

existing panic wrought havoc with all railway returns alike, there was a fair prospect of the plan being consummated, for it was the keystone of the Southern Construction Company's vast design.

The eastern terminus of the main line is at Fort Worth in Texas, but branches diverge thence to connect with roads running north, east, and south, and with the navigable waters of the Red River, a large tributary of the Mississippi. From Fort Worth the line is to run westward across the continent to San Diego on the Pacific, at first rising through the forest and prairie lands of Eastern Texas, by a series of terraces, to an elevation of about 3000 ft., ere it enters the dreary region of the *Llano Stocado*. While still in this, the southern extension of the great American Desert, the road will enter New Mexico and cross the Rio Grande. This, like other similarly situated rivers further north, represents a ribbon of fertile land, capable of supplying the wants of a mining population, and whose waters, if land should ever become scarce on this continent, may be utilized to irrigate artificially large districts of adjoining desert. At this point the road will connect with the Denver, Santa Fé, and Rio Grande railroad, a 3 ft. 6 in. line, which, starting from Denver, Colorado, almost on the 40° parallel, runs due south along the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains for nearly 500 miles, and by means of its extension the Denver Pacific R. R. will form a binding link between the Southern and Union Pacific roads. And here also will commence the passage of the mountains. But the task will be an easy one, for the Sierra Madre of Mexico has already broken up into a number of insignificant ridges, and not yet reformed into the great coast range or Sierra Nevada of California: and it is north of Santa Fé that the great eastern chain of the Rocky Mountains, which, when viewed from the Plains, opposes such an apparently impassable barrier to the Union Pacific,

abruptly begins. It is therefore claimed that the parallel of 32° really offers a natural highway, with easy grades, from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Throughout New Mexico and Arizona the road will run for 700 miles close to the Mexican frontier, and thus, while passing through the heretofore inaccessible mining regions of the southern territories, will afford the readiest outlet for the mineral and vegetable products of the Mexican provinces of Sonora and Chihuahua. Strange to say, the road will traverse a country with a past human history, amidst ruined cities and abandoned mines, memorials of the conquered Aztec races which inhabited the country before the arrival of the Spaniards, and of the conquerors who so ruthlessly swept it from the earth, but who in turn have disappeared before the knife and fire-brand of the Apache and the Mohave. Over alternate stretches of desert and the fertile valleys of the Rio Colorado and its tributaries, the road will reach the confines of California, only a few miles north of the line which divides the upper from the lower section of that state, at Fort Juma. Here it will meet the South Pacific road, whose northern terminus; 300 miles north, is San Francisco; but the Texas road will proceed straight onwards, and strike the sea at San Diego, said to be a harbour rivalling in size and safety the Bay of San Francisco.

The length of the road, from Shreveport on the Red River to San Diego, will be 1472 miles, and Shreveport is about 300 miles distant by rail or river from New Orleans. Sixty-six miles of the eastern section have been running for more than a year; two hundred miles more are ready for the rail, and work was being pressed forward simultaneously from both ends when the panic involved its chief promoter—Tom Scott—in ruin. The calculated cost is \$40,000 U. S. currency per mile, to meet which the road has been endowed with land grants by the Federal and State