

MEMORIAL

OF THE

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF MILWAUKIE, WISCONSIN,

PRAYING

The construction of a wagon road to Idaho, through Minnesota and Dakota, and such military protection as will afford safety to emigration and quick and secure transit of merchandise and the precious metals.

FEBRUARY 24, 1864.—Referred to the Committee on Territories.

MARCH 17, 1864.—Ordered to be printed.

To the honorable the United States Senate and House of Representatives:

The Chamber of Commerce of the city of Milwaukie would most respectfully present, that the reports of recent discoveries of rich deposits of gold and silver in Idaho Territory are now so well authenticated as to command special credit and attention, and induce large immigration. Already miners and others have found their way to this far off and, to the commercial world, scarcely known region, and confirm the statements of the immense mineral wealth of the country.

It is believed that within the last few months more than twenty-five millions of dollars in gold and silver have been mined in the Territory, nearly all of which still remains there, together with unestimated millions not yet reached, all unavailable for the want of convenient and safe means of ingress and outlet. The shortest and most feasible route to Idaho is through central Minnesota and Dakota. The distance upon an air-line from the western boundary of Minnesota to the eastern boundary of this new Territory is less than five hundred miles, but owing to the hostile character of the Indians through that unsettled and exposed section of country, the want of a proper wagon road and the projection of a line of military posts, the route suggested is unavailable, and emigration has to find its way to that land of gold and silver by a circuitous line of travel through Utah, making the distance more than four times as great as that by the direct line through Minnesota and Dakota.

On this northern route wood, water and grass abound. The climate is comparatively mild. The soil is fertile, and adapted to the highest cultivation, and with a suitable road and military protection, an immense population will soon find homes in this new Territory, and speedily develop its vast mineral and agricultural wealth.

By some, the ability of the government to pay the principal and interest of the public debt is seriously questioned; but we believe that with timely care to encourage the development of the resources of the vast mineral regions of our country, the aggregate of national wealth may be increased with sufficient ra-

pidity to alleviate the future financial emergencies of the government and the people.

Idaho, a land of fertile valleys and golden mountains, once made accessible by a line of travel less than one-fourth the distance now required to be traversed to reach it, with the protection needed for persons and property against savage tribes, a hardy, industrious and enterprising population will occupy that now uncultivated country, develop its varied resources, and open the way to the Pacific coast.

With a view to reach the treasures of this new Territory, and render the same available to government and commerce, this chamber would most respectfully urge such immediate congressional action in accordance with precedent as will secure a road to Idaho by the short and natural route through Minnesota and Dakota, and furnish such military protection as will afford safety to emigration and quick and secure transit of merchandise and the precious metals.

[L. S.]

JAMES B. KELLOGG,

Secretary.

THOMAS WHITNEY,
Vice-President.