Sacramento Daily Union, Volume 5, Number 767, 8 September 1853 — Pacific Telegraph and Bailroad. [ARTICLE]

Pacific Telegraph and Railroad.

Our columns have for the last two or three months been so completely burthened with political matter, that it was impossible for us to give them up to any other useful purpose. Fortunately the election is over, and we shall now have time and room to devote them to an examination and discussion of other great questions agitating the public mind. Chief among these is the contemplated Atlantic and Pacific Railroad and Telegraph.

A letter from Dr. Wozencraft, addressed to John B. Weller, U. S. Senator for California, appeared in the *Commercial Advertiser* of the 27th instant, with reference to the discovery of a new pass through the Sierra Nevada range of mountains. Should the conjectures of the Doctor prove true after actual survey has been made, one of the greatest difficulties in the way of this stupendous work will have been removed.

We give this letter to our readers to-day, prefacing it by extracts from an article of the *Commercial Advertiser* of the date named. That paper says:

The people of California, who will have the largest interest in the benefits that must arise from the Pacific Railroad, should naturally be the first to select a route and begin the work. If a commencement were made simultaneously at three points, by the people of California

at three points, by the people of California on their side, by the Mormons on the middle section, and by the people of the eastern States from the Missouri to the Sou h Pass, the entire work would be completed in less than four years.

The California section would begin in the vicinity of San Francisco, pass up the Sacramento valley and through the mountains, if Noble's Pass is selected, from Shasta City westward to Humboldt river. The second section would connect Humb ldt valley, through the Mormon settlements, with the South Pass. The third would cross the south-western tributaries of the Missouri, and terminate at St. Louis.

The California overland emigration moves at present through the South Pass. Each of the three grand sections of the road would be used by the emigrants after the construction of the first hundred miles It is hardly necessary to say, that a line of settlements would begin with, and follow each section of the road as it advanced, occasioning a rise of value in the lands adjoining, which would more than cever all the building expenses of the road. If a sufficient fund could be procured for the construction of a railroad across tht Isthmus of Panama, it is reasonable to believe, nay, there is no doubu, that as much private capital as may be eeded for at least the eastern and western sections of the Great Pacifit Railroad, will be forthcoming as soon as the undertaking shall have b en properly organized.

It is probable that Dr. Wozencraft will be employed by the Pacific Telegraph Company to locate the route of their subterranean wires. It this duty is entrusted to him, he will carry the wires through the South Pass of the Rocky Mountains, and continue them south of Humboldt river through Noble's Pass in the Sierra Nevada. The lead will be taken, in that event, by the wises of the Telegroph; and as the defence of these wires will oblige the company to establish a line of posts at every hundred miles along the route, a considerable tide of emigration will naturally move on that line.

Of all places in the world. San Francisco will reap the greatest benefit from the opening of this new channel of commerce. It is therefore a question of the first importance to every citizen, whatever be his occupation, to influence the selection of a proper route through the Sierra Nevada. It would be worth the while of any person who could afford the outlay, and who looked forward to an augmentation of his private fortune by means of the Pacific road, to despatch a party of exploration through Noble's Pass, The results of such an exploration would in all probability decide the action of Congress this coming winter, and might possibly lead to the immediate commencement of a road from Shasta City to this vicinity, on the basis of private capital. If the funds cannot be raised in this city, where money commands three per cent a month, they may be in New York at seven, or in England at five per cent per annum. English speculators are vesting their millions in Australian gold companies nine in ten of which are utterly ruinous to those who engage in them. Why cannot some of this idle British money by employed to build Californian railroads? It is a good revenge against the use they make of our gold and silver.

[From the Washington Union.]

Noble's Pass through the Sierra Nevada.

WASHINGTON, (D. C.) Feb. 10, 1853.

Dear Sir :—I am in receipt of your favor of the 8th instant, in which you are pleased to interrogate me in relation to information, which, in the discharge of duties connected with my mission as Commissioner and Indian Agent among the Indians of California, I may have been enabled to obtain relative to any pass through the Sierra Nevada range of mountains which would be deemed practicable for the passage of a railroad, and my opinion as to the practicability of est blishing and maintaining a line of telegraph passing through the Indian country which may be hostile to the whites.

