

**Russo-American telegraph; for connecting the old and new worlds, through the dominions of Alexander the second, and thus signaling the completion of the first millenium of Russian nationality. Memorial of Henry O'Reilly ... New York, Jan. 1st, 1861.**

Russo-American Telegraph: FOR Connecting the Old and New Worlds, through the Dominions of Alexander the Second, And thus Signaling the Completion of the First Millennium of Russian Nationality.

MEMORIAL OF HENRY O'RIELLY, Projector and Constructor of the First Telegraph Range that Electrically connected the different sections of the United States—

TO THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL ACADEMY—in reply to inquiries on Telegraphic Subjects, from one of its most honored members.

The great measure of Russian Policy which renders this New-Year memorable in the World's History by the enfranchisement of millions through the beneficence of the Emperor Alexander, renders appropriate the selection of this First Day for the reiteration of a project that may further signalize the Reign of His Imperial Majesty in connection with the completion of the first Millennium of Russian Nationality.

Memorials to the American Congress show that, on completing the first Telegraph Range which electrically connected the different sections of the United States, before the creation of State Sovereignties on our Pacific Coast, I proposed to continue the Telegraph Lines from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean, for connecting with the Russian as well as the British and our own possessions on that Coast, soon as the Federal Government would render any one Route safe for intercourse across the American Continent.

Although the proposed connexion between the Two Worlds through the Russian Dominions was then generally considered an absurdity too ridiculous for serious consideration, it will be seen that, nine or ten years ago, when the *submarine* project of intercommunication was first seriously proposed, the project of *Overland* Telegraphing between the Old World and the New (via Behring's Straits) through the Russian Dominions was publicly advocated in articles written by me for the American Telegraph Magazine of 1852, as AN ENTERPRIZE WORTHY OF THE RUSSIAN EMPEROR, who alone, of all Monarchs, possesses the power of connecting the Two Worlds through his own Dominions.

In the article on “Telegraphic Connexion between the Old World and the New,” after mentioning the then proposed investigation of the practicability of extending a Submarine Telegraph Line between Newfoundland and Great Britain, in the American Telegraph Magazine for 1852, I remarked that,

“While viewing with great pleasure the success which “has attended the projects of connecting various European “ countries across sundry arms of the sea, our faith “ is at present hardly strong enough to indulge in any “very sanguine hopes of speedily witnessing the success “of telegraphic wires for the contemplated distance under “the waters of the the ‘broad Atlantic.’

“The EMPEROR OF RUSSIA could readily extend “ telegraphic communication across his dominions “to the Russian settlements on our North-Western “coast; while the growing importance of our settlements “in California and Oregon, as well as the British “plans of colonization farther northward, render it certain “that *many years will not elapse before the telegraph “lines will connect the regions of Behring’s Straits* “(where Asia and America can be readily ‘wired “together,’) *with the cities of our Atlantic coast.* ”

And again, in another number of the Telegraph Magazine, (1853), it was stated that

“The Russian Empire, embracing portions of Europe, “Asia and America, furnishes the opportunity for connected “Telegraphic intercourse between the Old and “New Worlds. IT WOULD BE GLORY ENOUGH FOR “ANY MONARCH TO EXERT HIS POWER IN THUS “ESTABLISHING ELECTRIC COMMUNICATION BETWEEN “THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.”

With these prefatory remarks, and in view of the completion of the FIRST MILLENNIUM OF RUSSIAN NATIONALITY—for commemorating which event, a monument, erected through the contributions of the Russian People, is ordered for completion in 1862 at Nowgorod, the primitive seat of Russian power— and in view of the efforts now making for extending Telegraphic connexion from the Atlantic westward to the Russian and other settlements on the Pacific Coast—it is respectfully suggested that the Overland Telegraph Line through the Russian Dominions—the RUSSO-AMERICAN TELEGRAPH, connecting the Two Worlds—shall be completed coterminously with the above-mentioned structure—that the inauguration of the Monument of Russian Progress for a Thousand Years may be simultaneous with the dedication of that grand Telegraphic System which shall alike illustrate the extent of Russian dominion and the magnanimity of the Russian Emperor.

