

here, in the Salt Lake basin, the advance forces of the two companies met. The United States Congress directed that the rails should be joined wherever the two came together, but the bonus (\$32,000 to the mile) left a good margin to the builders in the valley, so, instead of joining the rails, the pathfinders only said "Howdy do!" and then "Good-bye!" and kept going. The graders followed close upon the heels of the engineers, so that by the time the track-layers met the two grades paralleled each other for a distance of two hundred miles. When the rails actually met, the Government compelled the two roads to couple up. It had been a friendly contest that left no bad blood. Indeed they were all willing to stop, for the iron trail was open from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

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THE tenth day of May, 1869, was the date fixed for the driving of the last spike and the official opening of the line. Special trains, carrying prominent railway and Government officials, were hurrying out from the East, while