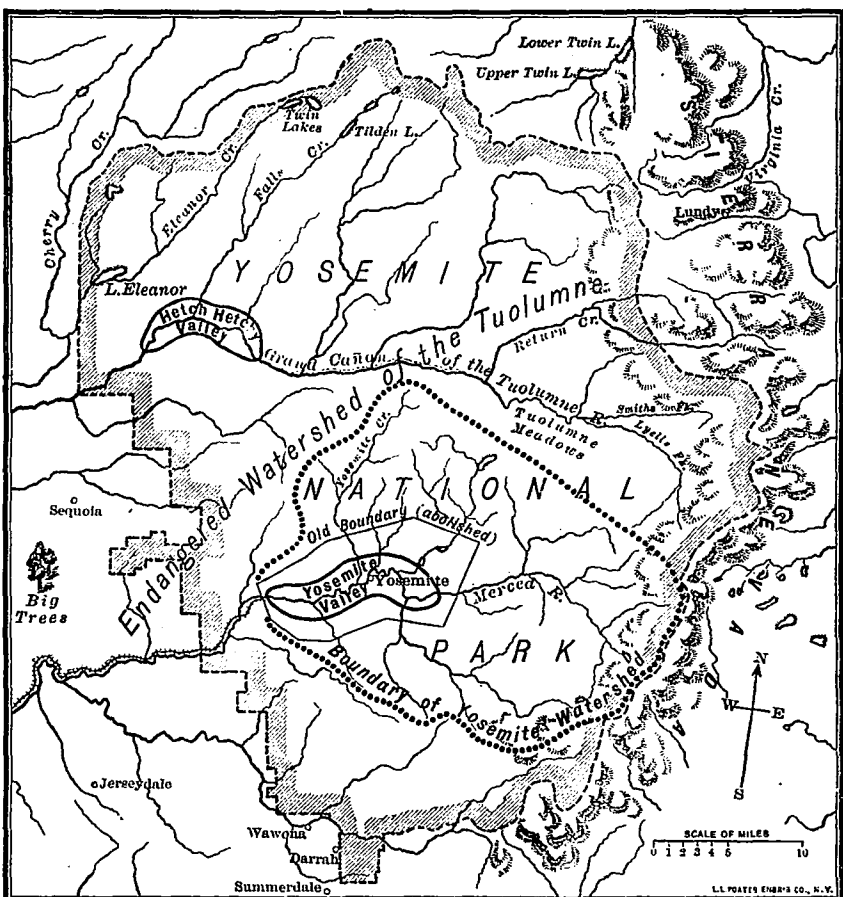


## SAVING THE YOSEMITE PARK

We ask our readers, especially our Western readers, to give their careful attention to the article by Mr. Robert Underwood Johnson and the story by Mr. Stewart Edward White which appear elsewhere in this issue of *The Outlook*. Mr. White's story presents a vivid picture of what this country has been through in its struggles to preserve its natural resources and create its great National parks. Mr. Johnson describes the proposal to give over the beautiful Hetch-Hetchy Valley in the Yosemite National Park to San Francisco for a water reservoir.

A glance at the accompanying map shows the situation of the Hetch-Hetchy Valley in the Yosemite National Park, whose boundaries are indicated by the broad shaded outline running from the Twin Lakes on the north to Summerdale on the south, and from the Sierra Nevada on the east to the famous "Big Trees" on the west. If the Hetch-Hetchy Valley is turned into a reservoir, it will be for the purpose of supplying the city of San Francisco with water for drinking, washing, and industrial purposes. These purposes cannot be hygienically carried out without careful supervision, not only of the Tuolumne River and the beautiful camping meadows near its head, but also of the watersheds on the north and south. Far be it from *The Outlook* to say that San Francisco should not be given the opportunity to wash and dress itself properly and drink a moderate amount of pure water. The point we wish to make here is that if its drinking water is to be kept pure, it means that the Hetch-Hetchy Water Company must eventually be given practical supervision of at least half of the Yosemite National Park. We have neither the knowledge nor the time to go into details of rainfall, watershed topography, or bacteriological chemistry, but we do know that if a municipal water-works is permitted to erect its plant in the Hetch-Hetchy Valley, it means that the Yosemite Park will become the back yard of a great municipal utility instead of a recreation ground for all the people of the country.

*The Outlook* says this with full recognition of the fact that Mr. Garfield,



THE YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Secretary of the Interior, and Mr. Pinchot, the National Forester, men of the highest character, most unselfishly devoted to National welfare on the highest plane, and experts in the matter of National resources and National parks, have both approved the project of turning the Hetch-Hetchy Valley into a San Francisco reservoir. We do not claim that under the law Secretary Garfield lacks the authority to make this grant. We take issue with him on his statement of reasons for giving the permission. They are, first, that San Francisco seriously needs water; and, second, that to let it have water from the Hetch-Hetchy Valley is "not incompatible with public interest." If San Francisco could not get an adequate water supply

from any other source than Yosemite Park, we should think Secretary Garfield's decision a justifiable one; but we have seen no satisfactory evidence that the citizens of San Francisco cannot get all the water they need from at least a dozen other sources of supply, and excellent evidence from competent engineers that they can do so. It may be that they can get it more *cheaply* from the Hetch-Hetchy Valley; but we submit that while the Yosemite National Park might very properly be sacrificed to save the lives and health of the citizens of San Francisco, it ought not to be sacrificed to save their dollars.

If this country were in danger of habitually ignoring utilitarian practice for

the sake of running after sentimental dreams and æsthetic visions, we should advise it to cut down the California big trees to shelter its citizens from the weather, and to dam the Tuolumne River in order to instruct its citizens in the use of the bathtub. But the danger is all the other way. The National habit is to waste the beauty of nature and save the dollars of business. One of the great achievements of the present Federal Administration is that it has made the entire country realize both the wisdom and the necessity of preserving its forests, mountains, rivers, and lakes as National resources. For the present Administration to permit a municipal corporation to intrench itself in the Yosemite National Park, no matter how good that corporation promises to be, seems to The Outlook an indefensible and dangerous piece of inconsistency which will be thoroughly bad not only in its immediate effect but as a precedent for future action. Before the damage is irremediably done we hope that Congress will investigate the entire Hetch-Hetchy controversy for the express purpose of authoritatively finding out whether San Francisco cannot be adequately supplied with water from some other source. We urge our readers to write to their Representatives in Congress asking for Congressional action.