

more, and the trains on the Western North Carolina Railroad give life and animation to the scene, as they come rushing down the one stream and make a graceful curve along the banks of the other. When we look down from some lofty peak like Pisgah, on this wilderness of mountains which raise their gigantic forms in every direction, it would seem a hopeless task to attempt the construction of a railroad through their rugged labyrinths. But the observant eye of the engineer discovers that there are two deep fissures or canyons in this apparently impassable barrier. Mr. Hayne, the eloquent Senator from South Carolina, said, in 1835, that the Alleghany mountains were the dividing line of two great empires, and that sooner or



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later they would become the geographical and natural boundary of a trans-Alleghany and cis-Alleghany republic, unless they could be united by bands of iron, laid down through these great depressions which the Creator had marked out for railroads. Part of this mighty work has been achieved by the Western North Carolina Railroad Company, who laid the iron "bands of empire" along the French Broad in 1882.

Few persons appreciate the magnitude and importance of these great achievements. It has been sixty years since the project was conceived, and two generations that waited for its fulfilment have passed to the silent shores beyond, and the third is now striving manfully, in its day, to complete the gigantic plan. It is in this mountain region that the last of the abo-