

OKLAHOMA CENTRAL RAILROAD.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

RETURNING,

*Without his approval, House bill 5624, entitled "An act to authorize the Oklahoma Central Railroad to construct and operate a railway through the Indian and Oklahoma Territories, and for other purposes."*

FEBRUARY 28, 1895.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

*To the House of Representatives:*

I herewith return without approval House bill number 5624, entitled "An act to authorize the Oklahoma Central Railroad to construct and operate a railway through the Indian and Oklahoma Territories, and for other purposes."

The railroad proposed to be built under authority of this bill commences at a point in the Creek Nation called Sapulpa, and runs through the Indian Territory to Oklahoma City in Oklahoma, and thence through the Kiowa and Comanche Reservation to a point at or near the Red River, on the west line of said reservation.

There is no provision in this bill requiring the consent of the Indians through whose lands it is proposed to build the road.

The character and situation of these Indians is such as to make this consent important.

The first section gives the railroad company the right to build not only its line of road, but "such tracks, turn-outs, branches, sidings, and extensions as said company may deem it to their interest to construct."

If under an apparent grant to build a railroad, the route of which is in a general way defined, this company is to be allowed to build such branches and extensions as it may deem it to its interest to construct, the grant, I am sure, is more comprehensive than was intended by the Congress.

It seems to me that the entire line of the proposed railroad should be precisely located and subjected to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior before the work of construction is entered upon. This bill provides that it shall be approved in sections of twenty-five miles before construction on such sections shall be commenced.

Our relations to the Indians on reservations and their welfare and quiet are better preserved and protected when the entire line of road can be settled upon at one time, and all uncertainty and doubt on the subject removed. The object sought by submitting the line to the supervision and determination of the Secretary of the Interior can be better and more intelligently accomplished if it is dealt with in its entirety instead of in sections.

GROVER CLEVELAND.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
*February 28, 1895.*

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