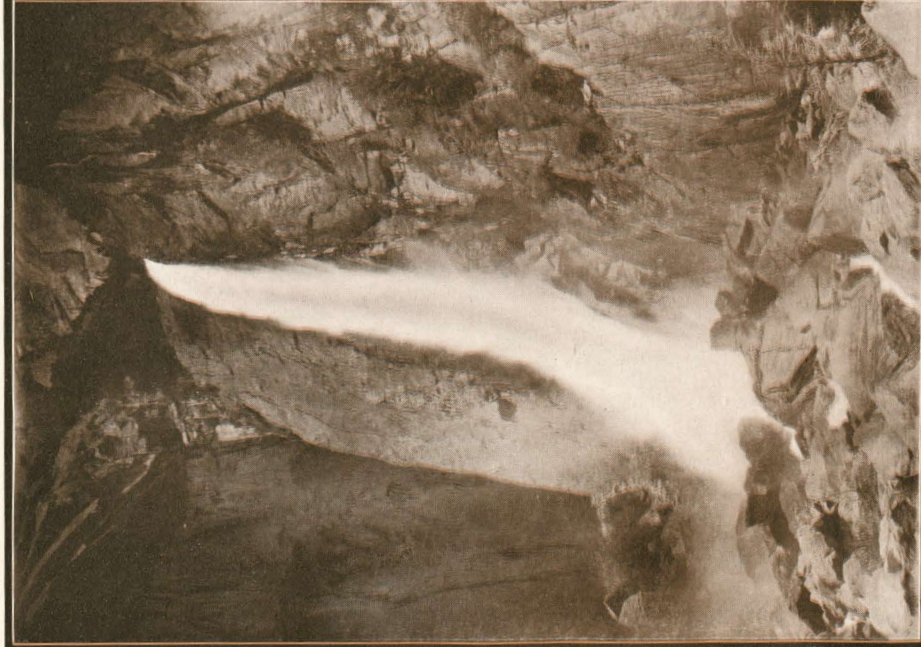
*UPPER YOSEMITE FALLS*



Let the Mind's Eye Conceive a Cloud Over a Quarter of a Mile High, and Over Its Edge  
Come Tumbling a River of Silver Water.



*LOWER YOSEMITE FALLS*



A Little Lower, a Little Slower, a Little Gentler, but Beautiful.

*THREE BROTHERS*



**Nature's Symbol of Fraternity.**



*MIRROR LAKE*



**Mirror Lake Enhances the Reality. Mount Watkins and Its Surroundings Gain in Beauty and Lose Nothing in Impressiveness in the Reflection.**

