

FORT OR GARRISON IN SOUTHWESTERN MISSOURI.

MEMORIAL

OF

*Loyal citizens of the southwestern portion of the State of Missouri, asking for the establishment of a fort or garrison near the southwest corner of the State of Missouri.*

FEBRUARY 13, 1865.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and ordered to be printed.

A MEMORIAL to the President and Congress of the United States and to the Secretary of War, asking for a fort or garrison to be established near the southwest corner of the State.

Whereas the loyal people of southwest Missouri have suffered greatly in all their material interests by reason of the war, and have been, are now, and will continue to be for years to come, greatly exposed to bands of marauders, who infest the country, robbing, murdering, and leaving their mark of death and desolation wherever they go.

There is a large section of country lying between Fort Scott, in the State of Kansas, and Fort Gibson, in the Cherokee Nation, a distance of some two hundred miles, including some seven of the western border counties in Missouri, and the more interior counties thereto adjacent; also a part of the northwestern portion of the State of Arkansas, with a portion of the Cherokee Nation, and the Seneca, Shawnee, and Chippewa tribes of Indians, all of which is exposed to marauding bands, who make their raids from a southwest direction; and the rebel army, in almost every raid it has made into Missouri since the rebellion commenced, has either passed in or out of the State through this unprotected gap, thereby giving great trouble to all portions of the State, and the consequence is that our citizens are becoming greatly discouraged on account of the lives lost, as well as property taken annually.

The above-named Cherokee country is extensive and fertile, producing some of the finest and largest salt springs in America, flowing off in large branches, and giving out more salt water than it is likely will ever be consumed. These springs have been worked extensively and a large amount of salt made annually, but the ravages of war have stopped the hand of industry and closed this avenue of wealth. With proper protection, here would open up a business that would give employment to thousands, and furnish to millions of people one of the essential articles of life, (that of salt,) and thereby become a great source of wealth to us as a people.

The mineral resources in southwest Missouri are so great as to require the government's earliest possible attention, as they are hardly surpassed in any country, especially that of lead, in the counties of Jasper and Newton. A geological report made by the State geologist, in 1855, has the following on page 163, first and second annual report:

"There are at least four hundred square miles in southwest of Jasper and the northwest, central, and eastern portions of Newton county, which give every

indication of being very valuable mineral lands. Mines have been already opened and successfully worked in ten townships, and there are several others which give indications just as promising as those already worked. Mineral is found over this whole region. Scarcely a shaft has been sunk, however carelessly the spot was chosen, without obtaining mineral sufficient to render the labor profitable. One may get a good view of this mineral region by starting from Carthage and travelling a little north of west ten miles to the Centre Creek mines, thence a little west of south seven miles to Mineral Point; from thence southeast eleven miles to Mosby's mines; and from thence a little south of east nine or ten miles to Clover Prairie mines; thence eastward some six miles. The country along this whole route, and for several miles on either side, presents the same geological feature, and the same indications of great mineral wealth. And the day is not far distant when this will prove to be one of the richest districts in the country."

Since the foregoing geological report was made, (1855,) and up to the breaking out of this rebellion, all these mines had been worked extensively. Some seven or eight smelting furnaces have been in successful operation; the largest one containing six eyes, with steam power; and this furnace alone, while in operation, was capable of smelting over 10,000,000 pounds of lead annually, while some others were able to produce almost as much. This great mineral region has become almost a desolated country, with here and there an inhabitant. Its vast and untold mineral wealth lies dormant in the bowels of the earth. Protection given to this country by the general government would insure success to thousands of honest laborers, who would soon produce an amount of lead that would stop the necessity of importing that article from foreign countries, and give life and energy to one of the finest portions of our State.

The Granby lead mines are in the centre of this vast mineral region, and the great necessity of building the southwest branch of the Pacific railroad to Granby, in a military sense, has been fully set forth in a memorial on that subject, which it is hoped will receive due consideration.

From the foregoing considerations, we, your memorialists, would respectfully recommend to his excellency Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, to Congress, and Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War, that there be a board of competent engineers selected and sent to the town of Neosho, Newton county, whose duty it shall be to select in that section of country a suitable place for a fort, and locate the same thereon.

*Resolved by the senate, (the house concurring therein,)* First. That the foregoing preamble and memorial are recommended to the consideration of the President and Congress of the United States, and to the Secretary of War.

Second. That it is hereby made the duty of the secretary of the senate to transmit to the President of the United States, to each senator and congressman from this State, and to the Secretary of War, each, one copy of the foregoing preamble and memorial.