

and varied productions, but one which never can be properly developed until a great line of railway shall connect it with the States on and east of the Mississippi, and with the cities of the Pacific coast. But when so connected and made easily and quickly accessible, will give an impulse to our national prosperity beyond anything known in our past experience.

I have no inclination to depreciate the grand and unexampled enterprise of our California brethren in pushing a railroad from Sacramento across the Sierra Nevada range, into the rich mining State of Nevada. Their energy demonstrates that, although in choice of routes they may find it necessary to traverse the dreary and serpentine valley of the Humboldt to reach the region of Salt Lake, the great work will still go on, conferring immense material benefits, and generously rewarding them for their outlay. Nor am I at all inclined to underrate the other great work of making a road from Omaha, up the valley of the Platte, and over the Rocky Mountain range, to the great valley of Utah; for this, too, will be a road the value of which it would be difficult to estimate; as over it Southern Dacotah, Idaho and Utah, at least, can be reached. But as to the value of the country over which these two divisions of one great line will pass, as compared with that of the "Eastern Division" through Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona, there is an incalculable difference.

Alexander K. McClure, Esq., editor of the Chambersburg *Repository*, who went up the U. P. Railroad of the Platte in May last, thus describes the valley of that river:

"There are but few settlers on the line of the road; and after we enter what is called the Platte Plains, about Fort Kearney, there seems to be little that can ever invite the husbandman. The valley or vast plain is bounded on every side by vast bluffs, ranging from twenty to thirty miles apart, and the bluffs seem to be terribly sterile and repulsive. The Platte river rolls lazily along south of the railroad, hugging the southern bluffs at times, and again striking out near the centre of the valley; but it tires the eye to look at it and its surroundings. It is a murky, shallow, treacherous stream, with shifting sand for its bed, and naked banks skirting it most of the way. I have looked for miles along its banks without seeing so much as a shrub, much less a tree; but at times, where it nears the bluffs, it puts out along its banks a stunted, miserable growth of cottonwood. . . . The valley is a miserable waste, and I fear ever must be. . . . I have not found a single stream in it but the Platte river—the whole plain thus far, north of the river, not furnishing a single tributary. . . . There is not a habitation on the route for nearly two hundred miles, but such as are necessary to accommodate the railroad and travel."