

NOTICE TO THE READER.

The Senate of the United States, and the House of Representatives having each ordered ten thousand copies of the reports of the two exploring expeditions conducted by me, to be printed together, I have deemed it regular and natural to place the report of 1842 first in the order of publication, although heretofore printed; it being first in the order of time, and first in the progress of actual exploration. The two reports naturally go together, the second being a continuation of the first, and the two constituting parts of a whole, which will require a third expedition, now commencing, to complete. The first terminated at the Rocky mountains, and at the two points of greatest interest in that ridge—namely, the South Pass, and Frémont's Peak; the former being the lowest depression of the mountains, through which the road to Oregon now passes, and the latter the highest elevation, from the base of which four great rivers take their rise, and flow in opposite directions, toward the rising and the setting sun. The second, after approaching the mountains by a different route, connects with the first expedition at the South Pass, and thence finds the great theatre of its labors west of the Rocky mountains, and between the Oregon river and North California. The third expedition, now commencing, will be directed to that section of the Rocky mountains which gives rise to the Arkansas, the Rio Grande del Norte, and the Rio Colorado of California; and will extend west and southwest of that section, so as to examine the country towards the Pacific ocean, ascertain the lines of communication between the mountains and the ocean in that latitude, and complete the examination of the Great Salt lake and of the interesting region which embosoms it.

The map which illustrated the report of 1842 is now extended to illustrate the entire expedition of 1843-'44, so that a view of both expeditions will be presented together. This map may have a meager and skeleton appearance to the general eye, but is expected to be more valuable to science on that account, being wholly founded upon positive data and actual operations in the field. About ten thousand miles of actual travelling and traversing in the wilderness which lies between the frontiers of Missouri and the shores of the Pacific, almost every camping station being

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