

Great Britain in the establishment and maintenance of such a line of communication : Now, therefore,

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That Perry MacDonough Collins, of California, his associates and assignees, shall have the right to construct and maintain a line or lines of telegraph from any point or points on the line of the Pacific telegraph, constructed in pursuance of the act of Congress approved June sixteen, eighteen hundred and sixty, northerly, through any of the territories of the United States, to the boundaries of British America, with such branch lines as may be needed to open communication with the various mining districts and other settlements in said territories. And for the purposes aforesaid, the said Collins, his associates and assignees, shall have a permanent right of way over any unappropriated public lands of the United States, together with the right to take any timber and stone for construction purposes ; and for the purpose of establishing and maintaining said lines, and the stations necessary for the repair and working thereof, there is hereby granted to said parties the use of so much unappropriated public lands, not sold, granted, reserved, pre-empted, nor occupied by homestead settlers, as may be necessary for stations, not exceeding forty acres for each fifteen miles of line constructed across the public lands of the United States, so long as the same may be used for the said purpose : *Provided, however,* That so much of section one of this act as authorizes the construction of telegraph lines to open communications with the various mining districts and other settlements in said territories shall be null and void unless said branch lines shall be completed within five years from the approval hereof.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That, in order to encourage and aid the construction of said line of telegraph beyond the limits of the United States, the Secretary of the Navy is authorized to detail, for the use of the surveys and soundings along that portion of the Pacific coast, both of America and Asia, where it is proposed to establish said telegraph, one steam or sailing vessel, in his discretion, to assist in surveys and soundings, laying down submerged cable, and in transporting materials connected therewith, and generally afford such assistance as may be deemed best calculated to secure a successful promotion of the enterprise.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That the Government of the United States shall, at all times, have priority in the use of the line or lines, so far as the same are within its territory, and shall have the right, when authorized by law, to connect said line or lines by telegraph with any military posts of the United States, and to use the same for Government purposes. And in order to secure the same from injury by savages or other evil-disposed persons, to the interruption of the public business, the Secretary of War is authorized to direct the commanders of the military districts or stations and other officers, acting under authority of the United States in the Territories traversed by said telegraph, to use any available force at their command to protect the same. Subject to the right of prior use by the Government, as aforesaid, said line or lines shall be at all times open to the public and to any other telegraph company upon the payment of the regular charges for transmission of despatches, and all despatches received shall be transmitted over said line and lines in the order of their reception at the telegraph office ; and the answers to said despatches shall be delivered to such parties as may be directed by the sender.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That the better to accomplish the object of this act, namely, to promote the public interest and welfare, by facilitating