

"the Federal Government has taken hold of the matter with earnestness. Since all doubt is now removed about the early construction of this great continental highway, which is destined to effect in a greater or lesser degree the fortunes of every civilized nation, it has grown into favour with all sections and parties. Nobody is opposed to it—everybody says it must and shall be made. It has become the hobby of demagogues, and is working in the brain of statesmen. Everybody wants some share in the glory of the work, everybody is disposed to help it along. The last Congress, under the pressure of public opinion, appropriated 100,000 dollars for the survey of three distinct routes to the Pacific—all lying between the British possessions on the north, and the States of Mexico on the south." The writer then proceeds to state that the prevailing opinion then was that a COMPANY would be formed, with power to raise 100,000,000 dollars (the estimated cost of the road), the various States through which it will pass giving liberal donations of the public domain. The revenues from the traffic on this route would, it is calculated, be very great. "If only the same number of passengers," continues the writer, "went over it as now regularly cross the Isthmus to and from California, at 200 dollars per head, it would give the road an income of from 40,000,000 dollars to 50,000,000 dollars per annum. But the freight business would be incalculable. The commerce of the Pacific Ocean and the Eastern Asiatic world would flow through this new channel. New York would be brought within twenty days of Canton—nearer than England can ever be. It is thought, too, that so vast would be the influence upon the commerce of Europe, it would not only affect the business now done by the Cape of Good Hope, but perhaps in the end change the channels of European and Asiatic commerce. Be this as it may, the Pacific railroad, if it is ever completed, seems likely to affect the business of the entire world."

So much from this authority: but further back on the 27th of March, 1851, an article appeared in the *New York Tribune*, which, after adverting to Mr. Whitney's idea as one of a vaster and more inspiring enterprise than the political and industrial world had ever before attempted, states:—"The route through British America is in some respects even preferable to that through our own territory. By the former the distance from Europe to Asia is some thousand miles shorter than by the latter. Passing close to the northern shore of Lake Superior, traversing the water shed which divides the streams flowing towards the Arctic Sea from those which have their exit southward, and crossing the Rocky Mountains at an elevation some 3000 feet less than at the South Pass, the railway could here be constructed with comparative cheapness, and would open up a region abounding in valuable timber and other natural products, and admirably suited to the growth of grain and grazing. Having its Atlantic sea-port at Halifax, and its Pacific depôt near Vancouver's Island, it would inevitably draw to it the commerce of Europe, Asia, and the United States. Thus British America, from a mere colonial dependency, would assume a controlling rank in the world; to her other nations would be tributary; and in vain would the United States attempt to be her rival, for we could never dispute with her the possession of the Asiatic commerce, or the power which it confers. But the matter reaches beyond the suggestions of national interest, and has a wider scope than the mere sentiment of patriotism. We had