It affords me pleasure in complying with your request and at the same time presents an opportunity of making known to the public—who

portunity of making known to the public—who are so much interested in this subject—and directing their attention to a remarkable pass in the Sierra Nevada range of mountains, which, it would appear, is measurably unknown to them. Public attention, so far as I am informed, has not been directed to it, and yet it may prove to be the best and most practicable route yet discovered. Of this I am satisfied in my own mind, and now venture the assertion that when the preliminary reconnoissance and surveys are made, it will prove to be the shortest and most practicable route from St. Louis to the Bay of San Francisco and the Columbia river.

In the summer of 1851, when in the discharge of my official duties among the Indians in the Sierra Nevada range of mountains in California, I became satisfied that there was a great depression in the range of mountains, commencing north of the point where Feather river escapes into the plains, continuing on to East Pit river, a distance of one hundred miles and upwards. This fact is apparent to the observer without the aid of instruments.

I felt assured that there was a low pass in this depressed portion, and observed a section on the western side that would appear to indicate it. My limited time, however, would not admit of further exploration; but, fortunately, at the time there was a bold and persevering adventurer engaged in his explorations in this section. Mr. Noble, formerly of Missouri, is the gentleman, I believe. He has returned to Missouri, but his name remains to us attached to the pass discovered by him. He completed the exploration and soon afterwards came to me, and gave me the important fact there was a complete pass through the range of mountains. The grade was so inconsiderable that a loaded wagon could be taken through without difficulty, and he believed that there would be no impediment from snow at any season.

These important facts were transmitted by me to the Department of the Interier immediately thereafter, suggesting that the government would do well to take the initiatory measure and explore the route, with a view of di-

recting the emigration to it, establishing posts with a view of security from Indians, who are troublesome in this section.

I am not aware of there having been anything done, further than the establishment of a post on the western side of the Sierra.

Now, if you will please observe any of the maps in which California is embraced, you will see that the south pass through the Rocky mountains, (the pass conceded to be the best pass yet found, through which passes the emigration to California, Oregon and Salt Lake,) is near latitude 42, passing along the northern border of Salt Lake, and continue on a straight line to the Sierra Nevada range of mountains, latitude 40 deg., 30m., you find the low pass indicated, as discovered by Mr. Noble, shortening the distance to California some two hundred miles and meeting with less mountain, less grade and less snow, I venture to say, than can be found on any other route to California and Oregon.

The practical engineer will please observe that there is a space of one hundred and upwards of miles on the western side of the Sierra Nevada, (from Pitt river south,) in which there are no rivers coming from the mountains. This fact will indicate to him that the mountains are low here. He will observe again that for four hundred miles south of Feather river, bold rivers spring out of the mountain range at intervals of not more than twenty miles apart, indicating that they come from an altitude of eternal snow. Again: look at the mountain peaks called Lawson's, Two Sister's and St. Joseph's, in the Sierra Nevada, latitude 41, or thereabout; they stand up in bold relief, signal peaks, yet they are not covered with snow in the summer months; consequently, not so high as any part of the range further south. These are facts that would indicate to the practical explorer and engineer to seek for the greatest depression in the mountains here with the certainty of success.

The fact of the existence of this lower pass was made known to a company of men at Shasta

city by Mr. Noble. He took them through it, and they confirmed in full all which he stated to me. They look on it as a remarkable pass, possessing advantages over any other known. A portion of the immigration of the past year passed through it without the least trouble.

Here, then, is a route which should commend itself to those who may be chosen with a view of locating the most practicable route for railroad or telegraph I will venture the asserti n, without fear of successful controversy, that less grading will be required on it, and less obstruction than any other route that can be indicated; and that it will pass through a country as well, if not better, supplied with timber and water than any other route. The caloric engine, methinks, will have to be brought into requisition on any of the routes indicated. My personal knowledge of a southern line has satisfied me of that fact.

You will perceive that there are other advantages in this route. The first of moment is that it enters the Sierra Nevada range near the diverging route for Oregon. Indeed, the only practicable route from California to Oregon passes around east of the Shasta range of mountains, at the point indicated by me for the entrance of the road into California; consequently, you perceive the diverging route into Oregon will be at this point; and it possesses all the facilities and inducements for a settlement —fine valleys of land, abundance of grass and water, and a healthy region, with plenty of the best timber.