The rapidity with which the first Telegraph Range of Eight Thousand Miles was constructed for connecting the different sections of the United States—amid all the difficulties of a new enterprize, accomplished by private effort without governmental aid—indicates that there is yet time sufficient for the Emperor Alexander to accomplish the great work of telegraphically connecting

the Two Worlds through his Dominions, in the year 1862—so that the Imperial Speech, at the Millennial Celebration, simultaneously disseminated through the Russian possessions in Europe, Asia and America, shall be rendered additionally memorable by marking the establishment of electric intercourse between the Old World and the New—thus conferring one of the greatest benefactions not merely on the Russian Empire, but on Civilization at large, by annihilating time in correspondence, while furnishing extraordinary illustration of the Extent and Progress of an Empire whose History is THIS DAY AND FOREVER HONORED by the Emancipation of Millions through the liberality of the modern Alexander, in realms unknown to his ancient name-sake.

The rapidly extending civilization and development of political power on the Russian and other shores of the Pacific Ocean, render this enterprize of immediate and world-wide importance. The interest attached to the Submarine “Atlantic Telegraph” indicates the general opinion of the “paying value” as well as the magnificence of Telegraphic Intercourse between the two hemispheres. The Ukase of the Russian Emperor, decreeing the completion of this Line through his vast Dominions would stimulate Telegraphic Enterprize so as to secure the cotemporaneous completion of lines radiating from Sitka in Russian-America to all parts of the United States and British America—thus forming a reliable electric bond of communication between the People of all civilized lands.

The power and wisdom of the Russian Emperor, signalized in the speedy completion of the Inter-Continental Telegraph, could be equally manifested in the sustenance of the enterprize—for the Russian troops who may be employed in constructing this Overland Russo-American Line, would furnish supervision alike efficient and economic for securing the permanence and integrity of Telegraphic Intercourse (via Behring's Straits) between all nations of the Old and New World. The British Government, with less effort than it has already made for an abortive Sub-Oceanic Line, could quickly and cheaply extend Telegraphic connexion *by labor of its soldiery*, between existing Canadian Lines and the point of connexion with the “Russo-American Telegraph” on the Pacific Coast—or, if the Government will not, British capitalists will effect the object—thus readily securing electric correspondence between the Mother Country and its American Provinces, as well as with the whole Telegraph System of the United States—even if the line from the Mississippi to the Pacific, authorized by a law modified last year substantially accordant with my Memorial to the Congress of the United States, should not be completed in due season (1862) by the contractors under that law.

I respectfully address the RUSSIAN IMPERIAL ACADEMY particularly about this great Inter-Continental Telegraph—because the Academy, devoted to Science and Improvement, and aiming only at the public welfare, will readily appreciate, and may represent to His Imperial Majesty, the several great scientific and practical objects which would render the Overland Russo-American Telegraph more useful than any Sub-Oceanic Telegraph can possibly be. Aside from the commercial,

social and political value of a Telegraph between the New and Old Worlds, the interests of Science, in connexion with Astronomy, Meteorology, Electricity and Telegraphy, would give this Overland Route great advantage over a Sub-Oceanic Line—which latter, even if practicable and reliable on such a “long circuit,” would be *useless for those objects* at any points *between the termini*—while the Overland Telegraph, besides its beneficial effects in general correspondence *between all points* along its route, would have the additional merit of furnishing means of instantaneous observations on Astronomy, Meteorology and Electro-Telegraphy. *at all points*, over thousands of miles in Europe, Asia and America.

Were there no other interests involved—no other benefits to be realized—would not the contribution thus made to Science render the proposed RUSSO-AMERICAN TELEGRAPH one of the noblest enterprizes to which Imperial ambition could be directed?—an enterprize which would virtually render the Imperial commands ubiquitous through the Russian Dominions—an enterprize worthy of that illustrious Autocrat, who, instead of riveting chains upon his subjects, signalizes his Reign by enfranchising millions of serfs—a glorious capstone for the Historical Column which commemorates the Reign of Alexander the Second and the completion of the First Thousand Years of Russian Nationality.

HENRY O'RIELLY.

New-York, Jan. 1st, 1861.

Mr. George Mr.

Henry O'Rielly