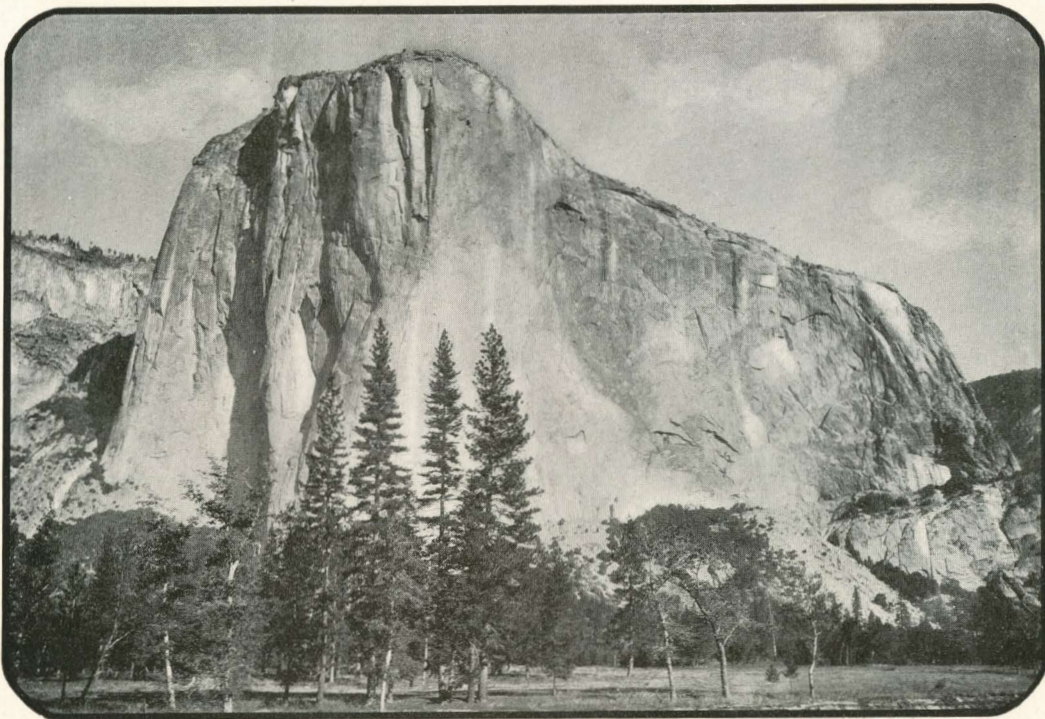
*CATHEDRAL SPIRES*



**It Is Said That the Groves Were God's First Temples; Yet These Matchless Spires of His, Towering Over the Valley, Call Forth a Joy in His Works Not Less Spontaneous.**



*EL CAPITAN*



**From the River, This, Perhaps the Most Majestic of Nature's Great Mountain Carvings, Fittingly Resembles a Crouching Lion.**

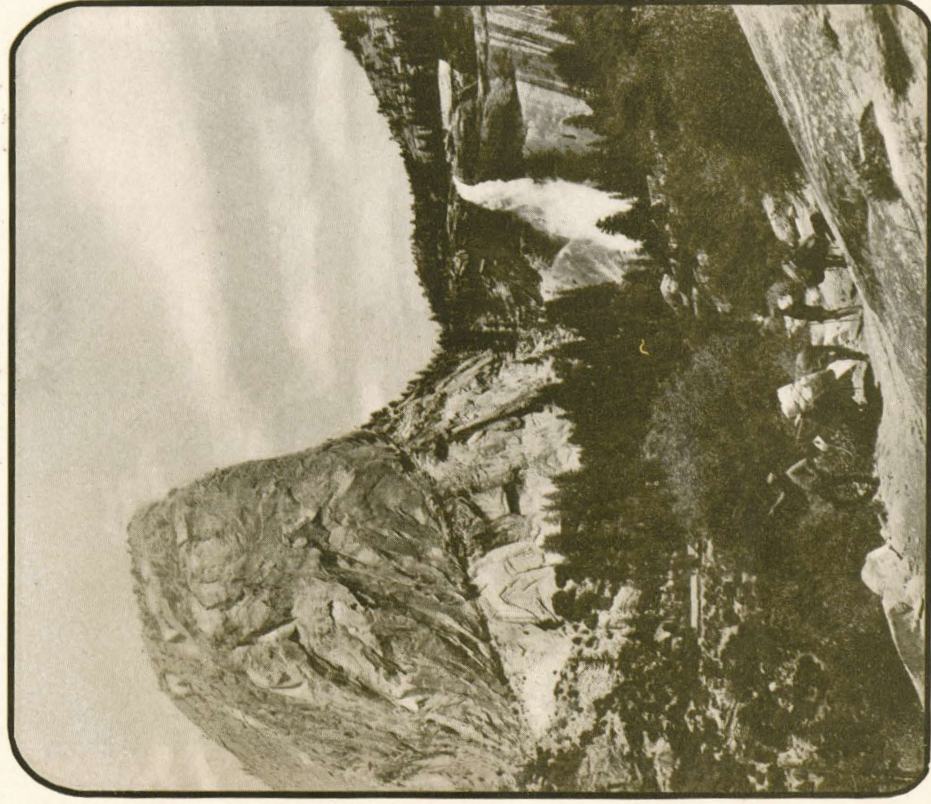
## THE SENTINEL



From the Heights Above, the Sentinel Rock Is Not Less Imposing Than From Below. Serene and Impressive, It Is a Fitting Guardian of the Valley.

