

well as the Colonial Governments; the recent discovery of gold on both slopes of the Rocky Mountains, gives it much additional interest, and lastly, the difficulties between the United States and Imperial Governments, for the present happily set aside, have not failed to show its vast importance as an engine of military defence.

It seems likely then, that although the means of transport for nearly 2,000 miles are as yet scarcely better than they were when La Sale attempted to traverse the continent almost two centuries ago, the time is rapidly approaching when a highway across the continent will no longer, by any one be viewed as visionary.

Before proceeding to consider the construction of the work practically it will be necessary to discuss its character, and profitable to view its magnitude.

ITS CHARACTER.

A CONTINUOUS LINE OF RAILWAY ADVOCATED.

The early French Projectors appear to have had the idea of opening a water communication to the Pacific through the lakes and rivers of Canada and the interior. Nearly all the recent writers on the subject have proposed in different ways to improve and render navigable the natural lines of water communication. I am not aware however, that any of the latter, by reason of their knowledge of the great Rocky Mountain barrier, have contemplated a route wholly by water; they have generally advocated a mixed system, employing the water channels as far as possible, and connecting them by intermediate links of roads or of railways. On the other hand, Captain Blackiston appears to be much in favor of a land route, for the present, at least from the north shore of Lake Superior to Red River, by the north end of Lake of the Woods, at some distance inland from the international boundary line; and Major Carmichael-Smyth in 1849 boldly urged the construction of a "British Colonial Rail-