

road, and much of it long before any other route was discussed.

The acquisition of territory from Mexico, following the war of 1846-8, the gold discoveries in California and the rush of population to that region, and later certain important political considerations resulting from the war of the Rebellion, caused the support of the government to be given to the middle route. Thus the first railroad completed to the Pacific terminated at the Bay of San Francisco, instead of at Puget Sound or the mouth of the Columbia River. The northern route was long neglected. Although a grant of land was made in its behalf two years after the two companies were chartered to build the middle line, one transcontinental highway appeared to be sufficient for the time; and the one which was supported with heavy subsidies of government bonds, and large land grants, and ran to the romantic shores of the Golden State, easily secured and monopolized public interest and confidence. The northern project languished for want of support, and more than once came near being abandoned in despair by its few earnest advocates. After capital had finally been secured to begin work upon it, and its advantages had been fairly set before the public, the enterprise had to encounter fresh vicissitudes. It was overwhelmed in the financial crash of 1873, and struggled for many years after being rescued from bankruptcy to merely hold the unfinished lines it had built. Before it could regain the confidence of capital and push forward to a connection in the Rocky Mountains its widely separated "ends of track" a second Pacific road had been opened by the Southern route, built by California capitalists with wealth acquired from the generosity of the government toward the first line.

Thus the Northern Pacific Railroad, though the first

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