And, further, by entering at the head of the Sacramento valley, you obviate the rapid and great descent from the great and elevated basin on the eastern side of the mountain, and have the gradual descent from the head of the Sacramento valley to San Francisco, without obstruction of any kind whatsoever. I have designated this route to Mr. Alden, who, in behalf of his company, has taken the initiatory steps to establish a line of telegraph from St Louis to San Francisco, and feel satisfied that the foregoing route will have a preference over any other. In connection with this subject,

and in answer to your second inquiry, I may be excused in making a few suggestions relative to the great difficulty, which is apparent to all, and amounting to an insuperable obstacle with some—*i e.*, protecting the line from the numerous bands of Indians.

I am in hopes that I shall be able to convince all rational and reflecting persons that this can be done, and in doing i , much good will come to these poor creatures. My experience has been sufficient to intrust me in the matter, and I venture the suggestions from having had practical knowledge which should remove controversy, though it may appear new, and withal, differ so materially from the prevailing opinion of those who have legislated, and those who would legislate, on this momentous subject.

The prevailing opinion appears to be, that in order to control Indians, and prevent them from murder and marauding, it of necessity be done by armed force and shedding of blood.—This, permit me to say, is one of the great errors which we have fallen into, and it has been readily propagated from generation to generation, through and by our inveterate feeling of hatred towards them. That they can be more readily controlled and made subservient to our wishes without taking life, but simply by pursuing a humane policy, I will attempt to show.

By going to war with the Indians, you at once place yourself on an equality with them. You kill them; they exact a life in return All who know the Indian character, know that their account is an indellible register, only obliterated by death. They are remorseless creditors; they will have their pound of flesh. Consequently, war woud be an evil if we stop short of extermination

On the contrary, if we show ourselves to them jest as we are, a superior race, capable of controlling them without resorting to the extremity of destroying, treating them in accordance with the dictates of an enlightened and humane policy, we find it no difficult matter to gain and maintain a controlling influence over them by pursuing this course; and of course it is the only one which can result to their advantage,

only one which can result to their advantage, or prevent their speedy extinction.

Permit me to specify a course of policy by which the Indians cannot only be prevented from attempting to injure the line of telegraph passing through their country, but they can be made useful in its preservation.

Formerly it was the common practice by those passing through the Indian country, to make them presents, which was just in itself, and resulted in safety to the party making such presents. Of late, I am sorry to say, the heavy emigration passing through their country have disregarded custom, and humanity too, it would appear. Instead of presents, they have treated them harshly and badly. The Indians are enraged at this treatment, and now seek favora ble opportunities of venting it on the sm all parties of emigrants. A knowledge of the foregoing state of affairs will instruct the party who are engaged in laying the telegraph, and induce them to treat the Indians kindly. When they appear give them some food, and for a proper return of service give them a return, be it what it may, and thus show them that these are their friends; punish them for any bad faith or acts, but not by shooting them. Scourge them, or tie them up. Show them that you can control them.

Inform them and convince them of the nature of the work. Inform them that it is placed there for their protection and good. The President can then talk direct to them; he will then not be so far off; will know their wants—and they are pressing at this time—they want food. Convince them of the power of the Great Father's voice, by shocking a crowd of them with a galvanic battery. They will be slow to touch it afterward.

In this simple manner the telegraph can be protected with greater certainty than can be done by all the soldiers that could be placed on the route. There would be intervening places between posts, and there the Indian would surely destroy the wire, as it was his enemy's property: but if he is convinced that it is his friend's property, and good will come to him by permitting it to remain there he will not me-

permitting it to remain there, he will not molest it, but assist in its preservation.

Indeed, their labor can be made available, and thus commence the work of domestication and christianization, the two great systems by which their temporal and spiritual existences may be preserved. Their national existence must, through necessity, be destroyed. It would be the part of humanity to preserve the integral portions thereof.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

O. M. WOZENCRAFT.

Hon J. B. WELLER, U. S. Senate.