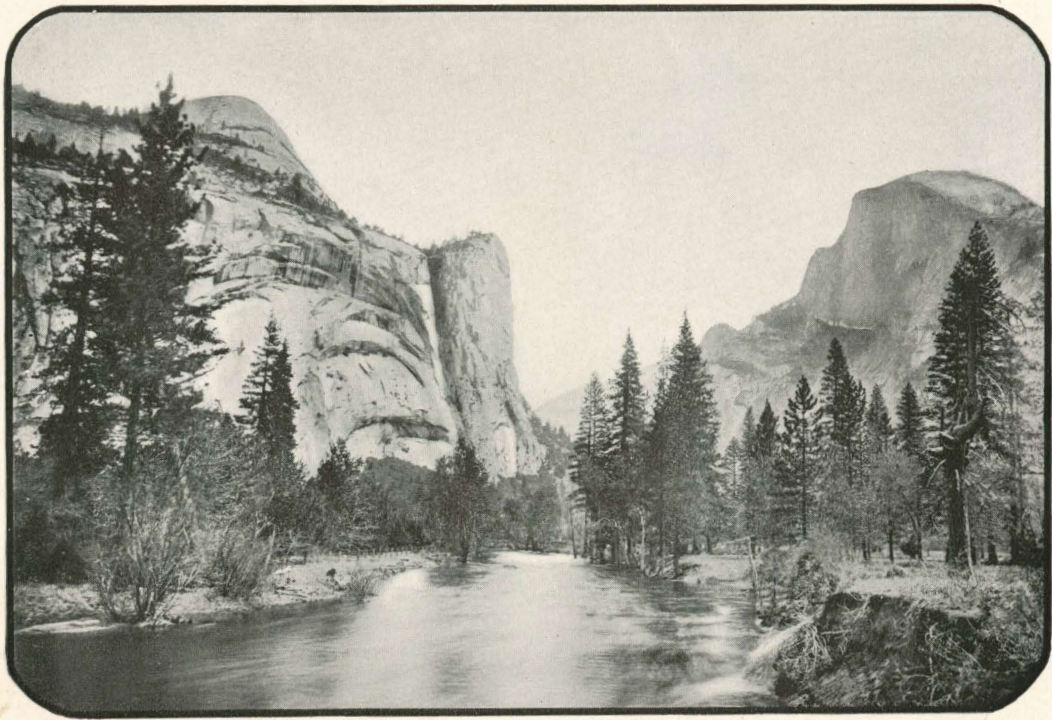


*CAP OF LIBERTY AND NEVADA FALLS*



One of the Striking Domes of the Valley. A Titanic Cap, Emblem Suitable for the Spirit of Liberty.

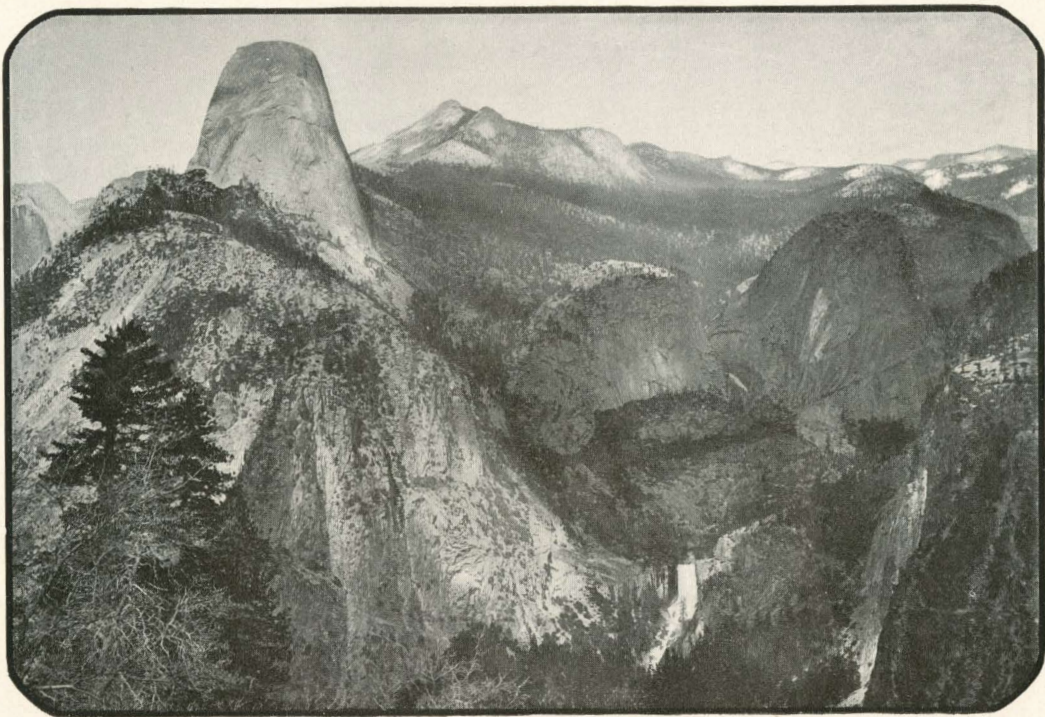
*THE DOMES FROM THE MERCED RIVER*



**The North and South Domes, With the Washington Column and the Royal Arches in the Foreground, Form a Picture Worthy of the Most Comprehensive Eyes—A Variety in Color, Majesty and Beauty Not Excelled.**



