

# THE BUDGET.

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### RAILWAY INTERESTS.

#### AMERICAN.

Perhaps no country in the world has reaped greater advantages from the construction of railways than the United States. Physical, moral and political reasons, separately and collectively, pointed out, early in the history of that country, that it was of vital importance to the success of the Union that the different States comprising it should be cemented by the bonds of reciprocal trade. The difficulties to be overcome were great, but the consummate judgment of Washington overcame them when he planned his system of inland navigation.

This great man, soon after peace was proclaimed, made a tour as far West as Pittsburg, and also traversed the western parts of New England and New York, and examined for himself the difficulties of bringing the trade of the West to different points on the Atlantic. Possessed of accurate knowledge on the subject, he corresponded with the Governors of the different States, and other influential characters. He suggested to them the propriety of making by public authority, an appointment of commissioners of integrity and ability, whose duty it should be, after accurate examination, to ascertain the nearest and best portages between such of the Eastern and Western rivers as headed near to each other, though they ran in opposite directions; and also to trace the rivers west of the Ohio, to their sources and mouths, as they respectively emptied either into the Ohio or the Lakes of Canada, and to make an accurate map of the whole, with observations on the impediments to be overcome, and the advantages to be acquired on the completion of the work. In advocating the extension of inland navigation we cannot but regard Washington's views as grand and magnificent. He considered it as an effectual means of cementing the Union of the States. In his letter to the Governor of Virginia he observes, that which is not without a lesson for us:—"I need not remark to you, sir, that the flanks and rear of the United States are possessed by other powers, and formidable ones, too; nor need I press the necessity of applying the cement of interest to bind all parts of the Union

"together by indissoluble bonds, especially of binding that part of it which lies immediately West of us to the middle States. For what ties, let me ask, should we have upon those people; how entirely unconnected with them shall we be, and what troubles may we not apprehend if the Spaniards, on their right, and Great Britain, on their left, instead of throwing impediments in their way, as they do now, should hold out lures for their trade and alliance?" After stating the same thing to a member of Congress, Washington proceeds: "It may be asked how are we to prevent this? Happily for us the way is plain. Our immediate interests, as well as remote political advantages, point to it. \* \* \* \* Extend the inland navigation of the eastern waters; communicate them as near as possible with those which run westward: open these to the Ohio; open also such as extend from the Ohio towards Lake Erie, and we shall not only draw the produce of the Western settlers, but the peltry and fur trade of the Lakes also to our ports; thus adding an immense increase to our exports, and binding these people to us by a chain which never can be broken."

The foregoing passages from Washington's letters embody interesting evidence of the connection which has always existed in the American mind between the facilities for transit and communication and the strength of the Union. It would seem to be a settled maxim with them, that no country embracing a vast area can be great unless the outlying sections are closely connected with the central; and what the inland navigation system did for them in earlier times is still more effectively done to-day, as with their railway system a distance of fifty miles is as near as 10 miles used to be. By remembering what importance the American people attach, socially as well as politically,—not to allude to the great commercial importance—to the facilities for intercourse between the inhabitants of different States, one will easily understand why the Government of the United States is so generous in its land-grants when the object is to aid in the construction of railways.

With this preface, which we deemed necessary to account for the lively interest taken by the American Government and the public men in the United States in enterprises which tend to connect all parts of the country together, we shall pass on directly to the question of their railways.

The outburst of railway enterprise in England excited a similar spirit in America. In 1827 four miles of lines from the stone quarries at Quincy to Boston were constructed; in 1829 several miles of the Baltimore and Ohio were completed, locomotive power having been first introduced at Lackawana in 1828 on the line which connects the Delaware and Hudson canals. In 1833 the Albany and Schenectady line, 16 miles in length, first made in New York, was opened with locomotive power. These were the feeble beginnings of the American railway system. Let us trace their progress, and probe their results, and then we shall judge whether the American Government, by its liberal land-grants, dealt wisely with the railway interests of the country. We have seen that in 1833 the Albany and Schenectady line was opened—it was commenced in the State of New York. In this State alone, in 1851, there were 1500 miles of railway, and 9000 in the United States which had cost £60,000,000; in 1853 there were 14,500 miles; in 1860 there were 30,635, and to-day there are over 50,000 miles. In 1869 7,715 miles of railway were constructed, at an aggregate cost of not less than \$305,000,000, and during the next five years, it is estimated, upon certain data, that the increase will be 5,000 miles a year.

By dealing liberally with their great railway interests the Americans have, it was well remarked in *Herquith's* (London) *Railway Journal*, "set a wise example." The land-grant to the Illinois Central of 2,595,000 acres, while it conferred a boon upon the company, has been to the country of much greater advantage, as the company, in disposing of 2,000,000 acres of land, have populated and placed under cultivation a large district of country.

The land-grant to the Des Moines Valley Railway is the cause that now from Keokuk to Fort Dodge. Nearly 250 miles up the valley of the Des Moines River cars are running. For the month of June last the land sales of the company amounted to about \$40,000, and the land-grant bonds of the company, advertized by Messrs. Clarke, Dodge & Co., bear eight per cent interest.

A pamphlet published by Mr. H. J. Johns, in 1869, shews that the bonds of the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad Company, connecting St. Paul and Duluth, amounting to \$4,500,000, were taken up by capitalists in five days. And why so? Because the company along the line of the road own 1,632,000 acres of valuable land.