*HALF DOME AND CLOUDS' REST*



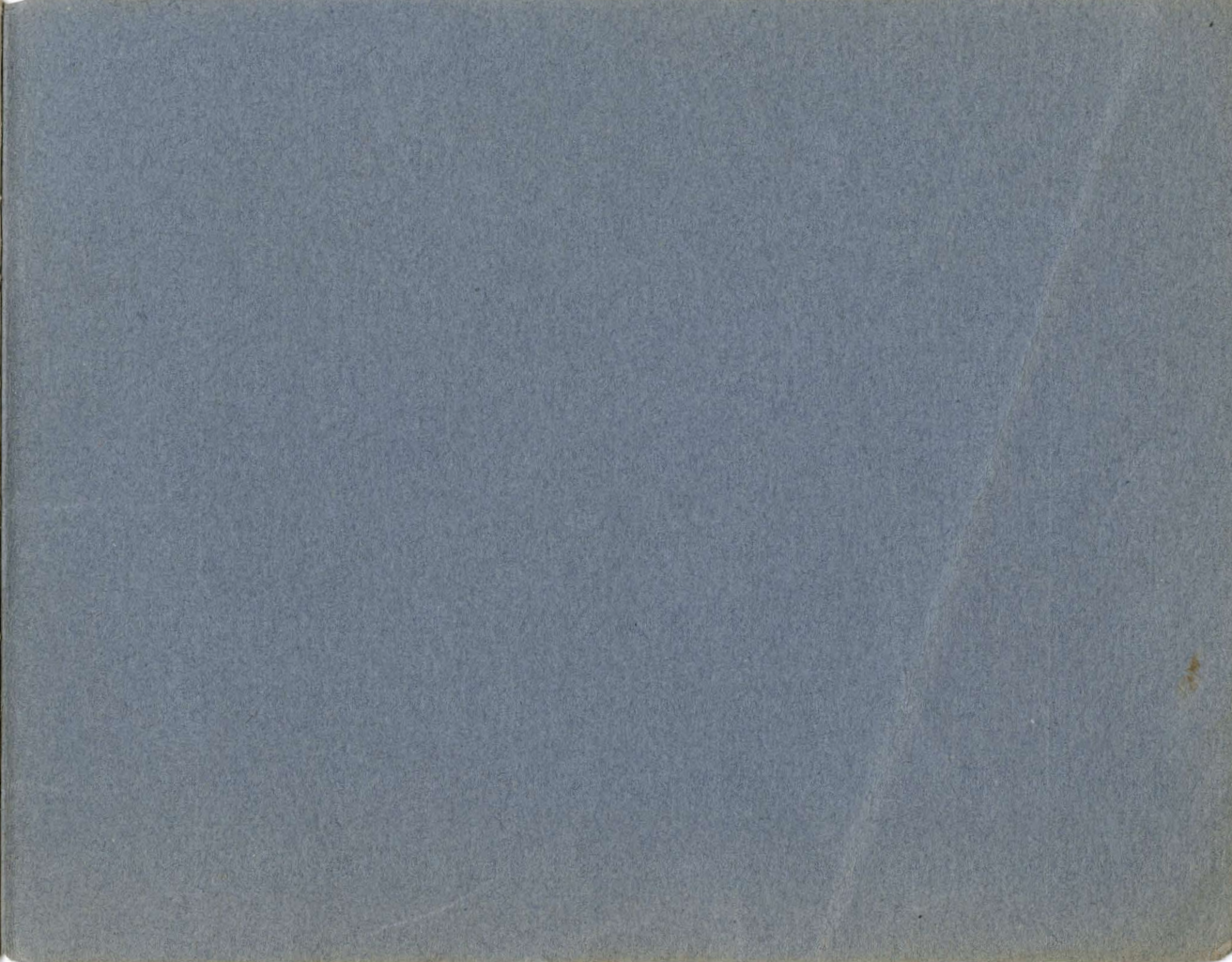
Leaving Glacier Point, a Magnificent View Is Obtained of the Great Burnished Half Dome and Clouds' Rest Beyond.

*HALF DOME AND CLOUDS' REST*



**From Glacier Point — A Magnificent View of the Valley's Highest Walls. From No Other Point Does the Great Half Dome Stand Out More Majestically.**





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